

Event Plan: Finnish-Singaporean Cross-cultural Wedding

Elena Nikulina

Author(s) Elena Nikulina	
Degree programme Hospitality, Tourism and Experience Management	
Thesis title Event Plan: Finnish-Singaporean Cross-cultural Wedding	Number of pages and appendix pages 41 + 31
<p>This work is a product type thesis and the outcome of it is a Finnish-Singaporean Wedding Plan. The product was created to help an intercultural couple to plan their wedding in Finland and take into consideration elements of both cultures. Author of the thesis was approached by the Finnish-Singaporean couple and asked to act as their wedding planner. The aim of the work is to create an informative, useful and inspiring event plan that can be used by the couple to organize their wedding. The Plan includes a lot of visual examples for a better understanding of suggested wedding style. The Wedding Plan will be evaluated by the mentioned above couple. This wedding plan can also be used as a template for other cross-cultural, and not only, weddings as it takes into consideration different cultural aspects and suggests many ideas on wedding implementation.</p> <p>The theoretical part of the thesis is focused on event management, wedding planning, and cultural dimensions' studies. In addition to that, the author has a good experience and knowledge of wedding industry as she worked for an event planning company in Italy. The author divided the theoretical background of her project in two parts: Event Planning and Impacts of Cultures on Weddings. The first part focuses on Event management and Wedding planning studies, and the second theoretical part is based on Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory. The methods that were used in this work are the desk research and the qualitative interview conducted with the Finnish-Singaporean couple.</p> <p>The Wedding Plan is based on the author's Framework. It includes the most essential wedding elements, sources that help to support it from the theoretical point of view and comments by the author. To create the Wedding Plan File, the author has used Canva – a graphic design tool. In the Wedding Plan, author collected the most important details that couple would need to know to implement their wedding. The plan includes vendor suggestion list for each wedding element that is stated, useful information and webpages, tips and various mood boards for a better illustration.</p> <p>The final product includes information and suggestions on: wedding ceremony type, documentation, wedding venue, wedding reception, catering, wedding cake, floral decoration, music, wedding colours, invitations, wedding attire, bridal look, and budget. All suggestions that are presented in the Wedding Plan were influenced by Finnish and Singaporean cultural aspects, thus, many small details were taken into consideration to avoid any cultural misunderstanding.</p>	
Keywords event management, cross-cultural wedding, Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory	

Table of contents

1	Introduction	1
1.1	Objectives	2
1.2	Cross-cultural Wedding Plan	2
1.3	Methods	3
1.4	Key definitions.....	3
2	Event Planning and Impacts of Culture on weddings.....	5
2.1	Event management	6
2.2	Wedding planning	9
2.2.1	Factors that influence modern weddings	10
2.2.2	Wedding ceremony types.....	11
2.2.3	Wedding Timelines.....	12
2.2.4	Demand for a Wedding Planner	15
2.2.5	Role of a Wedding Planner	17
2.3	Cultural Dimensions	19
2.3.1	Comparison of Finland and Singapore	21
2.3.2	Cross-cultural Weddings and their challenges.....	25
2.4	Own Framework.....	26
3	Creating an Intercultural wedding plan	28
3.1	Author's journey – from student to a wedding planner.....	29
3.2	Wedding Plan.....	30
3.3	Methods	32
3.4	Limitations, Challenges, and Risks.....	32
3.5	Evaluation	34
4	Discussion.....	35
4.1	The Thesis Process	35
4.2	Learning Outcome.....	36
	References	37
	Appendices	40
	Appendix 1. Qualitative Interview	40
	Appendix 2. Own Framework	42
	Appendix 3. Finnish – Singaporean Wedding Plan	43

1 Introduction

Planning a wedding can be very challenging, a planner needs to receive a detailed information, wishes and feedback from the couple and their families to implement a successful wedding. When it comes to cross-cultural marriages, the task becomes even more difficult. The wedding should be planned in a way that both the cultures are well presented, and norms of both the families are fully entertained. Culture is a deeply valuable and important thing for many people, the failure of accurately presenting the cultures involved in the event, can cause serious issues and even a damage to the family and guests.

Modern weddings became much more complex compared to the past. Globalization, economic growth, new education models, influence of media and celebrities caused a worldwide growing demand for professional wedding planners (Daniels & Loveless 2014, 4). As consequence, the number of cross-cultural marriages has remarkably increased worldwide over the last years. A research conducted across United States by the Pew Research Center demonstrated that during 2010, overall, more than a quarter of weddings in each racial and ethnic group were cross-cultural. The percentage of such weddings doubled between 1980 (6.7 percent) and 2010 (15 percent) (Wang, W 2012, 8.).

This project aims to provide an intercultural couple with the wedding plan that will help to face challenges normally occurring during the wedding implementation. The author of this thesis acts as a wedding planner. In March 2017, the idea to create such wedding plan was proposed to the author by Finnish-Singaporean couple. Considering the fact, that there are not so many studies and work on this topic, the author found it very interesting. The work was done in the hopes of implementing an event plan for a cross-cultural wedding that will be used by them in future for their wedding organization. To make the plan, the author used her knowledge and experience of working in event planning agency in Italy. This thesis is product-oriented, and the final product is an event plan for the Finnish-Singaporean wedding taking place in Finland.

The couple for which this plan was created live in Helsinki, but both have an experience of living abroad. The bride is Finnish, however she spent her childhood in the United States. The groom has lived for four years in Helsinki, although, he is originally from Singapore. The wedding will take place in Porvoo, Finland which is the hometown of the bride. Overall, fifty guests will participate the ceremony including the family members from both sides. The author was asked to produce and optimise the wedding plan which would be suitable for all the guests despite their different cultural background.

1.1 Objectives

The primary aim of this thesis was to provide a Finnish-Singaporean couple with an event plan for their wedding in Finland. The event plan includes all the necessary information, descriptions of wedding elements and suggestion of various wedding vendors. Since this wedding plan includes many different options and ideas, it can also be used by any other couple.

The first objective is to take into consideration both cultures and create the wedding plan that will help to avoid any risks. When planning a cross-cultural wedding it is important to remember that some cultural aspects may influence the expectations and behaviour at the wedding. Singaporean culture, for example, has some restrictions and rules that need to be considered to avoid misunderstanding. The second objective is to create such plan that will be easy to read and follow, so couple will be able to organize the wedding themselves. The presence of too much text could push away the reader, thus author tried to make it informative but at the same time visually attractive and interesting to read. The plan includes a lot of images, tips, suggestions and necessary information. The third objective was to provide couple with a practical information, such as steps that need to be taken while registering the marriage. Since the groom is a citizen of Singapore, some additional steps are required to be done, so the wedding plan will inform couple about the necessary procedures. The fourth and fifth objectives were to create a style for the wedding and find the best vendors for it. The wedding plan includes the list of vendors for each wedding element, mood boards as visual examples of the style and different recommendations from the author.

1.2 Cross-cultural Wedding Plan

The Cross-cultural Wedding plan is the final product of this thesis. The plan was created to help the Finnish-Singaporean couple to organize their wedding. The plan is as a guide that couple should follow when planning their wedding. In the case of this work, the author performed as a wedding planner. The wedding Plan for an Intercultural Wedding should take into consideration cultural aspects, and present the ideas that will suit both cultures.

The wedding plan includes vendors' suggestion for each wedding element, useful information and webpages, tips and various mood boards as a visual example. The author aimed to make it useful but also visually beautiful. Mood boards play an essential role in the plan, it helps to see what is suggested and how it can be implemented. While creating the plan, the author focused on details and wanted to make it as perfect as possible. An Intercultural Wedding plan will present the following information:

- Wedding Ceremony suggestion
- Wedding ceremony mood board
- Wedding venues
- Catering companies
- Wedding reception mood board
- Wedding cake history and ideas
- Bakers
- Wedding cake mood board
- Music (duo that could be hired)
- Wedding invitations (mood board and vendor)
- Wedding dress store and stylist
- Budget

1.3 Methods

The Wedding Plan was created using a desk and qualitative researches. To write a theoretical part and framework of this thesis the author read and analysed different books, research papers, articles, handbooks, annual reports, statistics, journals. Choosing the most relevant and modern material and conducting a successful desk research was important, as the theoretical background is one of the biggest parts of this work.

Wedding planning requires a lot of information from the couple who is planning to get married. To collect all the necessary information and create a truly special wedding plan, the author chose to have a qualitative research in the form of semi-structured interview conducted with the Finnish-Singaporean couple. The Qualitative interview was chosen over quantitative because information that was required had to include personal opinions, feelings and be focused on descriptive answers (Research Methodology 2016). Author used her professional experience and online sources such blogs, wedding checklists, Pinterest and journals to prepare the semi-structured interview questions. To create the wedding plan author had to know as many details as possible.

1.4 Key definitions

The key definitions of this thesis are: event management, cross-cultural wedding and Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions theory. Since this work is focussed on planning an event, event management would be one of the main key definitions. Event management is a phenomenon which defines the process which is helpful in providing guidance and direction to the event in such a manner that the event becomes more efficient and effective (Dowson & Bassett 2015,15).

The outcome of this thesis is an Event Plan for a Finnish-Singaporean Wedding. Another key term of this thesis is a cross-cultural wedding. Anything comparing, involving or relating two or more countries with different cultures can be described as cross-cultural. A wedding is the ceremony joining two together in association (Merriam-Webster 2017.), however, a Cross-cultural wedding takes place only when two people who represent different cultures get married (Daniels & Loveless 2014).

The third key term is a Hofstede's Cultural dimensions theory. Professor Geert Hofstede is well known for his pioneering studies on cross-cultural groups, organizations and cultural dimensions. One of his most famous works is a cultural dimensions theory named the Hofstede model of national culture, conducted by Geert Jan Hofstede himself together with Michael Minkov. (Hofstede Insights 2017.)

2 Event Planning and Impacts of Culture on weddings

Couples engaging in an intercultural marriage are prone to face many unique challenges. While the couple can benefit from aspects of, and the mixing of, two or more cultures, this can also cause issues for the couple and anything they do together (e.g. planning a wedding). As there are so many different cultures in the world, and an even greater number of mixed cultures, there is no right way to approach the topic of planning an event catering to the needs of multiple cultures. Marriage itself is a union of different families and people with possibly very different mind-sets. The various scenarios involving the mixing of culture, before and after marriage, can be new and unfamiliar to the couple. Also, to be noted is that each couple behaves differently. When it comes to two different cultures, cultural and regional differences are also added to the normal situation thus making it more sensitive to handle. (Romano, 2008.)

It is beneficial for people indulging in such affairs to get a pre-marriage understanding of their partner's culture and evaluate the intercultural differences for a better understanding of their partner and their family. However, the main goal of this journey is to plan a marriage ceremony in such a way that both families are satisfied and their guests are entertained in the way they like.

In this modern age, as people are becoming busier and more committed to their careers, they may not find as much time for addressing issues of personal lives, the institution of marriages and other celebrations. This has led to the rise of event planners who offer their professional services in organizing such events according to requirements of their clients. Event management has become an important field of study and people are turning towards it because it is offering quite bright prospects in the future. (Daniels & Loveless 2014, 4.)

Planning a marriage event can be challenging and the planners need a lot of feedback from the family to make the successful execution of their wishes. When it comes to intercultural marriages, the task becomes even more perplexing. The event is required to be planned in such a way that both the cultures are well presented, and norms of both the families are fully entertained. This involves a lot of detail starting from decoration to the cuisines served at the ceremony; the colour scheme followed and many other minor details. (Daniels & Loveless 2014, 66-67.) As culture is a deeply valuable and important thing for many people, the failure of accurately and respectfully presenting the cultures involved can cause serious issues and even irreparable damage to the family and guests.

Weddings hold a significant amount of importance for the couple, their family, and their friends. In this regard, the importance of making the wedding an event that will be remembered fondly and there is no negativity related to the event. The fact that there is a need for hiring professionals clearly shows the importance of event management in weddings and the next chapter will be more explanatory on the significance of event management.

