

# happy 1<sup>st</sup> birthday, AWP!



*Couples strike a playful pose for the camera.*

1. Leticia Hsu, co-founder of AWP, delivers her welcome message.
2. Couples pose for the cameras.
3. Winning entries from the Garden of Eden photography contest.
4. Guests arrive in time for the event.
5. Covershots is all decked up for the big celebration.
6. Guests mingle after the show.

It was a sunny afternoon on 29 October 2009 when the who's who of the Malaysian wedding industry gathered together to celebrate the one year anniversary of The Association of Wedding Planners (AWP). As with all birthday celebrations, the first is always the most special.

The brainchild of Leticia Hsu of Events Wizard and Eileen Lui of Nupts & Such, AWP is an organisation designed to increase awareness of the wedding business and improve the professionalism of its members. As competition in the industry heats up, there is a need for good governance, to ensure that vendors are competing not on price but on quality of service. This is good news not just for industry players, but for couples too.

Celebrations began with a warm welcome message by AWP co-founder Leticia Hsu. The highlight of the event was a runway performance by the couples who had won the Garden of Eden photography competition held in August this year. Modelling fine bridal wear by That Special Occasion, each couple strutted their stuff to a medley of jazzy tunes, much to the delight of the crowd.



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### September 2009

Belinda flew back to Kuching just a week before the wedding ceremony. "I went back to handle all the last minute preparations and am particularly thankful for all the help I got from friends," she says. Despite her hectic schedule, Belinda designed and printed her church booklet cover with a friend. With the excess paper, she printed her own Thank You notes, attached her pre-wedding pictures and gave them to family and close friends as souvenirs.

### The Big Send-Off

Belinda's two girlfriends 'kidnapped' her for a week-long trip to Krabi, Thailand and her family held a dowry exchange ceremony two weeks prior to the reception.

### 3rd October 2009

The big day dawned early for Belinda and her family as they got ready to go off to St. Joseph's cathedral, her hometown church. She was wearing a Carven Ong mermaid-cut wedding gown which had French lace and a scalloped train.

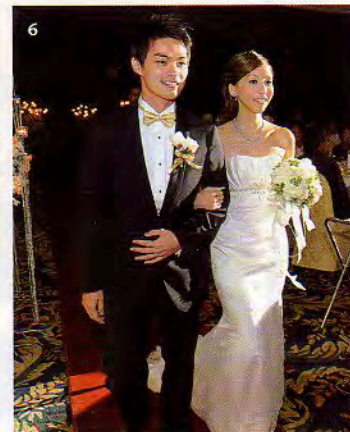
While the whole wedding was memorable, there were some moments that stood out for Belinda. "Yes, one moment stands out: when my page boy started wailing and refusing to walk down the aisle with the ring pillow that morning!" she says.

After failing to calm the page boy down, it was Belinda's turn to walk down the aisle with her father. Due to the panicky moment earlier, she forgot to draw the veil over her face. "Halfway, I realised my veil was still up. I asked my dad to quickly pull it down. It felt like ages before he finally got it right. We then continued down the aisle as if nothing had happened!"

Although Belinda thought the waterworks might suddenly flow during the exchange of vows, she managed to keep it all in. She laughingly tells us, "After all, you can't let tears, even if they are happy tears, ruin your makeup right?"

### 10th October 2009

There was great fun at the couple's KL reception when Joe and his entourage went over to Belinda's house to pick up the bride. "My friend Tania made Joe a 'contract' which he had to read out loud and agree to before he could get me out from my room. Some of the rules included putting up with my mood swings, eating everything I 'try' to cook and letting me know where he is at all times! He actually signed it!" says Belinda with a laugh.



3. Belinda gets her bridal look perfected before the big ceremony.
4. The bride poses with her adorable little flower girl.
5. Bridesmaids pose with pretty bouquets of peach and yellow roses.
6. Belinda and Joe make their grand entrance to the dinner reception.
7. The bride and groom toast to their future health, happiness and fertility!



# belinda's new beginning

Belinda Chee, 8TV Quickie host and model, is poised for a brand new start after tying the knot with long-time boyfriend, Joe Yeow.

PHOTOGRAPHY *Andy Kho/www.andykho.com and Eric Chow/Blink Studio*  
TEXT AND COORDINATION *Yan Yi Chang*

It has been over a month but when we meet Belinda, it is clear that she is still over the moon about her October wedding. The Kuching lass headed back to the church of her childhood in her hometown for the white wedding of her dreams. The wedding was followed by a tea ceremony for her family's side. One week later, the happy couple flew back to Kuala Lumpur for a tea ceremony for Joe's side of the family. Later that same evening, they held a gold-themed reception at the Grand Ballroom of Shangri-La Hotel Kuala Lumpur.

## The Proposal

"It was my birthday last year and he brought me on a weekend trip to Pangkor Laut Resort," she says. "During a romantic candlelight dinner by the beach, he gave me a birthday present. When I opened it, I saw a ring and the next thing I knew, he was down on one knee asking me to spend the rest of our birthdays together." Belinda, who is usually chatty and outgoing, was at a loss for words. "I cried and hugged him! I couldn't even say yes!"

## Planning the Wedding

The couple booked Belinda's childhood church, a restaurant in Kuching and Shangri-La Hotel Kuala Lumpur for the celebrations. Belinda relied on Leticia Hsu of Events Wizard to help her with the KL reception while her mother and a Kuching-based family friend assisted her with the Kuching ceremony.

Belinda and Joe decided on a gold theme colour and from there, plunged right into the thick of planning.

Throughout the whole process, Joe was as hands-on as Belinda herself. "He even agreed to my request of wearing a white suit to church!" she says.

## The Registration

The couple got registered six months after Joe proposed. "The date we picked was the date we started our courtship eight years ago," says Belinda.

## The Right Date

Belinda picked 10th of October simply because she liked the idea of a perfect 10 out of 10. The Saturday prior to that was chosen for the Kuching events. Although the couple did not consult the Chinese calendar, the dates they chose turned out to be pretty auspicious ones.



1. Belinda and her father before entering the church.
2. The bride is handed over to her husband-to-be.