

Derek Justin Lee

and

Joshua Israel Rozovsky

Welcome

Shalom! (Hello and Peace to You!) We are honored you are joining in our *simcha* (our joyful celebration) on the occasion of our *chatunah* (wedding)!

Please take a Kippah

It is customary for men (and women who choose to do so) cover their heads during the ceremony. We invite you to take a *kippah* (a skullcap also called a *yarmulke*). These are for you to keep and are engraved on the inside with our names in both English and Hebrew and the date in the Hebrew and secular calendars.

Honoring our Heritage

Our ceremony represents our heritages coming together: Chinese and Jewish. Joshua's heritage is primarily of European Jewry (*Ashkenazi*), with Spanish and Middle Eastern Jewish (*Sephardic*) ancestry on his mother's side. Derek's heritage is Chinese with extended family coming from Hong Kong, Japan, Canada and around the world to celebrate with us.

Our ceremony and preparations have been based in the Reform denomination of Judaism. You may notice that we do not have any dairy food, pork, or shellfish. This is to recognize the Jewish custom of *kashrut* (dietary rules) that prohibit pork and shellfish and mixing the meat of land animals with milk products.

The Ketubah

The *ketubah* is a traditional Jewish wedding contract. It outlines Derek's and Joshua's visions and responsibilities of their marriage. It is signed by Joshua and Derek, at least two witnesses, and Rabbi Jen Gubitz. *Ketubot* (plural) can be ornately decorated, framed, and are displayed prominently in the home.

Derek and Joshua chose a *ketubah* illustrated with Gingko leaves, symbolizing love, long life, overcoming hardship, and resilience.

The Wedding Ceremony

Chupah - The wedding ceremony occurs under a *chupah*, a temporary structure, whose roof is formed traditionally with a *talis*, a ritual fringed garment. A *talis* is also worn and wraps Derek & Joshua together during the ceremony.

Sheva Brachot - Seven blessings are spoken and honored guests and members of our family share in this reading. Our Seven Blessings are a modern version, reflecting our shared values while honoring and recognizing the traditional seven blessings from ancient times.

Breaking the glass – towards the end of the ceremony Derek and Joshua will smash two glass vessels, followed by immediate celebration. The glass-breaking carries multiple meanings. The breaking of the glass for us symbolizes longevity, sorrow, and commitment to each other:

- ✧ A forever relationship – just as the glasses are broken forever.
- ✧ Sadness – even in good times we remember the destruction and calamities of the past.
- ✧ Commitment through adversity - despite tough times – we come out the other side celebrating life together.

Mazel Tov – We invite you to shout out “*Mazel Tov!*” after we break the glass. This takes us right from the scene of breaking the glass into a scene of celebration and goodness for the future. *Mazel Tov* means Good Destiny, Good Fortune, or Good Luck.

Blessings over Wine, Bread and the Washing of Hands

Before we eat, we will ritually wash our hands (*netilat yadayim*) and share a blessing over wine and Challah bread. We are grateful for incredible food and health and our ability to share it with you!

The Lion Dance

The *Lion Dance* is performed by a group of performers to signify the bringing of good fortune and good luck to Derek and Joshua and to all in attendance. The lion is a powerful symbol in both Chinese and Jewish culture.

Honoring our Parents

As with the *Tea Ceremony* we wish to again thank our parents and ancestors who brought us to this day and helped mold us into the men we are. Joshua will dance with his aunt Ann to honor his late mother Fay (of blessed memory), who passed away in 2020.

The Hora Dance

Immediately after we celebrate our gratitude for the food after eating (*birkat hamazon*), we invite you to participate in the *hora*. In this traditional Jewish wedding dance, you will dance around the couple and help lift them on chairs. Derek and Joshua ask that you please try not to drop them!

Leave Us a Message!

Help us remember this auspicious day in our lives! We have both a bound guestbook and an audio guestbook. We welcome you to leave messages to us in both the written and audio guestbooks so we can read and hear your words years into the future.

Gifts and Donations

We are grateful for all the gifts and donations we have already received! If you have gifts, cards, or donations in our honor, please place them on the marked gift table.

In Memoriam

We again wish to reflect our great respect and love for those who cannot celebrate with us. In the Jewish tradition you may see us honor the names of the deceased with the letters ז"ל (transliterated as Z"l). This is an acronym for *Zikhrone Livrakha* (“of blessed memory”). We invite you to visit the memorial outside the reception hall.