As previously mentioned, marriage - is a union of two people that also includes their family members. Uniting two families and planning a wedding will most likely require considering different opinions, and in cross-cultural marriages, it will need to integrate two or more cultures. Understanding the culture of a partner, planning a wedding according to traditions of each nationality can be very challenging and stressful. It requires a professional that knows the aspects of such event organisation and could help the couple to create a truly successful and meaningful event. The next chapter will begin with introduction and discussion of events, its management process, event types and phases for a better understating of wedding planning.

2.1 Event management

The concept of an event can be understood as a particular occurrence taking place at a specific time and venue which may or may not include the participation of individuals. 'A gathering of human beings, generally lasting from a few hours to a few days, designed to celebrate, honour, discuss, sell, teach about, encourage, observe, or influence human endeavours.' (Matthews, 2008)

Event management is a phenomenon which defines the process which is helpful in providing guidance and direction to the event in such a manner that the event becomes more efficient and effective. (Dowson & Bassett 2015,15.) When it comes to organizing professional/major events, improvisation should be avoided. The importance of good event organization is emphasized when failures and mistakes happen. Sometimes this sector or these professionals are not valued or respected, as people feel their services are not needed. While event organization is possible by amateurs and people with limited skills and experience, they run the greater risk of failure. Hiring a professional with skills in proper protocol knowledge, supplier market, organizational methods, an organized mind and good training is a good way to minimize problems and stress during the event planning process.

In the process of event management, the following three paths might take place:

Informational path

It includes the sequence of events for analysis of the provision of the services. This will be necessary to gain the understanding of what is being expected in a particular event. Further, the information gathered will be used to make the strategic plan that can make sure there are minimum issues in the event. As an example, when an event manager knows the flow of the event there will be less hassle in the follow-up of the event.

Warning path

In this path, the limits and expectations of events are identified which enables to gauge the status of an event. In other words, this path will make sure that the event manager does not waiver off the requirement of the event. Since there are so many aspects of the event to be limited to the primary ones can save resources and make the event more efficient. For example, creating a set budget for the event will limit unnecessary spending.

Exception

Here the unforeseen, exceptional situations of the event are planned. This path can be taken as the troubleshooting of the event in case something happens that was not considered before. There are many examples that can be quoted here like the music band that was selected could not get their air tickets on time and on the shortest notice there must be an alternative that could save the event from failure (Brewster, 2010.)

Types of events

To understand the classifications of events, and how it is usually categorised, the types of events will be discussed in the following subchapter. There are no limits for types of events, however, there are some major categories that are as followed. According to the Getz' Typology of Events (Getz, D 2007) method, events can be categorized as follows:

- Cultural celebrations: festivals, carnivals, and religious events
- Business & trade: meetings, business shows, networking events and product launches
- Arts and entertainment: concerts, performances, awards performances
- Educational & scientific: conferences, seminars, training
- Political & state: inauguration ceremonies, political summits, Royal occasions and state visits
- Private events: parties, weddings, family events, birthdays

- Recreational: games, outdoor activities, adventure activities
- Sport competition: Individual/team, amateur/professional, local/international

Being a private event manager is a challenging job, consisting of many responsibilities and often involving dealing with difficult clients. A cross-cultural wedding or any other complex event that should take into consideration many special aspects, is a good example of a demanding and difficult private event.

As in the case of planning a cross-cultural event, manager has to cater for a completely different types of event attendees. Different cultures usually mean that there will be different types of catering and food, plus there will be a need for different type of ambiance as there are cultural differences that cannot be ignored. The planning stage of such an event is crucial, as many issues can be foreseen by the event planner, and thus avoided.

Phases of event planning

Each event organisation has a beginning and ending, however it also has the process in between. The following subchapter will discuss the phases of event planning. When a special event is planned, it should engage maximum possible attendance from the people involved so that the purpose of holding the event should be satisfied. The event should be planned in such a manner that it is meaningful, powerful and memorable. The planning of event provides the base for a successful event. The five phases of planning any event are as follows (Dowson & Bassett 2015, 305.):

- Research
- Design
- Planning
- Coordination
- Evaluation

Phase 1: Research - This phase comprises of the continuous questioning by the event planners, and they keep on asking questions from their client like the venue of the event. What is the context of the event and what are the desired goals of the event? All the covert and the overt goals are to be identified very clearly in order to conduct the event in a successful manner. For the success of an event attended by the desired audience must be made possible otherwise the event would not be successful. (Allen, 2015, 10.); Phase 2: Design - In this phase, the event is planned in the light of the perspective of the client. Here the planners have to visualize the execution of the event and give input in a creative and professional design to execute the event successfully in a creative fashion. Here we

are required to keep the purpose of the event in mind. (Allen, 2015, 6.); Phase 3: Planning - In this phase, the on-ground realities and solid factors are evaluated like budget, attendance, services, menu and venue of the event.; Phase 4: Coordination - In this phase, all the logistics of the event are finalized, and at this stage, any changes in the plan can be managed easily. All the events are resources coordinated, and the execution of the final event takes place; Phase 5: Evaluation - At the phase of evaluation, the planning proficient person or team evaluates the event in terms of its success and whether all the goals are met or not. All qualitative and quantitative information must be analysed realistically for future success. (Dowson & Bassett 2015, 307.)

2.2 Wedding planning

Marriage is a union of at least two people supported by society and is considered steady and long lasting arrangement partially based on sexual or some other kind of bond. Depending on social norms, marriage needs civil or religious authorization, although living with each other long enough in modern societies is also considered as a marriage. In spite of marriage functions, norms and roles may vary in different societies; marriage is viewed as an universal culture, which implies that it is found as a cultural establishment in all societies across the globe. (Haviland, Prins, McBride & Walrath 2013.)

There are different functions that wedding serves such as, in many social setups, its aim is to identify the child's relationship with the father, mother and other family members. It also serves to regulate sexual conduct in society. Another role of marriage is to exchange and amplify power, pride, and property. However, the most important purpose it serves is the foundation and start of the family institution. (Haviland, Prins, McBride & Walrath 2013.)

In many societies wedding is viewed as a beginning of the social and legal contract and a connection between two individuals which consist of mutual rights and commitments. A wedding does not simply exist between two people who are just agreeing to get married, but rather it is arranged social institution regarding legal, economic, social and religious way. (Haviland, Prins, McBride & Walrath 2013.)

A wedding is identified as an event, but due to lots of emotions involved in the matter, it is a very sensitive one to handle. In any wedding planning, the role of the couple is very crucial in defining the main concept and direction of the wedding. The couple decides to what extent their budget will be and in that budget what kind of their dream theme and concept can be achieved. As the first stage of wedding planning, it is important to get to know the couple and their preferences. A good amount of communication with a couple leads the

way to a successful wedding. After deciding on budget and concept comes the stage of deciding what location what suppliers and services are going to be used in the wedding. What will be the floor plan and seating arrangements? How many people are going to attend and what will be the menu at the reception? In short, all stages of the wedding should be discussed in detail before wedding planning so in the planning stage and during the wedding the couple can relax at their big day. (Haviland, Prins, McBride & Walrath 2013.)

2.2.1 Factors that influence modern weddings

Modern weddings are influenced by some factors such as local culture, traditions, global and digital trends. Media, pop culture, and social media are also rapidly affecting weddings nowadays. The wedding industry is in a transition period. The information technologies and globalization have transformed modern weddings into an ever-changing industry. (Daniels & Loveless 2014, 3.)

Understandably people want the day to be perfect. Many programs on television follow the wedding of celebrities these days. Being a celebrity and plus being broadcasted on television puts pressure on celebrities to plan their wedding to perfection. After their wedding broadcast, the retail outlets start following and selling products and services depicted in this wedding. It is obvious, that celebrity has a great influence on the public's life. Therefore, most weddings nowadays are happening by following steps taken by favourite idols. Apart from buying the house people might not spend this much money anywhere other than a wedding, so they want to spend it with perfection and make it an unforgettable moment of their life. These celebrity trends have given more exposure to the wedding planners. People now turn to planner mostly for taking care of their big day and feel like a celebrity in their realm. (Daniels & Loveless 2014, 46-47.)

Internet, social media and ready information available through the effect of globalization is also having a great impact on a wedding. In the planning phase, people turn to the internet and find tons of new ideas, themes, and concepts about wedding culture locally and from around the globe. Even though local customs still take place in modern weddings, people do not hesitate to adopt trends and customs of other cultures which they find over the internet. Apart from getting ideas from other cultures, technology has changed the way weddings are happening. For example, nowadays couples are recording personal video invitations for their guests. Invitations are being sent via digital media. People are using various wedding applications while preparing a wedding. These applications help them during different stages of planning: from choosing the date to book a hall to selecting a venue, pick up dresses and sending invitations to selecting caterers etc. (Daniels & Loveless 2014, 277.)

The portrayal of a wedding in films is also influencing the decision on a type of wedding. Recent movies such as *The Wedding Planner* (*The Wedding Planner*, 2001), *Bride Wars* (*Bride Wars*, 2009) and *My Best Friend's Wedding* (*My Best Friend's Wedding*, 1997) have given new directions on how people see their wedding day and how they want to plan it. Many factors are influencing modern weddings these days and so the wedding industry is an ever-changing one. Nobody can easily predict what is going to be the next big trend in wedding business due to its dynamic nature, the influence of digital media and globalization. (Daniels & Loveless 2014, 3.)

2.2.2 Wedding ceremony types

There are different types of wedding ceremonies. People choose the wedding type which resonates with their expression of what it means to be husband and wife and what they feel for each other. Religion and culture play its part in selecting what kind of wedding ceremony they choose. Most popular ceremonies are the following:

Religious: People with strong religious faith naturally follow this kind of wedding ceremony. A religious wedding has its own structure and is carried out with a doctrine setup by the given religion. In these ceremonies, people are expected to follow protocols and have no or little room to include personal elements in their wedding ceremony. (Kitzinger & Wilkinson 2004, 127-150.)

Civil: In most of the countries it takes place in a town hall, registry office for marriage or building designated by marriage registrar. The purpose of civil marriage is to make marriage legal, so in most of the cases, it is a secular ceremony. These ceremonies have no room for personal elements as well. (Kitzinger & Wilkinson 2004, 127-150.)

Symbolic, Non-Legal ceremony: The Symbolic or non-dimensional wedding is the choice of that couple who do not wish to worry about completing documents for civil or religious weddings or already legally binding in a marriage. This kind of ceremony is not legally binding. And there is a lot of room to personalize the wedding ceremony. The content and theme of this kind of wedding vary from culture to culture and couple to couple. (Kitzinger & Wilkinson 2004, 127-150.) A lot of couples who want to celebrate their wedding several times, for example, abroad or in another state/town, make their second ceremony symbolic. This symbolic wedding can also take place during the honeymoon, for example, many exotic places and resorts by the sea, organise these special services.

These three ceremony types are different from each other in terms of organisation, regulations, and decoration, however, the main purpose of it is to bring a couple together.

2.2.3 Wedding Timelines

Planning a wedding includes many components and some of it may contain several elements as well. Wedding is a very multifaceted event, there are always many parts that require special attention and the right timing. Timelines help wedding planners, couples and vendors to be on-track and organise everything within realistic timeframes. Every wedding case is unique; thus, the timeline should be prepared following the needs of each couple. Despite the fact of wedding differences there are certain commonalities that will help to define the priorities in planning. For better organization and understanding it is more convenient to consider wedding timelines in terms of phases.

There are seven phases of wedding timelines: research, design, coordination, legal issues, confirmation and details, implementation and the last one is wrap-up and implementation. Some of the phases may overlap during the wedding organisation, especially if the engagement period is short. For a wedding planner, it is possible to be involved in the whole process or in a single phase only. Thus, it is important to know about each of the phases and how it should be handled. (Daniels & Loveless 2014, 131.)

The first phase of wedding timelines is research, usually, couples begin with it after their engagement. The research phase should start with the estimation of guests' number, as this affects many aspects of wedding, such ceremony and reception locations. As an example, historic and sophisticated venues would definitely make a wedding more unique, but these locations are often limited in capacity. A Location has a big influence on a wedding date options, as most popular venues are usually booked in advance. The desired venue may be the factor that will establish the wedding day according to its availability, it is very common that couple would have to adjust to get the site that they want. Selection of a wedding date is often a difficult moment for a couple. Many aspects such as vendors, location, schedules, family and friends are involved in this selection. (Daniels & Loveless 2014, 132.)

