

Engagement Ceremony (Vagdana/Vara Raksha/Roka/Sagai)



Marriage is a sanctified bonding which unites together two souls through marital bliss. Avowing to be together through all the happiness and sorrows of life, the couple starts a new journey stepping into a vast arena of marital relationship. In the Indian custom, the newly shaped relationship of the two souls together must also be reinforced by the absolute blessings of the Lord. The Engagement Ceremony follow up to Marriage and so is considered as a blessed omen of conjugal relationship and marital bliss.

Vagdana is performed prior to the Tilak Ceremony as an official confirmation for the marriage. This ceremony is called many names (like Vagdana/Vara Raksha/Roka/Sagai) but they all symbolise the same thing.

So when the both families are aware of a couples intention to spend the rest of their lives together and after checking with their Pundit if they are compatible as a married couple the next step is the process called Roka ceremony... The literal translation of rok is to stop, halt, ban, prohibit. This ceremony is performed by both the families in order to publicly stop either families for looking for a further partner for their child...

This takes place at the girls house. This is a very simple ceremony but some families really make this a large ceremony which is rather unnecessary. Here the girls family present a token gift or some cash or kind, along with some sweets to the boy... Similarly the boy's family reciprocates in the same manner. Some families exchange rings and this is an optional.

As for the Sagai ceremony, the literal translation is betrothal ceremony. This is like a contract between the both families and a more elaborate ceremony than the roka ceremony. Here a Priest or a family member performs prayers to Lord Ganesh and Mother Gauri and then to the Nine Planets. Then the young lady's brother applies Tilak to the boy's forehead and the presents to him sweets and gifts. Then the young

man's family then presents clothes, fruits, sweets, and cash or kind to the young girl. Some families present jewellery as well.



In some families rings are exchanged and the rings that are exchanged denote a sacred bondage that require great amount of commitment and loyalty. A havan is also performed by some families. This is followed by either a lunch or dinner. Please do refrain from serving non-sattwic foods. These ceremonies are performed differently in different parts of the country and are even called by different names, such as aashirwad ceremony, chunni chadana, sagan ceremony, magni etc. However, the essence of all these ceremonies is the same. Besides, quite often, the date of the marriage is also decided and confirmed at these ceremonies. These ceremonies thus, conclude with the blessings of the elderly and the Almighty.

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Compiled for the upliftment of Sanathan Dharma
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