

Anita Scott Celebrant – Wedding Ceremony Rituals

One of the wonderful aspects of a Celebrant-led ceremony is the opportunity to include a symbolic ritual that expresses unity in a meaningful way. These rituals create a beautiful, interactive moment that not only resonates with the couple but also engages family and friends who are sharing the day.

Many of these traditions have historical or cultural roots, but you also have the freedom to make them your own. With the guidance of your Celebrant, you can choose a ritual that reflects your love, your story, or your values.

Your chosen ritual might connect to your heritage or beliefs, or it could simply be something creative and heartfelt that feels right for you. Whatever you decide, it will add a unique and memorable touch to your ceremony.

There are countless symbolic rituals to explore—here are just a few of my personal favourites.



Tying the Knot - Handfasting

Handfasting is one of the most recognisable and meaningful rituals to include in a celebrant-led ceremony. Rooted in ancient Celtic tradition, it is often described as the original way of “tying the knot,” with history dating back thousands of years.

The ceremony itself is simple yet powerful. The couple places their palms together while cords or ribbons are gently wrapped around their joined hands. These can be tied in a simple knot or something more symbolic, such as an infinity knot, while words of blessing or commitment are spoken.

Many couples choose to personalise the ritual by including vows, exchanging rings, or inviting family and friends to take part in the tying of the ribbons. Each ribbon colour carries its own special meaning, giving you endless opportunities to weave personal symbolism into your ceremony.

Over the years, I’ve helped couples design handfasting rituals that are as unique as their love stories. One couple chose the vibrant colours of the Pride flag, another selected the red and white of Japan – the traditional colours of marriage – complete with delicate crane charms to symbolise fortune and longevity. These thoughtful touches create ceremonies that are not only visually beautiful but deeply meaningful too



Unity Candle Ceremony

The Unity Candle Ceremony is a beautiful and timeless way to celebrate the coming together of two people, and often two families, within a wedding or commitment ceremony.

In its traditional form, each partner lights a taper candle to represent their individual life, before using these flames to ignite one larger candle, known as the Unity Candle. This gentle act creates a powerful and symbolic moment: two separate journeys merging into one shared future.

Many couples also choose to involve loved ones, such as parents or children, who may light additional candles to reflect the joining of families. Adding a reading, piece of music, or a few personal words makes the ritual even more meaningful and unique to your story.

What I love about the Unity Candle Ceremony is its versatility. Whether set in a barn, a garden, or a small and intimate space, the soft glow of candlelight brings an atmosphere of warmth and reflection. It creates a natural pause in the day, a moment to breathe deeply and honour the promises being made.



The Shot Ceremony

Looking for something playful and a little different to include in your ceremony? The Shot Ceremony is a modern ritual that's growing in popularity, and it's guaranteed to get everyone smiling.

The idea is simple: during the ceremony, the couple shares a shot together. It could be tequila, whiskey, limoncello, or even a non-alcoholic alternative if that suits you better. The drink becomes a symbol of joy, courage, and the spirit of facing the adventure of marriage side by side.

Think of it this way: marriage, like a good shot, can be bold, surprising, and best enjoyed together. Some couples even invite their guests to join in with their own shot or toast, turning the moment into a shared celebration of love and laughter.

The beauty of this ritual is that it can be tailored to you. Perhaps you choose a drink that has personal meaning—something you shared on your first date, or a favourite discovered while travelling. Some couples even have their shots served in customised glasses, which then become keepsakes from their wedding day. Light hearted yet meaningful, the Shot Ceremony is a wonderful way to bring personality into your celebration. After all, love deserves to be honoured in a way that feels authentically you, and if that means raising a glass of tequila during the ceremony, then cheers to that!



Sand Ceremony

A Sand Ceremony is a meaningful ritual where individuals pour coloured sands into a single central vessel, creating a striking and lasting keepsake. The flowing sands represent unity, connection, and the blending of lives. This beautiful tradition is often included in weddings, naming ceremonies, and even gender affirmation ceremonies.

Each person taking part has a small container filled with sand in a chosen colour, symbolising their individuality or role within the ceremony. A larger, central vessel is placed at the heart of the ritual, ready to hold the combined sands.

One by one, participants pour their sands into the central vessel. As the colours layer and intertwine, they create a one-of-a-kind design that represents the merging of lives, identities, and commitments. This moment can be made even more meaningful by adding personal vows, a reading, or a piece of music.

The distinct layers of sand show that while each person keeps their individuality, they are also part of something greater. Once the sands have been poured, they cannot be separated— symbolising the strength and permanence of the bond created