The research phase is the best time to start thinking what vendors should be included in the wedding organization. A *vendor* is any entity or individual that gets paid for services or goods that relate to the wedding implementation (Daniels & Loveless 2014, 132). For each wedding, there is an estimated budget that usually helps to prioritise future vendors. The budget can be changed during the wedding planning process, but the approximate figure will give an idea of possible expenses. Each couple will have different priorities according to their preferences, thus, one couple can choose to spend more money on a

wedding venue but another will prefer more expensive floral decorations. For a wedding planner, it is important to help them identify the best vendors that are available and affordable in their budget. (Daniels & Loveless 2014, 132.)

Here are the most common wedding vendors or *elements* as it also called (Daniels & Loveless 2014, 137.):

- Ceremony and reception venue
- Wedding Planner
- Caterer
- Baker
- Musicians / DJ
- Celebrant
- Entertainment
- Transportation services
- Florist
- Decorator
- Photographer
- Videographer
- Wedding invitations / other stationary elements
- Favours and gifts
- Hairstylist and makeup artist
- Accommodation

Design - is the second phase of wedding planning timelines. Design and research phases may often overlap, as the discussion of design options commonly takes place during the first stage as well. The primary consideration of design is creating the theme and vision for the wedding. During the design phase, clients and/or wedding planner should have a site inspection of possible reception and ceremony venues. Venues should be booked as soon as possible, so as the wedding date needs to be determined. For some couples the date is more important than the venue, so they will consider only those that are available on that exact date, while others prioritise the venue and are flexible with the date. Culture may be a strong influencer in date selection. For example, the Hindu religion and astrology are well connected (Shah 2013). Based on old traditions many parents of both sides demand the horoscopes, time of birth and location in order to make sure by their personal astrologer that couple truly suit each other and that stars align. Astrological analysis can also relate to the wedding date selection, so in these cases, the date would be very important. (Daniels & Loveless 2014, 135.)

A wedding planner should be able to present a list of vendors from different price categories and types to match the needs of a couple. It is also essential to know the area of work and have a variety of vendors that could be suggested for a wedding implementation. The design phase involves finalization of guest's list. The number of guests can dramatically

affect many sides of the wedding, such as: budget, ceremony and reception venues, favours and gifts, transportation and caterer. In addition, the couple should start thinking about the theme, vision, formalwear of the wedding and select members of the wedding party. (Daniels & Loveless 2014, 136.)

When the research and design phases are completed, the third phase - coordination takes its turn. Final vendor sections, contracts, and down payments should be made and formalwear selection should be finalized. If a couple is planning to have a honeymoon, the destination should be chosen and booked, and save-the-date notices should be mailed as well, especially if it is going to be a destination wedding or if the date is over a holiday weekend. Therefore, in the internet era wedding website is more common and convenient to use, so couples prefer it to a paper version. To conclude the coordination phase wedding invitations should be sent or given away in person, depends on couple's choice. (Daniels & Loveless 2014, 138.)

The following phase is about legal issues, very important part of the marriage process. In this phase, all contracts, final payments, and liability information should be carefully reviewed. Legal issues imply to the official registration of the marriage, collecting needed documents to prove that couple currently has no spouses (in case if divorce process took place), collecting necessary documents for the procedure of getting married abroad if one is going to happen. Finally, there is another process that appears very often—name change upon the marriage. During the coordination phase applications forms should be obtained and prepared, even though it will not be possible to apply before the actual marriage. The wedding planner would be the right person to help with this process. (Daniels & Loveless 2014, 138-141.)

The fifth phase implicates confirmation and finalization of details. At this stage, the *production schedule* and site layout should be completed, so as the guest list should be confirmed. *Wedding production schedule* is a detailed timeline of activities and liability that usually involve the wedding rehearsal, day-of and day-after (Daniels & Loveless 2014, 138.).

At this point, it is important to deliver a final confirmation to each vendor. It is a common practice that wedding planners prepare and send electronic versions of partial production schedules to all the vendors. It is unnecessary to send the entire schedule to each vendor, but the specific part of their role on the wedding should be delivered. For a couple with particular needs, it is very essential to provide vendors with a detailed production schedule. It will reduce the risk of mistakes or forgotten details.

Finally, other details that should be prepared at this point are gifts, favours and on-site stationary elements such as escort card and seating assignments.

During the implementation phase, the production schedule is a major organizational tool. The production schedule is created to know how the wedding should be revealed. The first page of the production schedule includes day-of contact information of all main parties that are included in the process. A contact sheet is a detailed agenda that has each task, start time, the point of contact and all the details. Therefore, nowadays wedding planners prefer an electronic version of the schedule to a paper one, however, printed copies should be taken anyway. In addition to it, extra copies of partial production should be prepared for vendors. (Daniels & Loveless 2014, 141-142.)

The last phase of the wedding timeline is a wrap-up and evaluation. After the event, the wedding planner should discuss the process and get a feedback from the couple. If wedding organization included any new vendors, it would be good to receive comments from them as well. Evaluation is very important for upcoming events and service improvement. (Daniels & Loveless 2014, 154.)

2.2.4 Demand for a Wedding Planner

Modern wedding process became much more complex compared to the past. There is a worldwide growing demand for professional wedding planners, which is caused by important reasons and changes (Daniels & Loveless 2014, 4). The following subchapter will discuss why there is a demand of such occupation, is there an actual need for a wedding consultant and what their roles are.

Considering the global increase of women who are getting an education and entering the workforce (Toossi, M 2012), it is essential to mention that the time taken to receive a high level of education affects the average marriage age and possible the approach to the wedding. Better educated and busy women have less time and more income to hire a wedding planner for a perfect event. Hiring a professional wedding planner is the best option for a couple who have no time nor desire to handle all the stress of organization, but have good financial possibilities to pay for such services.

Another reason that supports the idea of hiring a wedding planner, is a financial aspect of marriage. Wedding budgets vary according to the economy and geographical location, but the average budget is around 26.000 \$ USD (The Wedding Report 2012). With 36 per cent of couples paying for their wedding by themselves, there is a higher demand for a professional consultant, that can find good deals through professional contacts and offer

control and organization for the whole process, minimalizing over-budget spending (The American Wedding Study 2012).

It is worth mentioning, that due to an international acceptance of divorce there is a global increase in second marriages. The process of a second marriage may slightly differ from a first wedding. Usually it requires working with blended families where professional skills and experience are highly needed. A good wedding planner will help to arrange a complex event smoothly, taking into the consideration all the couple's special aspects and challenges. (Daniels & Loveless 2014, 5.)

Finally, there is a significant increase in cross-cultural and interracial marriages. A research made by the Pew Research Center presented, that in 2010 in the U.S more than a quarter of weddings in each racial and ethnic group were the intermarriages. The percentage of such weddings doubled between 1980 (6.7 percent) and 2010 (15 percent) (Wang, W 2012, 8.). As this thesis aims to prove, intercultural marriages pose a set of possibly challenging aspects, such as cultural customs, religion, traditions, family, wedding location, wedding theme, risks related to misunderstanding and cultural differences. The hiring of a professional wedding planner will help to address these aspects.

Even though there is an increasing demand for such professionals, nowadays, there are plenty of websites, apps, magazines, blogs, checklists, guides and tutorials on how to plan a wedding yourself. Among the most useful and popular resources which help brides to prepare the event are the following: magazine BRIDES, mobile app WeddingHappy, websites Wedding Wire, Wedding Bee, Wedding Spot and many others. Every country has its own sources that provides information on the best wedding locations, shops, catering companies and other essential wedding vendors. One of a good example can be an Italian website www.initalywedding.com, which states "make your own wedding". It has a big database of wedding venues, vendors, services, advice and other information that couple will need to plan their event.

Even though the website's mission is to help couples to organize a wedding themselves, they still suggest the services of a qualified wedding planning team. This goes to show that in weddings involving any element of complexity, the role of a well-connected and professional wedding planner cannot be easily substituted.

2.2.5 Role of a Wedding Planner

As was stated in a previous subchapter, modern weddings are certainly becoming more complex in its organization so roles of a wedding planner are increasing according to expanded responsibilities and expectations. The following part will go deeper into these roles.

During the wedding preparation planner will have to take a variety of roles, they will change according to the situation, tasks, and involvement in the process. If a couple will choose to have a comprehensive package (full involvement to the wedding planning process, that starts in early stages and extends beyond the wedding), it will allow the wedding planner to fully integrate into their lives and families, whether it was planned or not. There are seven common roles of the wedding planner that can be applied and included during the process: service provider, decision-maker, organizer, designer, confidant, mediator, and friend (Daniels & Loveless 2014, 10.).

First and one of the most fundamental roles of the wedding planner is to be a service provider and have a business relationship with a couple. Professional wedding organizer should remember that there are certain obligations and standards that are needed to be fulfilled with a high a standard. The obligations also include building and maintaining good and professional relationships with wedding vendors. The wedding planner is working on behalf of the couple, and in many cases, even negotiates without them. It is very important to treat chosen vendors and partners fairly. (Daniels & Loveless 2014, 10.)

Talking about negotiations on behalf of the couple, the second role of the planner emerges – the decision-maker. The consultant will often take this role, especially with couples who choose to have a comprehensive wedding package and minimal involvement in to the process. However, it is still important to let them feel that they are involved in the final decisions. Even small participation gives a sense of accountability, and it is a very essential feeling during the wedding preparation. (Daniels & Loveless 2014, 10.)

A third role that can be, and should be taken by a wedding planner and consultant is that of an organizer. For a wedding planner, it is crucial to maintain in order of all timelines, checklists, itineraries, and meetings to avoid any confusions and risks. For couples that are getting married and probably are very overwhelmed, it is important to be sure that everything is under control. In many cases, it is the reason why the planner is hired, to avoid the wedding stress. Time management is a key aspect of any event planning. Each task should be prioritized and completed in a right time. Bad timing can cause difficulties,

time pressure and failure in a preparation of wedding components. Thus, having a well-organized calendar with written agendas and tasks, certainly helps to prepare an event smoothly. (Daniels & Loveless 2014, 10.)

Another role of the wedding consultant is a designer. The wedding planner should have a good taste and vision, should follow the trends, and know wedding fashion details and last news of this industry. It is important to be aware of what is happening, changing and what are the nowadays tendencies. A wedding consultant is often hired due to a desire for artistic decoration, theme creation or even just to have a famous wedding planner. Many couples will want to take some ideas from celebrities' events, and in this case, the consultant should be prepared to support and organize that. It happens quite often that the couple and the wedding planner have different views, tastes, and opinions. It can easily happen that one side will completely disagree with another, but for the consultant, it is essential to be careful and not to over-impose their views. However, during the wedding planning practice, it is possible to meet couples that hire the consultant for an opposite reason – to not be involved in wedding decoration details. It is possible that all the initiative and decisions will be on the planner's shoulders, thus it would be still good to discuss the preferences and tastes of the couple beforehand. (Daniels & Loveless 2014, 10-11.)

The fifth role of a wedding planner is a confidant. During the wedding preparation, there are usually many people that are involved in the process: clients, family members and friends. In the moments of pressure, anxiety and strain it is likely that they will turn to a consultant by looking for an advice and support. As trust develops, the line between interpersonal interaction and business blurs thus a consultant should have skills to assist clients in handling situations of emotional stress (Hargie, 2011). It is important to be careful when it comes to dealing with sensitive topics and try to avoid giving advice. (Daniels & Loveless 2014, 12.)

At some point, each wedding might have a stressful situation that can cause problems and arguments, in such moments the consultant should act as a mediator. Mediator or peacemaker would be another role of a wedding planner. Mediators do not solve the problems, they respond to conflicts by encouraging constructive dialogs through listening, honest communication and emphatic recognition (Stains, 2012). In such situations, the planner's role is to create a forum where each party will get to speak and listen, in other words, to help them to understand each other and find a solution for their problems. (Daniels & Loveless 2014, 12.)

Finally, business relationship with some clients may turn into a friendship, which represents another role of the wedding planner – a friend. Many wedding consultants start their career by working with family members and friends. Good connections and referrals in addition to a positive feedback are very important for wedding planners. However, for a successful business it is not necessary to become friends with clients, sooner or later a consultant might work for someone they do not like at all. In such moments, it is important to separate work and personal life. Friendship with a client should be a natural outcome, it does not appear in every case of business relationship. Following the same token, the wedding vendors and partners may also become friends with time. (Daniels & Loveless 2014, 12.)

