

Weddings in Errachidia

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Errachidia is one of the most culturally prosperous regions in Morocco. It is rich in rituals, customs and traditions. One of the traditions that is a very significant event in people's lives here is marriage. Wedding ceremonies are generally celebrated in the summer because it is the most suitable season for such celebrations. We can divide the ceremony into three stages, before, during, and after the wedding party.

First, before the wedding party officially starts, the bride and groom's families prepare cakes, slaughter a sheep or two and buy necessary things for the ceremony. The bride goes to the public bath and made the famous Henna on hands and feet. The groom buys the rings and the new clothes for the bride.

During the marriage ceremony that sometimes lasts for a week, the two families start inviting the relatives, the neighbours, the close friends and often the whole village if the families are rich. The bride and groom make their appearances wearing special beautiful clothes for the wedding and took photos with the family members and the relatives and very close friends. Not all the guests have the opportunity to see these things. Guests are invited in terms of groups of age, sex and closeness to one of the families as the ceremony goes on.

The first group of guests is a little special: They are old people in general. The women are invited during the day to have lunch, whereas the men are invited at night after the Isha prayer. They gather on the roof of the house and listen to some Qura'an. The guests enjoy the ceremony eating cakes and drinking tea. After a long while, they have dinner which is normally two main plates: Couscous with chicken and Tagin. The dessert which is generally some melon, watermelon and oranges are presented as the last serving. Finally, before they leave, those old people implore Allah to grant the newly married couple prosperity, health and a lot of children.

The other guests are generally young people and they are invited at night as well but this time to listen to a locally famous orchestra playing pop music. They drink tea, eat cakes and food like all the other guests, but they are allowed to sing, dance and clap, in brief to enjoy the wedding party fully because the more the people are happy the more successful the marriage becomes...

After the wedding party is over, the bride and groom become husband and wife and either they leave their parents' nests to live on their own; or the bride goes to live with the husband's parents and brothers and sisters. A new completely different life began full of responsibilities and worries.

Reviewed by Mr. Abdessalami
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