



“BEING WITH MY FAMILY ON THAT PRECIOUS DAY WAS A DREAM COME TRUE.”

DIVYA SHOKEEN AND BHAVRAJ KHALSA
July 28, 2018. Rancho Palos Verdes, California

Photography:
Duke Images

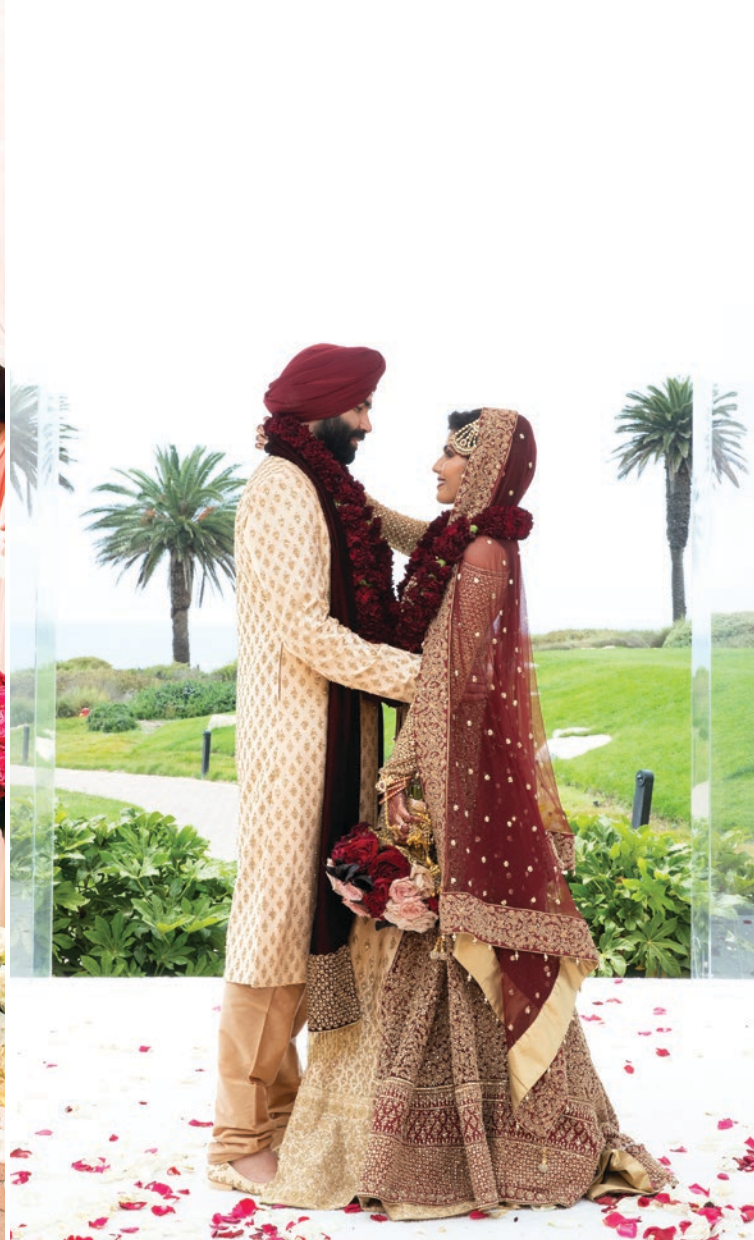
It was during Divya Shokeen's intern year of residency at UC Irvine when she first met Bhavraj Khalsa—a resident radiologist whose roommate introduced the pair. There was an obvious spark between them, and afterward Raj would often “stalk” Divya on the paging system, calling her for emergencies so they could see each other.

The couple's first date happened to take place only three days before Divya was scheduled to leave for her residency on the East Coast. That date, however, was an unforgettable one and they decided to stay in touch. Divya shares, “Due to numerous phone calls, voicemails, messages, FaceTime, and Google Chat, plus countless airline miles, trains, automobiles, and dermatology and radiology conferences, we saw each other enough to make our transcontinental, three-hour-time-difference, long-distance relationship a conceivable reality.”

After a year-and-a-half of dating, Divya had flown into LA for the weekend, so the two could drive down to San Diego for a friend's wedding. As it turned out, that weekend also included Raj's plan to propose in Balboa Park, and the engagement was to be solidified with a beautiful ring purchased from the same jeweler Raj's father had gone to for his mother's engagement ring.

“He was a groomsman at the wedding on Saturday morning and, in retrospect, seemed nervous all day,” shares Divya. “It rained on Sunday, and he later confessed that his initial plan for hang gliding down to Black's Beach had been wiped out. Fortunately, his backup plan was perfect. It was a beautiful afternoon as we walked through the park, although it seemed





odd to me at the time that someone was playing our favorite song. Raj started commenting on our relationship and our future, and before I realized this was the moment, he dropped down on one knee. A photographer hiding in the bushes took our picture, and our close friends were hiding at a nearby restaurant with champagne. We stayed for two hours and then rushed to meet my family, who were waiting for us at home with a big welcome reunion planned.”

Since the newly engaged couple was still living across the country from each other, they had an entire year-and-a-half to plan the perfect wedding. Divya was busy taking her boards and finishing up residency, when Raj finally moved back from his own residency in July of 2018—right before the big day.

“I am a minimalist,” Divya says, describing her vision for the wedding décor. “I don’t really love a bunch of flowers. I wanted it to be more elegant, so I was really big on having more colors, more chandeliers and a lot more candles. I wanted it to be whimsical.” With a lavish Indian wedding comprising of six scheduled events, there were several opportunities to bring all of the bride’s design and décor ideas to life, as each event featured its own theme.



On the first day, a Mehendi ceremony was held, followed by a Sangeet. The Sangeet had a Moroccan theme, with a rich color palette that created an ambiance much like a Manhattan club. There was also a private Haldi ceremony at the bride’s parents’ home, two wedding ceremonies—both Sikh and Hindi—and a grand reception at Terranea Resort. Throughout the festivities, the bride and groom wore a selection of custom designed outfits, and the bride couldn’t have been more thrilled to have celebrity makeup artist, Cherish Brooke Hill, as part of her glam squad.

Hosting the ceremonies and reception at Terranea made the weekend feel like a destination wedding, with the property’s secluded surroundings providing an ideal haven for three blissful days. “I grew up in Palos Verdes and it has always been a dream to get married overlooking the ocean,” Divya shares. “The venue was gorgeous and offered suites for both families. We wanted our families together for one weekend to enjoy an experience that felt like home away from home. Being with my family on that precious day was a dream come true.”

> **Written by Lauren Malamala**
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Location: **Terranea Resort** Rancho Palos Verdes, CA; Planner: **Elegant Events** Orange County, CA; Floral and Event Design: **White Lilac Inc.** Costa Mesa, CA; Makeup: **Cherish Brooke Hill**; Photography: **Duke Images** Los Angeles, CA