The profession of a wedding planner requires being ready for different kind of tasks. Some of it could be very informal as wedding planners often evolve from consultant to a friend. The process of planning usually includes a lot of cooperation with families, relatives and friends of a couple. Since a wedding is a complex event, wedding consultants should be multitasking and take the above roles to create a truly special day for a couple.

This work is based on two main theoretical parts: event management with the focus on wedding planning and cultural dimensions. The next chapter will discuss Finnish and Singaporean cultures, Hofstede's model of cultural dimensions, cross-cultural wedding and its challenges.

2.3 Cultural Dimensions

Culture greatly influences the way in which people behave and is present in all societies. It is a set of beliefs and values, or a collection of learned behaviours that we share with others in a particular society, giving us a sense of belongingness and identity. Due to this, a good cultural understanding is becoming more important as people are encouraged to interact with many individuals from different countries due to the increasingly globalising world. (Lee, 2006.)

Many have tried to define and assess culture from various angles. According to Walsham, the culture at its most basic level can be defined as shared symbols, norms, and values in a social organization. There is no right or wrong culture, they are just different from each other and their key differences are culturally rooted. (Walsham, 2002.) Another well-known definition of culture was proposed by the Geert Hofstede, saying that culture can be treated as a collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from other (Hofstede, 1984). Professor Geert Hofstede is well known for his pioneering studies on cross-cultural groups, organizations, and cultural di-

mensions. One of his most famous works is a cultural dimensions theory named the Hofstede model of national culture, conducted by Geert Jan Hofstede himself together with Michael Minkov. (Hofstede Insights 2017.)

The Hofstede model of national culture is built up of six dimensions: power distance, individualism versus collectivism, masculinity versus femininity, uncertainty avoidance, long term orientation versus short term normative orientations and indulgence versus restraint. A country is scored from 0 to 100 according to its preferences and can then be compared to those of another country, which allows the identification of specific cultural traits linked to a specific country. By using the model, a conclusion that all humans have similarities but still are unique can be reached. (Hofstede Insights 2017.)

The first dimension is power distance, which sums up how equally power is distributed across the members of the society and how it is accepted. Societies that have a large power distance accept hierarchy without needed justification for it whilst the ones with a low power distance aim to equalise the distribution of power. (Hofstede 2001, 79.) The second dimension is individualism versus collectivism explores how loosely or tightly-knit the social framework is. Individualism encourages taking care of yourself and only your closest family members but collectivism is more focused on also taking care of relatives and any members of an in-group. (Hofstede 2001, 209.) The third dimension is masculinity versus femininity and it is related to how tough or tender the society plays out to be. Masculinity stands for achievement, heroism, rewards, and competitiveness. Femininity, on the other hand, encourages cooperation, modesty and caring for the weak. (Hofstede 2001, 279.)

The fourth dimension is uncertainty avoidance measuring how comfortable the members of the society are with uncertainty and how much they try to control it rather than letting it happen without interfering. Societies scoring high for this dimension have rigid rules but those with low scores have more relaxed attitudes. (Hofstede 2001, 145.) The fifth dimension, long term versus short term normative orientation, explores how strong the links between the past and the present are in the society in question. Societies that score low in this category prefer sticking to traditions and are suspicious about change whilst those that score high indulge in new, modern ways in order to prepare for what the future holds. (Hofstede 2001, 351.) The sixth and last dimension is indulgence versus restraint, which examines how freely a societies' members can have fun and enjoy life or whether they are suppressed by strict social norms (Hofstede 2001, 423).

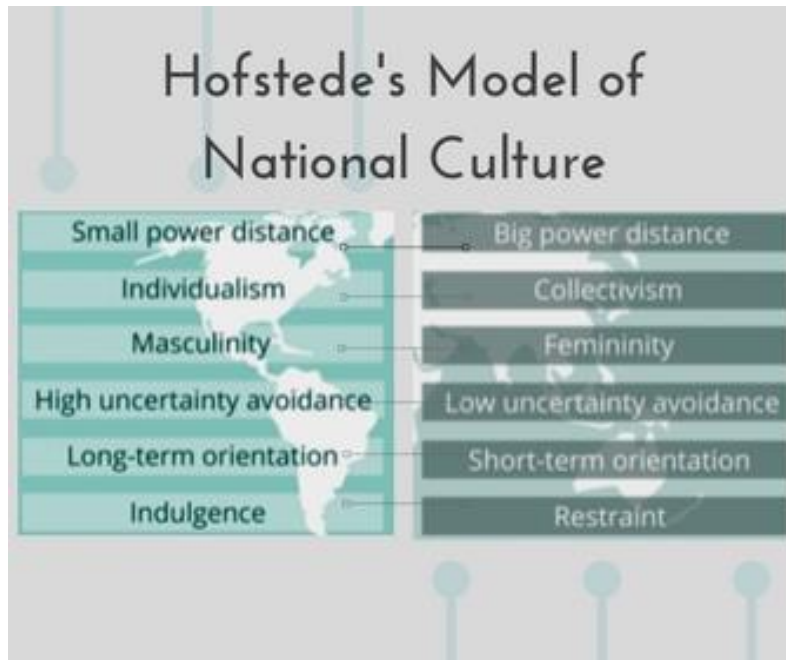


Image 1. Hofstede's Model of National Culture, Hofstede 1984.

The Hofstede model of national culture can be used as a tool when planning a wedding, in the case of this thesis between a Finn and a Singaporean for example. The following sub-chapter will study the two nations in more detail, with an emphasis on their cultures from the point of view of each of the six dimensions and the one after will focus on the challenges a wedding planner may face specifically when organising a wedding between a Finn and a Singaporean.

2.3.1 Comparison of Finland and Singapore

Already by having a look at the locations of Finland and Singapore on the world map it is possible to assume that the two are far apart, and not only in the geographical sense. Finland is located in Northern Europe and is the home of 5.4 million people spread across 338 440 km² of land where the official languages are Finnish and Swedish (This is Finland 2017). Finland is best known for its breath-taking aurora borealis lighting up the sky in Finnish Lapland, the midnight sun shining the brightest during June and July, its over 2 million saunas, for being the land of a thousand lakes, 188 000 to be exact, and as the home of the real Santa Claus (Visit Finland 2017). Singapore, on the other hand, covers only 715.8 km² of land of the southern tip of the Malay Peninsula, but has a population of 5.3 million that communicates in one of the four official languages: English, Malay, Mandarin and Tamil (Singapore Expats 2017). Today Singapore attracts people's attention thanks to its food that is so rich in flavour, its colonial and wartime past that can be revisited through historic monuments and its lively, never-ending festivities (Visit Singapore

2017). The following will compare Finland and Singapore with a focus on cultural aspects of the two nations.

Finns have a high degree of national self-consciousness, a trait they share with the Japanese and French (Lewis 2006, 331). Finland is proud of their development and conduct of international business especially that achieved after having gained independence in 1918, as Finnish leaders have found the right balance between authority and consulting when it comes to making decisions. It may seem challenging to break the ice at first, but once relationships start forming a Finn starts showing characteristics of general honesty, reliability and punctuality. (Lewis 2006, 332.) Generally, Finns have weaker communication skills, in comparison to citizens of Southern European countries for example, because they are shy by nature and have learnt to speak little, expressing only the necessary information. Even though they are silent they are also strong on the inside and make true friends when the barriers are broken (Lewis 2006, 333). In the working environment, Finns show great deals of persistence, individuality, and original thinking, which have been fruitful in the fields of industrial design and technology (Lewis 2006, 334).

When empathising with a Finn it is necessary to acknowledge that they are modest and enjoy order and clarity. A minute or two of silence is needed for the Finn to gather their thoughts before they give feedback on the given matter, as they do not think and talk at the same time but prefer to think before talking. Clear goals must be set, objectives defined, responsibilities outlined and authority established before the given task can be tackled. Harmony must be maintained no matter what. (Lewis 2006, 335.)

Singaporeans, on the other hand, find comfort in hierarchical structures. They value personal space even though they are used to crowding in their densely populated country and don't like to waste time. When engaging in conversations, they aim to express themselves as clearly as possible, their choice of words is rather courteous and they make good listeners. (Lewis 2006, 466.) Empathising with Singaporeans can be challenging as the wide racial mix of its citizens must be kept in mind at all times. The Chinese are found in higher positions dominating and running the state thanks to their social and business skill together with their efficiency. Westerners are considered very experienced and well connected in all fields. Eurasians may be sensitive when it comes to discussing their origins. The majority of Indians are Tamils that have kept to themselves and usually only speak their own language. Singaporeans of Malay heritage tend to be seen as less ambitious in pursuing higher education or top-position jobs because of their cultural emphasis in family and home-life. (Lewis 2006, 467.)

The Lewis Model illustrated beneath in image 1. divides humans into three categories: linear-active, multi-active and reactive. Linear-active people are job-oriented, polite but direct, use limited body language, does one thing at a time and partly conceal feelings. Multi-active people are rather people-oriented, emotional, use plenty of body language, do numerous things at the same time and display feelings. Reactive people are extremely people-oriented, polite but indirect, use subtle body language, reacts according to how others react and conceal feelings completely. (Cross Culture 2017.)

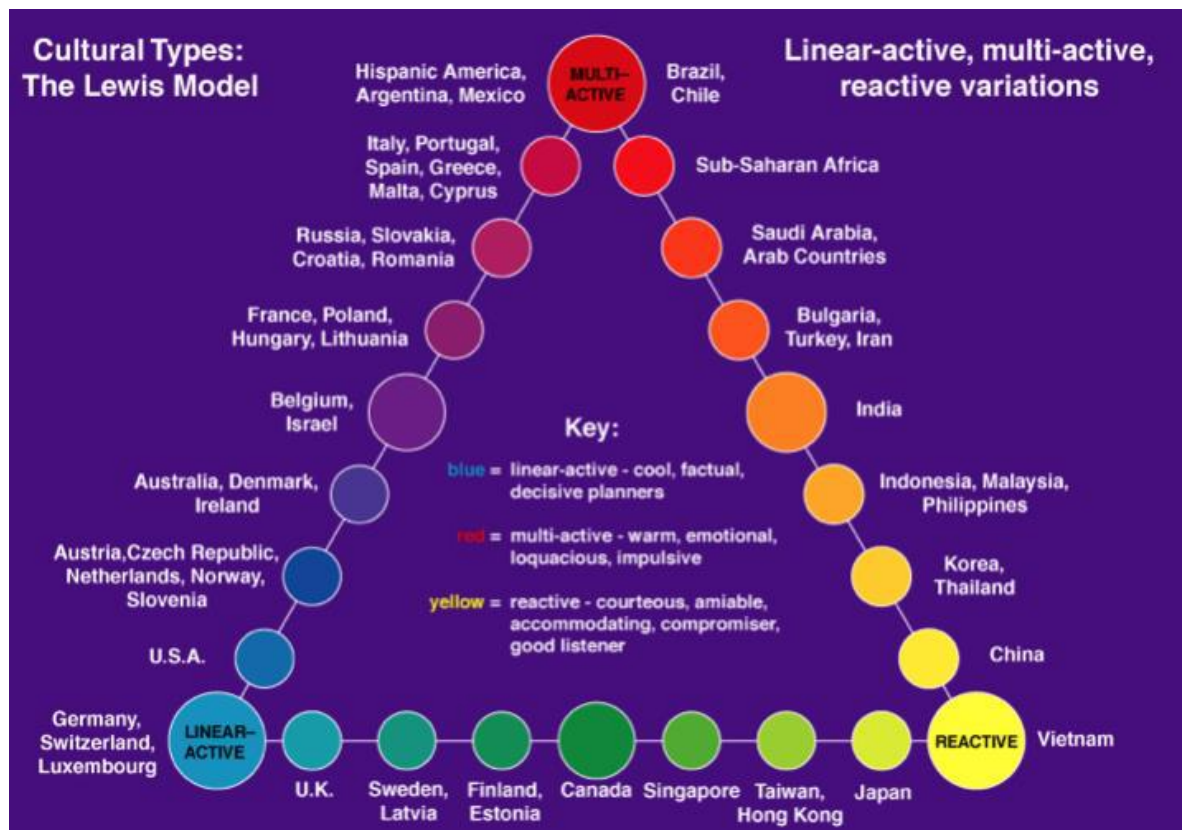


Image 2. The Lewis Model, Cross Culture 2017

According to Lewis and studying these behavioural categories, Finland and Singapore have similar cultures as both are found on the bottom line of the Lewis Model, half way in between the linear-active and reactive categories. Therefore, planning a wedding involving these cultures can be expected to be a success. However, it is important to work extra hard to pinpoint the small differences between the two instead of having them go unnoticed.

