

## SKY LANTERN RELEASE CEREMONY

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Symbolizing good luck and prosperity, the *Bride and Groom* have elected watch their dreams for the future take flight on their wedding night. This deep symbolism is particularly amazing as they leave behind their individual courses in life to embark on a single journey together. This thought-provoking beauty of the moment will live forever in the hearts and minds of everyone in attendance.

*Optional - decide to invite your guests to launch their own floating lanterns, then make sure you provide colorful markers so they can write down their well wishes for your future. Guests could send off their lanterns at the end of the ceremony*

To give perspective, one source notes that sky lanterns first floated over China during New Year's celebrations in the 3rd century B.C. and also strategically used on the battlefield as an efficient means of communication.

After peace settled throughout the land, everyone from peasants to royalty began using the rice paper lanterns to thank the gods for their blessings, to cast away their fears and to declare their hopes for a prosperous future. Traditionally, sky lanterns are sent into the sky with written wishes attached, ranging from prayers for a good harvest to blessings for a happy marriage to requests for relief from life's worries. In Thailand, green lanterns are lit for personal growth while purple lanterns carry dreams of opportunity to the heavens.

It is believed that the longer and higher the lanterns float, the more likely the deities will receive your requests. The sky lantern ceremony has come to represent the releasing of one's deepest fears and desires. It is a symbolic cleansing, a letting go of everything that troubles you. It is also the beginning of a new, enlightened you, with the light illuminating the path of knowledge and righteousness.