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Inside The 'Halo' Wedding

From the cake to the vows, everything led back to the couple's favorite video game.

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The "Halo" bride and groom, Desirai Labrada and John Henry

Photo: MTV News

ORLANDO, Florida — The bride wore white, the groom a tuxedo. The man marrying them wore green armor and a helmet, playing the role of video game hero Master Chief.

This was, possibly, [the world's first "Halo" wedding](#).

On January 17, Desirai Labrada and John Henry were pronounced not "man and wife," but "teammates for life" in a theater at the Orlando Science Center that hours later would be converted to a venue for a "Rock Band" video game jam.

When Desirai was asked if she thought she would ever have a [video game-themed wedding](#), she said, "No, not at all! But I'm happy that I am, because it says a lot about how I'm a kid on the inside, and I would always like to be that way. Life should be fun."

The ceremony was not only a milestone in Desirai and John's life, but also a featured attraction at Otronicon, the video game development festival held each year to promote Desirai's alma mater, Full Sail University. Amid exhibits teaching the basics of computer programming or illustrating the history of Apple computers — as well as more permanent Science Center installations like an orange-picking booth and a tank of live alligators — were signs advertising the nuptials.

MTV News has covered [the backstory of this "Halo" wedding](#). Desirai lived in Brooklyn, New York. John was in Melbourne, Florida. They met in 2004 playing "Halo 2" online, formed a friendship, fell in love, and she relocated to Orlando and enrolled at Full Sail. She got the idea for a "Halo" wedding and floated it before he even proposed. He was into it. And Full Sail, which Desirai asked to host the wedding, found sponsors to supply the rings, the flowers and many other elements. On her wedding day, Desirai told MTV News that the couple didn't have to pay for much of the ceremony themselves.

The day before the wedding, John and Desirai had stayed up playing "Halo 3." In the game, they wore the ultra-rare Recon armor, which the "Halo" makers at Bungie Studios had bequeathed to them as a wedding gift.

On the morning of the wedding, John told MTV News that he wasn't all that nervous until he spotted the man in the Master Chief armor, Trey Morabito. That's when it hit him that he wasn't just getting married, but he was doing so in such an unusual way.

The ceremony started just after 1 p.m. in the Science Center's theater. Onstage, a screenshot from Ivory Tower, one of the wedding couple's favorite "Halo" levels, was projected, and a string quartet played songs from the game's soundtrack. Atop an incline of stadium seating, Master Chief began his walk down to the stage followed by John and his groomsmen, their ties marked with the winged-sword emblem of John's "Halo" character. Bridesmaids — including a matron of honor who just months before had confessed that she didn't know who Master Chief was — proceeded to their positions. And then, instead of "Here Comes the Bride," Desirai entered to the dramatic score of the "Halo" menu music. Bride and groom met onstage. Master Chief read his script.

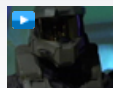
A warning to anyone else considering a "Halo" wedding: A man wearing a mouth-covering Master Chief helmet can be hard to understand. Thus, John and Desirai had some trouble hearing the vows they were asked to repeat.

Yet the couple soldiered through. They exchanged rings, mixed different-colored sand into a vase, kissed and walked off.

After the ceremony, the newlyweds did several media interviews and greeted Otronicon guests before heading to a private reception. Seating arrangements were displayed on a poster board printed to resemble a stack of TVs showing "Halo"

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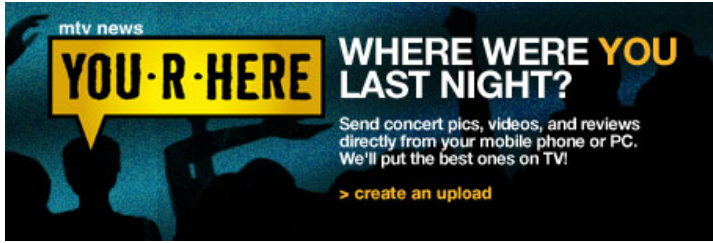


[A Match Made In 'Halo'](#)

matchmaking screens (you'd get it if you played the game). The wedding favors were candles designed to look like the game's purple "sticky" grenades — "stuck to you for life," as it were.

The couple danced and ate some "Halo" cake. If you loved each other and loved "Halo," this was the perfect day.

Check out the [Multiplayer blog](#), updated daily, for even more gaming coverage.



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