In addition to the Lewis Model, the Hofstede model of national culture and its six dimensions is a useful method to getting a visual representation of how far the cultures of Fin-

land and Singapore are from one another. This is can be done using the country comparison tool on the Hofstede Insights' website. The result of when Finland and Singapore are submitted can be seen below in image 3.

COUNTRY COMPARISON

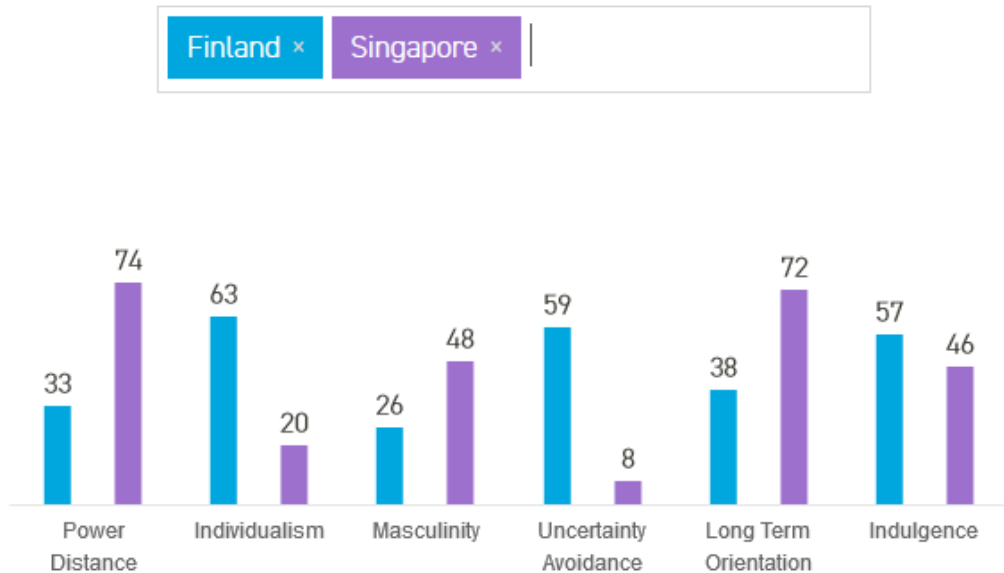


Image 3. Country Comparison of Finland and Singapore, Hofstede Insights 2017

It is clear that there are similarities but also some differences when evaluating these cultures. Finland and Singapore both score intermediate numbers, 57/100 and 46/100, for indulgence, which means that they are not indulgent or restrained when trying to control and show their desires and impulses. The score for masculinity, 26/100, illustrates that Finns value equality and solidarity, believe in resolving conflicts through compromise and focus on well-being rather than status. The same goes for Singaporeans who scored 48/100 as they value modesty and sympathy, do their best to avoid conflicts and believe in community support and respecting every individual. Finland's score for long term orientation, 38/100, explains that they hold traditions important but do not feel the need to save for the future and instead prefer seeing quick results. Singapore on the other hand scores higher, 72/100, which reflects its citizens being patient to seeing slow results, support long-term investments and use resources carefully. (Hofstede Insights 2017.)

Finland scores low, 33/100, for power distance that means the general attitude towards managers or elders, for example, is informal and relaxed, everyone has equal rights and is empowered by superiors and power is decentralized. Singapore on the other side

scores high, 74/100, because actions and reactions are controlled by rules, communication is very formal and power is centralized. Finns make an individualist society for its high score for individualism being 63/100 that means they are only expected to take care of themselves and perhaps immediate family members and any advanced are based on merit. Singaporeans form a collectivistic society by scoring low, 20/100 for individualism. This means that people are extremely loyal to the in-groups they belong to, they all look after each other and remain respectful in all situations so that everybody's face is saved. The greatest difference between the cultures of Finland and Singapore can be seen under uncertainty avoidance. Finland scoring 59/100 believes in remaining busy and working hard at all times, expect precision and punctuality, may resist innovation and consider security to be an important motivator. Singapore scores the lowest in this category, 8/100 as the nation is overwhelmed with rules and limitations and therefore they do not feel threatened by future unknown situations. (Hofstede Insights 2017.)

2.3.2 Cross-cultural Weddings and their challenges

Anything comparing, involving or relating two or more countries with different cultures can be described as cross-cultural. A wedding, on the other hand, is the ceremony joining two together in association. (Merriam-Webster 2017.) Therefore, a cross-cultural wedding takes place when two people that represent different cultures get married. The number of cross-cultural weddings is on the rise thanks to the enhanced interaction between people of different ethnicities, the changing image and understanding of what makes a family, more tolerance between religions, better access to transport and globalisation of the economy (Daniels & Loveless 2014, 66). However, these types of marriages remain complex, a statement that is true also for one organised between a Finn and a Singaporean. This is because there is the risk of a country's wedding traditions or beliefs are ignored, misunderstood, not respected or outshined by the ones of the second country. This can result in stress and emotional conflict. (Daniels & Loveless 2014, 67.)

Luckily, there are a few pointers a wedding planner should take into consideration in order to avoid nasty situations. Firstly, they must recognise each unique cultural identity that influences a person's personality, attitude and need. This requires sensitivity on behalf of the wedding planner. Secondly, they should aim to involve both of the families in the decision-making process, so that no one will feel offended or overwhelmed on the big day. This is done by encouraging communication among all stakeholders. Thirdly, an investigation is to be conducted on customs of the two countries. Here any rules and restrictions one may have are clearly outlined. Fourthly, the notion of time must be discussed together with both of the families because different cultures have different understandings of what "being on time" means. (Daniels & Loveless 2014, 69.)

Fifthly, a neutral venue and conductor of the ceremony must be chosen so that any religious tensions are avoided. The wedding planner must approach this issue with caution, as some cultures are very strict in the way they worship and are not enthusiastic about co-celebrating a marriage with different faiths. Sixthly, if conflicts do arise then differing conflict-resolution styles should be exercised in accordance with the cultural backgrounds of the two parties. Seventhly, multilingualism is an asset but can also be a challenge, because a shared language must be appointed and possibly some aspects of the wedding, for example, invitations and the program, translated. Finally, it is necessary to point out that some cultural norms and rituals simply cannot be emerged if the two parties do not feel entirely comfortable with doing so. In this case the only solution is to organise two separate weddings, perhaps in two entirely different countries. This means increased costs for the couple and increased workload for the wedding planner. (Daniels & Loveless 2014, 71.)

2.4 Own Framework

The wedding plan for the Singaporean-Finnish couple is the outcome of this work. The following subchapter is introducing the framework that will be used for the creation of the wedding plan. This Framework is based on the most essential wedding elements (vendors), sources that help to support the introduced elements, examples of possible vendors in Finland and comments by the author, who acts as a wedding planner for this couple.

The following table includes eight wedding elements that were chosen together with the couple according to their preferences and needs. Listed sources and professional experience of the author is a support for the framework.

Table 1. Own Framework

Vendors	Sources
Wedding Planner	Daniels & Loveless 2014, 4-12
Venue	Daniels & Loveless 2007, 144
Catering	Doell 2008, 222-229 Daniels & Loveless 2014, 163-177
Baker (wedding cake)	Doell 2008, 138-143 Bride's Magazine Editors 2003, 15 Daniels & Loveless 2014, 178 Knight 2008
Floral Design	Doell 2008, 133-136

	Daniels & Loveless 2014, 245-256
Photographer	Doell 2008, 144-147 Daniels & Loveless 2014, 293-302
Videographer	Doell 2008, 148 Daniels & Loveless 2014, 303
Musicians or DJ	Doell 2008, 230 Daniels & Loveless 2014, 311-318
Bridal make-up and hair style	Doell 2008, 194 Daniels & Loveless 2014, 199

3 Creating an Intercultural wedding plan

The following part of the thesis will introduce author's background and a story of the project, process of making the plan, discuss methods, risks and limitations and evaluation of the project. The author created three steps to follow and combined it together to make the successful intercultural wedding plan.

The first step is to look back at the cultural differences between the two countries, which have been described earlier. The second step is to list the elements that a successful wedding plan consists of: ceremony, venue, decorations, food and beverages and entertainment. The third step is to implement the eight pieces of advice a wedding planner should act according to so conflicts are avoided. The final step is to combine the three lists so that the outcome will be a detailed wedding plan for a Finn and a Singaporean attached in the appendix. This entire process is illustrated in the image below.

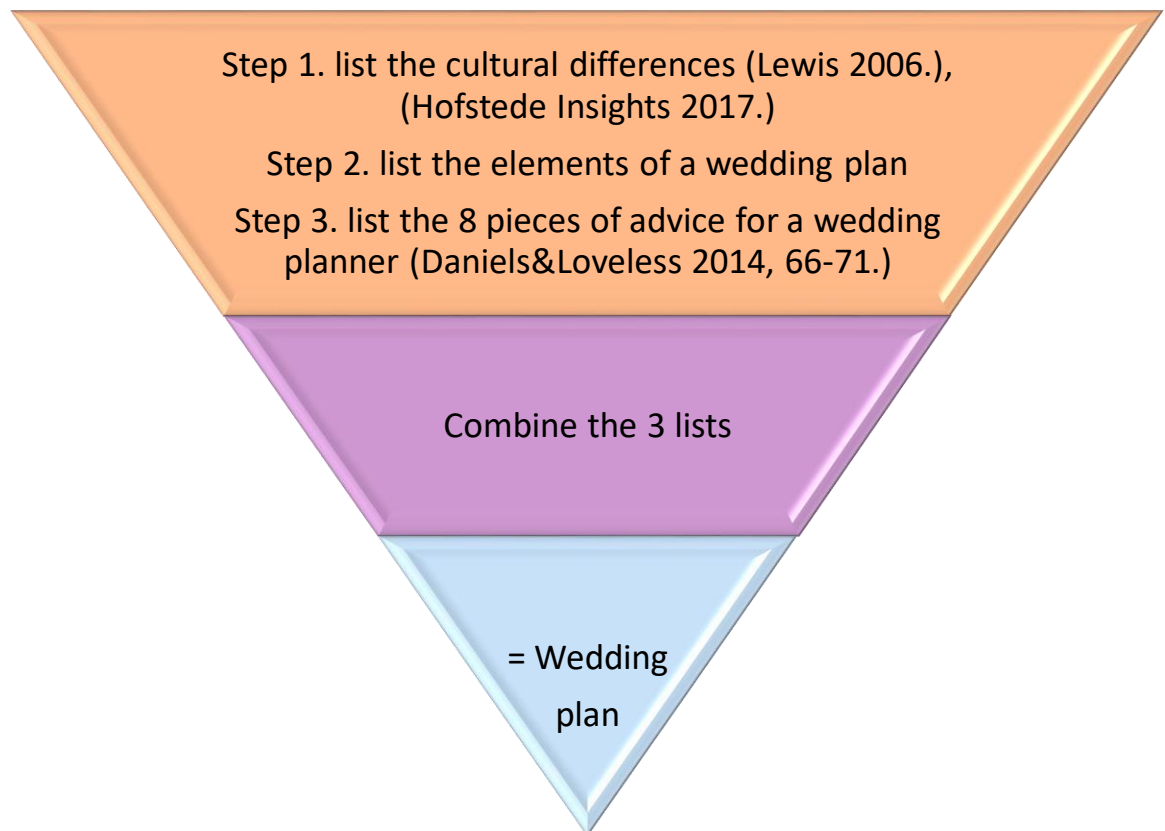


Image 4. The process of creating a wedding plan for the Finnish-Singaporean couple

3.1 Author's journey – from student to a wedding planner

The idea to create such work was born by combining personal interest in the topic and professional experience of the author. Being a foreign student of Hospitality program in Finland, with a multicultural experience and a big interest in studying cultures, the author had a dream to enter a wedding planning industry.

