

## **Bridal Show attracts large crowds in New York**

Ajay Ghosh, May 2006

A colorful DulhanExpo Bridal Show was held on Long Island in New York on April 9, 2006, attracting large crowds, estimated to be 2,000 people from the region. The 13th Bridal Expo by the pioneers in South Asian Bridal Shows, Dulhan Inc. was held at the Huntington/Long Island Hilton Hotel. The huge demand of Bridal Shows in Long Island was not being met by any other exposition company, forcing Dulhan Inc. to turn this annual phenomenon into a twice-a-year event. Today this event, co-hosted by Sitar Restaurant, has become a force to reckon with, in Tri-State Desi Wedding Industry and the only one of it's kind in the entire New York State.

Numerous benefits offered by the organizers and the 60 participating vendors was enjoyed by each of the participants. The highlights of the show included Live Performance by Belly Twins from California, Fashion Show by some world renowned designers, 21 item complimentary buffet by Sitar Restaurant, Guest of Honor Kamal Dandona of Bollywood Awards, \$10,000 in free raffles including a Carnival Cruise to Bahamas and much more.

The organizers Sumit and Shikha Arya are the founders and heads of the International "Association of South Asian Wedding Professionals", with 3000 plus members worldwide. Sumit Arya has been serving the brides as a photographer, a mandap decorator and a wedding planner for 20 years and owns the 'Shamiyana Wedding Center' in Iselin, New Jersey. Shikha Arya besides organizing DulhanExpos, also is the fastest rising Bridal Make-up Artist on the horizon and owns the 'Moulin Rouge Salon & Spa' in Roselle, NJ. This makes Dulhan Inc. the only company that stands at the crossroads serving both the Brides and the Vendors equally, fairly and without any conflict of interest.

The live performance by BellyTwins was the highlight of the evening. Audience's jaws were seen hitting the floor as they showcased their dance talent. BellyTwins are obviously available to dance at weddings and private events, that's why they were seen at the DulhanExpo. Neena and Veena are world famous belly dancers who have made a huge name for themselves in the mainstream America. They have been interviewed in practically every network talk show and appeared in numerous television shows and Hollywood movies. They teach Middle Eastern and South Asian dance forms through their school 'Eastern Dance Company'. They are also the pioneers in Fitness Instruction via Belly Dancing. They have produced 5 instructional

DVDs and written a book 'The way of the belly'.

The fashion ramp at the DulhanExpo saw a huge lineup of Designers and Boutiques this time. A perfect amalgamation of culture, tradition, and modernism emerged out of the treasure-coves of designers like Karamjit Bhinder & Shahrukh Zainab and Boutiques like Charms Couture & Khubsoorat Libas. The jewelry that complimented the amazing designs were collections by Shreya Jewelers, AVS Jewels & Karol Bagh Jewelers all from Hicksville, NY. Beautiful models that showcased these designs are associated with the modeling agency 'Today's Model'. The show was choreographed by Shikha Arya & Karamjit Bhinder.

Crowds got serenaded by the mystical sounds of Anand Patole's Tabla and Anjana's Sitar, as you walk into the reception area, a standard warm welcome is to be expected at each DulhanExpo. Next DulhanExpo in New Jersey will also see Ramesh Maraj melting away the food court area with his sexy saxophone sounds. The April 9 expo also had the towering personality of the master dhol player Boota 'Sher' Sheikh, who gave a sample of his international level talent on the stage. Saurabh Jain of Dhoom Entertainment, Ritesh Rathod of Medley Entertainment and Hina Trivedi entertained the crowds with their silky voices fit for weddings, garbas, sangeets and even Bollywood.

Like always Bridal Pampering was on top of the agenda at the DulhanExpo. If free admission and free parking was not enough, 21 item complimentary buffet by Sitar Restaurant topped it off. In addition to that, complimentary hot beverages were served by the Hilton Long Island. Now, if all this sounds too good to be true, imagine free mehndi applications by Ruchi's Mehndi, Dulhan Mehndi, Beauty Zone, Khubsoorat Nina Lamba's Salon, Moulin Rouge Salon & Spa and Nina Doshi. Nikki, Nadi, Pam & Shikha of Moulin Rouge Salon and Dulhan by Shikha Arya went to the extent of offering free mehndi, free make-overs, free massages and free eyebrow threadings right on the spot. Now which Bridal Show can top that?

Before the 1st Annual International Grand DulhanExpo scheduled for December 3, 2006, taking place at the Garden State Exhibit Center, NJ, takes the US bridal shows to the level of Indian and British shows, the 13th DulhanExpo already made some technological advancements unheard of at US bridal shows. Thanks to Teyaari.com, the registration area was completely computerized for the first time, where the brides and casual visitors sat down and keyed in their information. This also revolutionized the raffle system. The fashion show ramp & the stage was lit up by the state of the art lighting system and two huge screens displaying the names of the designers and other credits, courtesy of DJ Kucha and company.

\$10,000 worth of gifts and discounts were raffled off at the 13th DulhanExpo. All that registered online as well as at the walk-in registration area were automatically entered into the raffle. Some major discounts and gift offers included \$1000 discount from Sumit Arya Photography, \$2000 discount from Dave's Photo, three huge silk flower arrangements by Paragon Designs, An outfit worth \$200 from Khubsoorat Libas and many more. Leila Rizvi of Brooklyn, New York was the proud winner of the Grand Raffle "A 4 day/3 night trip for 2 to the Bahamas aboard Carnival Cruiselines", courtesy of Steve Pollock, an independent distributor of Royal Prestige Health Systems, a line of premier kitchen utensils.

Even if you visited this event, we encourage you attend the other upcoming events by DulhanExpo to maximize your choices among vendors. If you have never visited a DulhanExpo, then you don't know what you have been missing. You don't have to be getting married to attend these events... many casual visitors frequent these shows for fun, fashion shows, food, entertainment and wholesale priced fashion and jewelry shopping.

The 14th DulhanExpo is scheduled for April 30,, at the Doubletree Hotel, Newark Airport, New Jersey. Some unique attractions are... Fashion Designs of Kavita Agrawal, traveling especially from Kathmandu, Nepal; Bellydancing by the Fusion Bellydancers troupe of Dance Soul Company; Saxophone serenades of Ramesh Maraj, Drum beats of Dhol Master Madan Madi and the live music of Saurabh Jain & Ritesh Rathod. Food samples being tasted are courtesy of Royal Albert Palace, Shahnavaaz Palace and a few more yet to be confirmed. Another trip aboard Carnival Cruiselines to BAHAMAS is being offered by Royal Prestige for the lucky raffle winner.

The 1st Annual International Grand DulhanExpo scheduled for December 3 at the Garden State Exhibit Center in Somerset, New Jersey will showcase 200-300 wedding, home and fashion related vendors across a huge 80,000 square feet floor. The day will be saturated with the trade show, practical wedding planning seminars, soothing spiritual workshops, world class performances by wedding industry related talents, top international designers, a mega food court and huge giveaways.