

take5 slice of life



My £3,000 wedding SMILE

Monika Patel, a 26-year-old dental hygienist from London, shuddered at the thought of smiling on her wedding day.

I grinned into the mirror. Definitely yellowish – it was the only way to describe them.

I was a dental hygienist, yet my teeth were far from pearly white. When I talked to clients in the surgery I tried not to open my mouth too much and was so relieved to get my mask on.

Even my fiancé, Hiran, 32, had whiter teeth than me, and he smoked and drank coffee.

Last summer, when Hiran and I were planning our wedding, I knew I should do something to add some sparkle to my smile.

We were having a typical



Me and Hiran

Indian wedding, which meant eight days of celebrations and a whole series of outfits.

For the register office part, I'd ordered an ivory silk dress. On the day it arrived, I tried it on – it was beautiful. Then I caught sight of my teeth. My ivory dress was whiter than my smile.

That was it. I booked myself in for laser teeth whitening, plus veneers. I had to fit the treatment around work, so it took three weeks of appointments before the final result – a bright white smile.

It cost £3,000, but was worth every penny, especially when our wedding cost £45,000, not including my outfits and jewellery.

On the day of the Indian wedding ceremony, there were 1,300 guests. I ate some grapes and strawberries, as the bride is not allowed to eat anything other than fruit until after the wedding.

I had my hair and make-up



Me in my wedding sari

done, and was helped into my sari and wedding jewellery.

The soles of my hands and feet had already been painted with henna at a special party two days before. So, you can see, with attention to detail like that, I couldn't ignore my teeth.

Hiran and I have been married for a year now, and I still have a sparkling smile. I'm a convert.

If I ever have a bride-to-be in my hygienist's chair, I say, 'so, are you happy with your smile?'

● Monica was treated at Aqua Dental Spa. Call 020 7935 5332 or visit aquadentalspa.com.

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