In 2015, the author began her journey of exploring a wedding industry by starting an internship in Italian based company, *Italian Event Planners*. The Company was established in 2013. *Italian Event Planners* focuses on organizing big events and weddings, its employees have implemented different types of events such as: beer festivals, gay parades, medical forums, birthday parties, weddings and many others. The main mission of the company is events organization for foreign customers in Italy. Customers of *Italian Event Planners* are citizens from all over the world and mainly from European or Asian countries and the United States of America. Of note, part of customers is Italians who live abroad and coming back to celebrate their wedding in Italy.

The author's interest in cultures and events organization, combined with the multicultural orientation of Italian Event Planners, created a perfect chemistry. This was a base for gaining a lot of knowledge, experience and a strong interest in creating cross-cultural events. The author was particularly interested to learn about wedding planning, as it was her dream for a long time. She had a successful internship, so when it was over author began to collaborate with the company from Finland and coming to work in Italy for summer periods. The author gained experience in working with multicultural clients and learnt about their cultures, multitasking in chaotic situations, translating, promoting company's services to the Russian market, searching for new vendors and partners, writing articles and running the social media of *Italian Event Planners*.

The experience and excitement from working in wedding industry established a strong desire to link her thesis with this subject. Luckily, the author knew a Finnish-Singaporean couple that recently got engaged and started to think about their wedding. It was a mutual idea to have a wedding plan for such complex cross-cultural wedding. For the author, it was a great opportunity to combine two most interesting topics such as wedding planning and multicultural relationships by working on a real case.

3.2 Wedding Plan

Planning an event would most likely include taking several steps, while wedding planning, for example, has seven phases and many components that need to be considered (Daniels & Loveless 2014, 132). The following subchapter will include thesis progress timeframe (table 2) and explain the process of making the wedding plan.

Table 2. Thesis Progress

DATES	TASK
15 – 19.03.2017	Topic formulation and discussion with the couple
19.03	Subject Plan
26.03 – 20.04	Outline
21.04	First meeting with the thesis supervisor
23.04 – 9.05	Literature research and studying for Event management and wedding planning theory part (part 1)
10.05 – 23.08	Writing theory part 1
27.08 – 22.09	Literature research and studying for Cultural dimensions' theory part (part 2)
26.09.2017 – 21.01.2018	Writing theory part 2, creating questions for qualitative research (an interview), conducting the interview and analysing the answers
1.02 – 5.04	Creating Own Framework, planning the product (Wedding Plan) and writing subchapter 3.1
7.04 – 2.05	Wedding Plan development
2.5 – 8.05	Writing part 3 "Creating an Intercultural Wedding Plan"
9 – 10.05	Writing an introduction
10 – 17.05	Writing Part 4 "Discussion" and finalising the thesis
22.05	Thesis presentation
23.05	Final adjustments
23.05	Publishing

The idea to create such plan was proposed to the author by the bride in March 2017. The author found it very exciting and useful to combine her professional experience and personal interest and act as a wedding planner for a cross-cultural wedding. The next steps were writing the subject plan and outline to be assigned with a thesis supervisor. After a successful submission of that and getting in contact with a chosen supervisor, the first meeting between the author and the thesis supervisor took place in Haaga Campus. After discussing the topic with her thesis supervisor, the author started to search and study the suitable literature for a theoretical background of her work.

The theoretical part is focused on event management, wedding planning, and cultural dimensions' literature. It took a lot of time to find the right books, articles, research papers and put everything together so it would be logical and can support the project. Even though the author had a good experience and knowledge of wedding industry, it was still necessary to find literature on a wedding planning topic. Author divided the theoretical background of her project in two parts: Event Management and Wedding planning and Cultural Dimensions. The second theoretical part is based on Hofstede's cultural dimension theory. The author had a personal interest in the topic, during her studies in Haaga-Helia she took several courses such as: Cross-cultural Management, Developing Intercultural competence and Multicultural teamwork.

During the whole process, the author was in touch with the couple and had many discussions on their wedding preferences. The author started to collect all kind of information almost from the beginning of implementing the project. She conducted the qualitative interview right after finishing to work on Event Management part and researching the cultural dimensions. The knowledge she had, in addition to the details from bride and groom, helped her in creating her own framework. The framework was based on the most essential elements for the couples wedding and theoretical base to support it. All elements and vendors were agreed with the bride and groom. The framework presents options for each vendor: wedding venues, wedding decorations and florist, catering, bakers, musicians and stylist.

After creating the Framework and collecting the necessary information for the Wedding plan, the author started to work on it. To create the Wedding Plan File, Author has used Canva – a graphic design tool. For the author, it was a new experience to use Canva tool, she had to learn how to use it from the beginning. While creating the plan author has used Pinterest and different wedding blogs, Instagram pages and Facebook groups to find the inspiration and follow the trends of the wedding industry. In the Wedding Plan, the author tried to collect the most important details that couple would need to know to implement

their wedding. The plan includes vendor suggestion for each wedding element that is stated, useful information and webpages, tips and various mood boards for a better illustration. The author tried to make it very useful for the couple but also visually beautiful. Mood boards are essential parts of the plan, as it helps to see what is suggested and how can it look like. Creating the Wedding Plan required a lot of attention to details as the author wanted to make it as perfect as possible, thus this part required a lot of time. Due to the fact that while creating the Plan the author had a full-time job in events industry, she spent more time on it as she knew how important it is to work on each small detail.

3.3 Methods

To create an Intercultural Wedding Plan one of the methods that author have used was a desk research. The author analysed and studied a lot of different books, articles, research papers, handbooks, annual reports, statistics, journals and theses of other students. Considering the fact that there are many old books on a wedding planning topic it was very important to find the newest and most relevant books. The wedding industry has a lot of fast-changing trends; thus, it was essential to use modern sources and make sure that it is still valuable. Conducting a successful desktop research was extremely important, as theoretical background is the biggest part of the thesis and very strong base of the product (wedding plan).

Finnish-Singaporean Wedding plan required a lot of detailed information from the couple. To collect the necessary information, the author chose to have a qualitative approach in the form of a semi-structured interview conducted with the couple. Since the plan is made for a concrete couple, qualitative interview suits better, because answers include personal opinions, feelings and focused on descriptive answers (Research Methodology 2016). Author's professional experience of working in the wedding industry and different online sources such blogs, wedding checklists, Pinterest and journals helped her to prepare the semi-structured interview questions. To create the successful wedding plan author needed to know as many details as possible, such as: budget, wedding location and time of year, ceremony type, the number of guests, food and beverage preferences, special diets and restrictions, preferable colours, decorations, and music. In addition to the interview, the author had many face to face discussions with the couple that performed as an extra source of information.

3.4 Limitations, Challenges, and Risks

It would be hard imagining an event without any challenges in planning or risks. Risk Identification helps to be prepared for situations that can go wrong, it gives chances to prevent

it and have a “plan B” in case it happens. The following subchapter will introduce limitations, challenges and the risks of the Finnish-Singaporean wedding plan.

The main limitation of the wedding plan was the fact that author herself is from Russia. Although she lives in Finland for some time already, she did not have any knowledge regarding Finnish and Singaporean wedding traditions or customs. All information is second hand and not from her personal experience. Another limitation of the project was her lack of Finnish languages skills. The author does not speak either Finnish or Swedish, thus, is a needed source did not have an English version it was a challenge to understand it. The example of that could be a catering company research, many of them did not have any information in English and it was limiting author in getting the details.

One of the biggest challenges was combining two very different cultures together. The cultural background of the couple is unique. It was important to take into consideration aspects of both cultures, try to avoid restrictions during the planning of the event and create the wedding plan that will respect both Finnish and Singaporean traditions. Another challenge that author faced was not only combining the cultures together, but making the plan perfect, so both bride and groom will be satisfied with the suggested wedding plan. The third challenge was related to the financial aspect. When organizing the wedding couple can get overwhelmed with the ideas and wishes. Wedding industry and social media has a big influence on people, couples get inspired by beautiful photos of lavish weddings and willing to adopt the elements from there. In many cases, such weddings are very expensive and do not fit into the planned budget. Therefore, author had a challenge to meet couple’s requirements upon the plan and fit all the wedding components to the budget.

While creating the plan author was focusing on the answers of the qualitative interview conducted with the couple. The interview and discussions were essential to identify what are the preferences of the couple and what will not work for them. Attentive approach to their needs will help to avoid the biggest risk of not liking/and accepting the wedding plan. Another risk would be a bad weather during the ceremony day. Since the wedding and the actual ceremony is going to take place outside of the chosen venue, there is always a risk of bad weather occurrence. Rain and strong wind can cause difficulties during the celebration, in the worst scenario it can completely ruin it. A good way to prevent such situation would be to ask venue about availability of big tent/umbrella that could be used in a case of rain.

Talking about the venues and vendors for the wedding, another risk may occur during the booking stage of organization. It can happen that chosen vendors for the event day may be already booked or unavailable for some reason. It would mean that couple will have to choose either to contact another vendor or change the wedding date itself.

3.5 Evaluation

While creating the wedding plan for the Finnish-Singaporean couple author put a lot of efforts to make it perfect. It was important to her that the couple will like it and find it useful for their special event. When the plan was ready the author was happy with her work. The wedding plan is visually very beautiful and colourful, it has a lot of information, pictures and suggestions that can be used by other couples as well. The author tried to include several mood boards so it would help to imagine the actual event and create the atmosphere of that. Couple to which the plan was created for, had the same feeling about the plan, they liked it a lot and were thankful for the ideas that author suggested. The couple found it very easy to follow, informative and was satisfied with the vendors list and the wedding style that was proposed by the author. Before presenting the plan to the couple, the author had a chance to discuss it with her ex-colleagues from the wedding planning agency she worked for. She received a positive feedback from them and were glad that it was evaluated by professionals of wedding industry field.

To create the wedding plan, she used her own framework that was made by combining the theoretical studies and her work experience. The framework was created by researching what are the most essential wedding elements for the couple and proving it by author's professional experience in wedding planning and theory points she studied. Researching about the cultural aspects and behaviour in addition to event management studies helped the author to gain new knowledge, and link it to already existing one from lectures at Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences.

The hardest part was to learn how to use the new tool - Canva. The author did not have an experience of creating such work. The process was slow, as she was experimenting with style, colours, font, choosing the right images and words so it would be perfect. She tried to look for an inspiration from popular wedding blogs and social media and eventually could find her own style. Luckily, author's thesis supervisor was helpful and supportive. It was easy to reach her and ask for a feedback and ideas on improvement. During the process of Wedding plan creation, the author submitted the half-ready plan and received a very positive and inspiring comments that encouraged her even more.

4 Discussion

4.1 The Thesis Process

Before starting to work on the thesis it was very important for the author to find the topic she would be interested in. As wedding planning and cultures were the most favourite topics for her, she quickly accepted the offer to plan a cross-culture wedding. The author considered it exciting and extremely interesting to see how could she combine her knowledge and experience while working on this thesis. It turned out that chosen topic and theoretical background, she prepared during the process, are the great combination for author's future career. Even though author already has an experience in wedding industry, she handled this project herself and was happy to have a freedom of choice.

The part that author enjoyed the most was creating the actual wedding plan. From the very beginning author already knew how the plan should look like. She imagined it very bright, full of pictures and small details. The idea behind it was to make a plan that will remind a mini magazine. To create the plan author used Canva – a graphic design tool. It was her first experience working with Canva, the process was slow as she had to learn the features of the tool, but very interesting.

At the time of writing the thesis, in addition to author's part-time job, she also got a full-time position in another company. New job and schedule slowed down the process, and for some months' author could not work on it at all. Finishing the theory chapter took most of the time, as it required a lot of concentration and literature research. Another challenge author would highlight was the ability to apply her own knowledge and experience. As thesis must be based on academic material it was mandatory to find the literature that would support author's thoughts and knowledge. Her experience of working in wedding industry was a big plus, but also a challenge because sometimes it was complicated to find the supporting theoretical base. Luckily, the author could find the suitable literature and refer to that. Despite the fact that process of creating the Plan took longer than was anticipated, the author was glad that she took more time to work on each small detail and present the Plan of a good quality. She learnt a lot of new things while working on the Plan.

