

A Vibrant UNION

Meaningful moments infused this pair's lush, tropical wedding
VIDYA FLEETWOOD & BRENDAN O'BRIEN
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Vidya Fleetwood and Brendan O'Brien fell for Lowndes Grove as the venue for their June wedding. The big day's tropical, boho-chic decor—inspired by a recent viewing of the first season of *The White Lotus*—was carried out through natural fabrics, abundant bright flowers, and hanging rattan lamps capped with greenery.

Images by JENNA MARIE WEDDINGS
Planning & Design by BUTTERCUP EVENTS





Vidya Fleetwood and Brendan O'Brien were living in Chicago in 2014 when they spotted one another inside a Whole Foods Market and connected over, of all things, broccolini. Brendan, an engineer, had a feeling about Vidya, who had just finished the second year of her medical residency. Their relationship soon bloomed after a proper date at a Champagne bar.

The pair would continue dating, even as Vidya's surgery fellowship took her to Madison, Wisconsin, and Brendan remained in Chicago. Come early 2020, Brendan was planning a proposal. He arranged for a few of their friends to make the trip up for a "Wisconsin weekend"—really, a clever cover for popping the question. But when the start of the pandemic thwarted the group gathering, he drove solo to weather lockdown with Vidya. The two passed time taking high-flying drone shots of the scenic state. One day, after heading to a nearby harbor, he handed Vidya the remote. When she turned to him, he was down on one knee—while the drone captured the unforgettable footage.

Having grown up in South Carolina and attended medical school in Charleston, Vidya quickly thought of the city for their wedding. It took only a weekend trip for Brendan to agree. And as they explored the sprawling grounds of Lowndes Grove, with its manicured lawn and dock reaching over the marsh and into the Ashley River, they knew they'd found their venue.

They set about planning a celebration infused with heritage. Vidya had long dreamed of a fusion Indian wedding to honor her mother's home country. Her aunt provided a script for the ceremony, which the couple customized together. Brendan's uncle shared a Burmese prayer to represent their family's roots. Other special elements included the two families pouring rice into a common pot together to represent their joining in marriage and the couple taking seven steps around a fire, which planner Amy DeVito of Buttercup Events depicted via a glowing table of candles. Throughout the space, abundant king protea flowers represented Vidya's South African background, while garlands of marigolds, used for centuries in Indian weddings, symbolized brightness and positivity, setting a lovely tone for the couple's next chapter together.

—Emily Storrow



(Clockwise from top) The ceremony was rich in elements representing the couple's family roots, including a Hindu wedding ritual that involves taking seven steps around a fire—here, represented by a table topped with candles. Vidya hired a henna artist to tattoo herself and her bridesmaids ahead of her rehearsal dinner.



(Clockwise from left) From place settings to lounge seating, every detail of the dreamy reception was lush and vibrant. Vidya's custom-made red reception dress arrived from India with no instructions, so Brendan, ever the engineer, turned to Instagram and YouTube tutorials to learn the ins and outs of wrapping and tying the ensemble. One of the couple's cats, Chuck (short for Chucktown), helped guests toast to his parents.



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