There was a good communication between author and thesis supervisor, either by email or personal meetings. The author's thesis supervisor was very supportive and understanding so meetings were set up whenever it was needed. The author claims that good communication and connection with her thesis supervisor was very important and encouraging. She would like to recommend other students to find a supervisor with whom they

could build a good cooperation. The presence of such supportive and understanding supervisor was very helpful during the process of her work in this thesis.

4.2 Learning Outcome

As was stated previously, for the author it was extremely important to choose the topic among her interests. Different cultures and traditions are the ones that could be highlighted the most. During her work on this thesis, she had a great opportunity to learn about Finnish and Singaporean cultures. The author had many face to face discussions with the Finnish-Singaporean couple, she had a chance to learn about Singaporean and Finnish weddings, Malaysian wedding traditions and customs, engagement process, rituals, taboos, and rules.

Another topic that author was really interested in is the event management with the focus on weddings. One of the most significant learning outcomes of this work was a managerial experience in wedding planning. The author had a chance to act as a wedding planner for a cross-cultural wedding. She was aiming to combine both cultures and create a wedding plan that will consider all cultural aspects and pay attention to each detail of the event. The author claims that she succeeded and gained essential experience.

While literature research and study of necessary material for the theoretical part, the author learned about: event types, phases of event planning, factors that influence modern weddings, roles of a planner, reasons of increasing demand on wedding planners services, differences between Finnish and Singaporean cultures and challenges of an intercultural wedding.

During the process of making the wedding plan, the author developed new skills and interests. To create the plan, she used a Canva tool. The tool had a lot of options and different features that helped her to discover her new skill- designing. In addition to that author went through and explored some wedding and fashion trends to make a beautiful and informative plan for the couple.

In conclusion, it is worth mentioning that time management is very important while working on such a big project as a thesis. Setting up deadlines is essential and very useful during the process. Established deadlines and clear structure motivates to finish it in time with a less stress. In addition to that, working on one part at a time improves concentration and quality of work.

References

- Allan, A. 2010. Ethical practices in psychology. John Wiley & Sons. Melbourne.
- Allen, J. 2005. Time management for Event Planners. John Wiley & Sons. New York.
- Barczak, G., MCDonough, E.F. & Athanassiou, N. 2006. So you want to be a global project leader? *Research Technology Management*, 49, 3, pp.28.
- Bride's Magazine Editors. 2003. *Bride's Book of Etiquette*. The Berkley Publishing Group. New York.
- Bride Wars*. 2009. [film]. Directed by G. Winick. United States: 20th Century Fox.
- Brewster, M. 2010. Special Event Production: The Process, Special Event Production: The Resources. *Tourism Management*, 31, 4, pp. 558-559.
- Cross Culture. 2017. The Lewis Model – Dimensions of Behaviour. URL: <https://www.crossculture.com/latest-news/the-lewis-model-dimensions-of-behaviour/>. Accessed: 16 November 2017.
- Daniels, M. & Loveless, C. 2007. *Wedding planning & management*. 1st ed. Routledge. Abingdon.
- Daniels, M. & Loveless, C. 2014. *Wedding planning & management*. 2nd ed. Routledge. New York.
- Doell, S. 2008. *Picture Yourself Planning Your Perfect Wedding: Step-by-step Instruction for Planning, Organizing, and Personalizing Your Wedding*. Thomson Course Technology PTR. Boston.
- Dowson, R. & Bassett, D. 2015. *Event planning and management*. Kogan Page. London.
- Getz, D. 2005. *Event management and event tourism*. 2nd ed. Cognizant. New York.
- Getz, D. 2007. *Event studies: Theory, research and policy for planned events*. Elsevier. Oxford.

- Hargie, O. 2011. *Skilled Interpersonal Communication: Research, Theory and Practise*. 5th edition. Routledge. New York.
- Haviland, W. A, Prins, H. E, McBride, B. & Walrath, D. 2013. *Cultural anthropology: the human challenge*. 14th edition. Wadsworth Publishing.
- Hofstede, G. H. 1984. *Culture's consequences: International Differences in work related values*. Sage Publications. Newbury Park.
- Hofstede, G. H. 2001. *Culture's Consequences: Comparing Values, Behaviours, Institutions and Organisations Across Countries*. 2nd edition. Sage Publications, Inc. London.
- Hofstede Insights. 2017. Country Comparison. URL: <https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country-comparison/finland,singapore/>. Accessed: 16 November 2017.
- Kitzinger, C. & Wilkinson, S. 2004. The re-branding of marriage: why we got married instead of registering a civil partnership. *Feminism & psychology*, 4, 1, pp. 127-150.
- Knight E. 2008. History undressed. *History of Weddings: From the Middle Ages to the Present*. URL: <http://www.historyundressed.com/2008/06/history-of-weddingsfrom-middle-ages-to.html>. Accessed 18 July 2017.
- Lewis, R. 2006. *When Cultures Collide: Leading Across Cultures*. 3rd edition. Nicholas Brealey Publishing. Boston.
- Lee, H.W. 2006. "International human resource management can be achieved through cultural studies and relevant training". *The Business Review*, 5, 2, pp. 95.
- Matthews, D. 2008. *Special Event Production: The Process*. Butterworth-Heinemann. Oxford.
- Merriam-Webster. 2017. URL: <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary>. Accessed: 7 December 2017.
- My Best Friend's Wedding*. 1997. [film]. Directed by P. Hogan. United States: TriStar Pictures.

Research Methodology. 2016. Research Methods. Necessary knowledge to conduct a business research. URL: <http://research-methodology.net/research-methods/>. Accessed: 17 May 2017.

Romano, D. 2008. Intercultural Marriage: Promises and Pitfalls. 3rd ed. Nicholas Brealey Publication. Boston.

Singapore Expats. 2017. Facts at a Glance. URL: <https://www.singaporeexpats.com/about-singapore/facts-at-a-glance.htm>. Accessed: 12 November 2017.

Stains, R.R. 2012. Reflection for collection: Deepening dialogue through reflective processes, *Conflict Resolution Quarterly*, 30,1, pp. 33-51.

This is Finland. 2017. Facts, Stats and Info. URL: <https://finland.fi/category/facts-stats-and-info/>. Accessed: 12 November 2017.

The Wedding Planner. 2001. [film]. Directed by A. Shankman. United States: Columbia Pictures.

Toossi, M. 2012. Labour Force projections to 2020: a more slowly growing workforce. US Bureau of Labour Statistics. URL: <https://www.bls.gov/opub/mlr/2012/01/art3full.pdf>. Accessed 10 January 2018.

Visit Finland. 2017. About Finland. URL: <http://www.visitfinland.com/about-finland/>. Accessed: 12 November 2017.

Visit Singapore. 2017. See and Do. URL: <http://www.visitsingapore.com/see-do-singapore/>. Accessed: 12 November 2017.

Wang, W. 2012. The Rise of Intermarriage. Pew Research Centre. Washington. URL: <http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/files/2012/02/SDT-Intermarriage-II.pdf>. Accessed 19 June 2017.

Walsham, G. 2002. Cross-cultural software production and use: a structural analysis. *MIS Quarterly*, 26, 4, pp. 359-380.

Appendices

Appendix 1. Qualitative Interview

Qualitative interview held with Finnish-Singaporean couple about the planning of their wedding

- What season and month of the year you would like to get married?
 - Summer time for sure. July would be nice or maybe in August. Not June though, the weather is still too unpredictable
- What ceremony type would you like to have: Religious, Civil or Symbolic?
 - Due to neither of us, or our immediate families being religious, we want to have a Civil marriage with a symbolic ceremony
- Would you like to have your ceremony indoors or outdoors?
 - Outdoors for sure!
- What would be the geographical location of your wedding?
 - In Finland, but not in Helsinki. My family is from Porvoo, so that would be an ideal place. Porvoo is also very beautiful.
- How many guests are you planning to invite?
 - Family and close friends only, so 40-50 people max.
- What kind of cuisine would you like to have during your wedding reception? What kind of wedding cake?
 - Fusion food, Malaysian and Finnish. The cake should be a tiered cake (American style), decorated with flowers. The flavor should be classic white cake with white frosting.
- Are there any diets that need to be considered?
 - Yes, there are many special diets in our family. There is vegetarian, milk-free, gluten free, vegan, and pescatarian diet. Because of these restrictions, the wedding cake should be milk-free. There should be a separate, smaller cake for the other dietary restrictions (gluten-free and vegan)
- What alcohol would you like to be served during the celebration?
 - Limited alcohol, Hafeez's family doesn't drink so there must always been plenty of non-alcoholic options available. Sparkling wine for the toast and only wine with dinner, white or red. No body should get drink
- Who will be the celebrant at your wedding?
 - I would like my maternal grandfather to do it.
- Would you like to hire musicians/and DJ for your wedding? If yes what kind of music would it be?

- Yes. Acoustic music in slow pop style. Perhaps a Duo, singing and playing guitar
- Are you planning to hire a floral designer? If yes what elements of floral and not only decoration would you like to have at your wedding?
 - I would like to have many flowers at the wedding. In fact, almost all decorations should be fresh flowers. We would like flowers on the wedding arch, center pieces, and of course bridal bouquet. Flowers can also be used to decorate chairs and walkways.
- What colors or theme would you like to use at your wedding?
 - Very fresh and inspired by nature. Mostly white with green and gold.
- Are you planning to hire a make-up and hair stylist? If yes, do you already have an idea of your image?
 - I don't plan on hiring a makeup artist, but I would like a professional hair stylist. I want the style to be fresh and dewy, and hair to be loosely up and with fresh flowers.
- Will you use services of photographer and videographer? Do you have anyone in mind?
 - Yes, we will. Hafeez has many friends who are professional photographers and videographers. We will use one of these, and likely get a discounted rate.
- Are you planning to have a wedding invitations? If yes, what form will it be: paper or electronic version?
 - We would like very simple invitations with white background. The invitations should reflect the theme of the wedding, so have our wedding colors and flowers.
- Have you thought about your wedding attire? If yes, do you know the actual store where you can purchase it? How should it look like?
 - I would like a trumpet gown with long sleeves and an off the shoulder necklike. I have briefly started looking, and White Dress, Stockmann's own bridal boutique has dresses of this style. Hafeez will wear a suit, dark grey.
- What is your wedding budget?
 - 15000-20000 euros, in total. Hafeez's parents will be helping with some
- Is there anything else that needs to be taken into consideration?
 - Due the conservative nature of Hafeez's culture, we need to be careful in how we design and present things. Malay culture values clean and new things, so for example their popular rustic style of wedding would be looked upon as dirty and cheap. Also the wedding dress cannot reveal too much skin (thus the long sleeves) and all guests must be dressed in a classical style.

Appendix 2. Own Framework

Vendors	Sources	Actual Place	Comments
Wedding Planner	Daniels & Loveless 2014, 4-12	Elena Nikulina	Couple did not plan to hire any wedding planner but in this case author is acting as one.
Venue	Daniels & Loveless 2007, 144	Haikko Manor Kiala Manor Hirvihaaran Kartano (Glass Pavilion)	Couple would like to celebrate their wedding in Porvoo, so all listed venues are situated in there.
Catering	Doell 2008, 222-229 Daniels & Loveless 2014, 163-177	AteriAx Catering Catering Henriksen Runda Munken Base Catering	Catering company should provide menus that take into consideration cultural aspects of the guests, special food allergies and special diets.
Baker (wedding cake)	Doell 2008, 138-143 Bride's Magazine Editors 2003,15 Daniels & Loveless 2014, 178 Knight 2008	Kakkukuningatar KakkuGalleria Say It With a Cake	Wedding cake should be of simple design, in white or pastel pink colour and decorated with live flowers.
Floral Design	Doell 2008, 133-136 Daniels & Loveless 2014, 245-256	Hey Look Kukkakauppa Madonna Henriettas blom-mor	Couple would like to have a lot of floral decoration at their venue. It will be one of the most essential details of the wedding.

Photographer	Doell 2008, 144-147 Daniels & Loveless 2014, 293-302	Friends	Couple will use their personal connections to hire professional photographer and videographer for the event.
Videographer	Doell 2008, 148 Daniels & Loveless 2014, 303	Friends	See above.
Musicians or DJ	Doell 2008, 230 Daniels & Loveless 2014, 311-318	Duo Ihana	A musical duo will perform soft, acoustic music during the event.
Bridal make-up and hair style	Doell 2008, 194 Daniels & Loveless 2014, 199	Rudneva Beauty Expert	For a bride, it is important to avoid any extra stress during the ceremony, so hiring a professional make-up and hair stylist will help her to make preparation easier and stress free.

Appendix 3. Finnish – Singaporean Wedding Plan

PLAN FOR A SINGAPOREAN-FINNISH WEDDING IN FINLAND

INTRODUCTION

This Wedding plan is created for a Singaporean-Finnish couple to help to organize their wedding in Finland. Author of this plan has a professional experience in wedding industry and knowledge of cross-cultural communication and management.

This Plan will include suggestions on wedding venues, ceremony, catering companies, florists, music, bakers, makeup and hairstylist, and other important elements of a wedding. Due to the couple's unique story and background, their wedding will showcase interesting aspects of cultural features, traditions and restrictions.

This Wedding Plan can act as an inspiration and be useful for other couples as well, by giving an idea on how to plan your own wedding and what should be taken into consideration in intercultural weddings.

Framework of the Wedding Plan

This Plan is based on the following framework and literature, which has the most essential wedding elements that were chosen by the wedding planner, together with a couple. It includes a list of possible vendors for the wedding and author's comments. This framework will help to finalise the wedding plan by choosing vendors from the suggested list. In addition to it, Author's table will help to keep all the information in one place, and can be used as a wedding checklist.

Vendors	Sources	Actual Place	Comments
Wedding Planner	Daniels & Loveless 2014, 4-12	Elena Nikulina	Couple did not plan to hire any wedding planner but in this case author is acting as one.
Venue	Daniels & Loveless 2007, 144	Haikko Manor Kiala Manor Hirvihaaran Kartano (Glass Pavilion)	Couple would like to celebrate their wedding in Porvoo, so all listed venues are situated in there.
Catering	Doell 2008, 222-229 Daniels & Loveless 2014, 163-177	AteriAx Catering Catering Henriksson Runda Munken Base Catering	Catering company should provide menus that take into consideration cultural aspects of the guests, special food allergies and special diets.
Baker (wedding cake)	Doell 2008, 138-143 Bride's Magazine Editors 2003,15 Daniels & Loveless 2014, 178 Knight 2008	Kakkukuningatar KakkuGalleria Say It With a Cake	Wedding cake should be of simple design, in white or pastel pink colour and decorated with live flowers.
Floral Design	Doell 2008, 133-136 Daniels & Loveless 2014, 245-256	Hey Look Kukkakauppa Madonna Henriettas blommor	Couple would like to have a lot of floral decoration at their venue. It will be one of the most

			essential details of the wedding.
Photographer	Doell 2008, 144-147 Daniels & Loveless 2014, 293-302	Friends	Couple will use their personal connections to hire professional photographer and videographer for the event.
Videographer	Doell 2008, 148 Daniels & Loveless 2014, 303	Friends	See above.
Musicians or DJ	Doell 2008, 230 Daniels & Loveless 2014, 311-318	Duo Ihana	A musical duo will perform soft, acoustic music during the event.
Bridal make-up and hair style	Doell 2008, 194 Daniels & Loveless 2014, 199	Rudneva Beauty Expert	For a bride, it is important to avoid any extra stress during the ceremony, so hiring a professional make-up and hair stylist will help her to make preparation easier and stress free.





"I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU HUSBAND AND WIFE"

Wedding Ceremony

For a non-religious couple that wish to celebrate their wedding in a special way - a Symbolic Ceremony would be the best option, due to the greater possibility to express freedom and unique cultural elements.

A Symbolic Ceremony allows you to keep and/or blend different wedding traditions such as the bride entrance, the exchange of rings, and vows while maintaining a traditional, "wedding-esque" atmosphere.

The advantage of such Ceremony is the possibility to assign the celebrant, in this case couple is choosing bride's grandfather to perform as a celebrant.



Having a Symbolic Ceremony is also ideal for the couple as it allows great freedom in venue selection. Since this specific wedding has been planned to take place outdoors during the summer and have only 50 guests in attendance, mainly family members and close friends, the ceremony can be easily adapted for any venue.



Documentation

Because a Symbolic Ceremony has no legal value, the couple should officially register their marriage at Magistrate (Maistraatti) local register office at latest 7 days before their wedding day.

Before the official registration, it is mandatory to request the investigation of impediments to marriage at the local register office.

The request can be initiated by a visit to the local register office and filling in the investigation request form, or filled out at home and posted to said office. If the form is filled at home, the signatures of two witnesses are required.

Since the groom is a citizen of Singapore, a statement of his marital status, to prove there is no foreign impediments to marriage, is required from his home country. It may be obtained from his home country's accredited embassy or consulate.

Once the investigation is complete, the ready certificate should be submitted to the officiator before the marriage registration. This certificate is valid for four months.



CEREMONY MOOD BOARD & INFORMATION



THE WALK DOWN THE AISLE

At the wedding there will be families of both bride and groom. Bride's Father will make walk down to the aisle, to hand the bride to the groom at the Altar.



THE RIGHT WAY

The way to the Altar can be decorated either with: plants and flowers on both sides, candles, or white carpet. The frame of the Wedding Arch should not be visible, instead being covered and decorated with flowers, plants and leaves.



CHAIRS

Chairs at the ceremony should be simple: wooden and/or white, optionally decorated with flowers/plants/leaves.

MUSIC

During the walk down the Aisle, a musical duo will play soft, acoustic music.

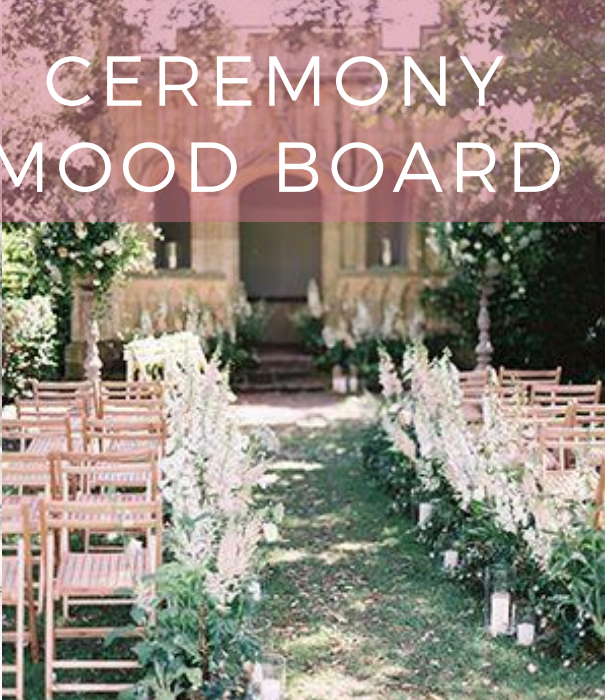
THINGS TO KNOW AND REMEMBER

- Wedding will happen in August 2019, so the weather will likely be favourable.
- Start to prepare all necessary documents and register in Maistraatti in advance: June-July
- Since the wedding ceremony will take place outdoors, prepare water bottles, fans and thermal water sprays for your guests to feel refreshed if needed.

Pictures found on:
<https://unsplash.com/photos/BN0HcaBdPug>
www.pinterest.com



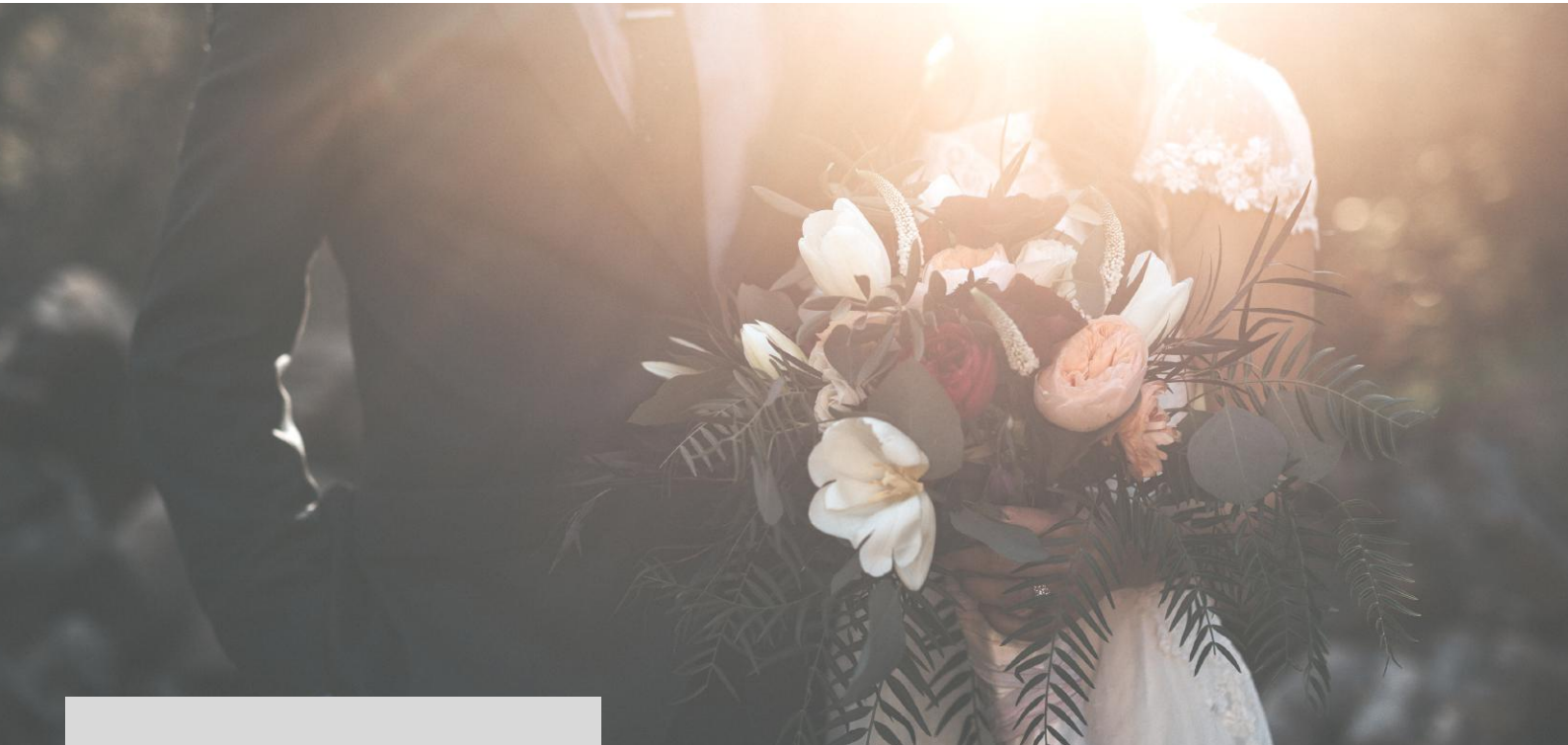
CEREMONY MOOD BOARD



Pictures found on:
www.pinterest.com

WEDDING VENUE

The most important element of the wedding



WHY PORVOO?

- Bride's hometown
- Great place to introduce Finnish culture and history
- Beautiful architecture, Unesco World Heritage Sites
- Must see destination in Finland
- Located nearby to Helsinki
- Budget friendly

WEDDING LOCATION-PORVOO

It is very important to choose the right venue when planning a wedding. For this couple, the ceremony and reception will happen in one place. Since the ceremony will be held outdoors, the chosen venue should have space with a nice surrounding or view.

Following the roots of the bride, the wedding reception and ceremony will take place in Porvoo. Many family members from the bride's side live there, while the groom's family is coming from Singapore.

Porvoo is a very popular tourist destination and the second oldest town in Finland. The town has beautiful historical architecture and Unesco World Heritage Sites to show. This little and charming town is a perfect location to celebrate a wedding of a Finn and Singaporean by introducing the bride's hometown and culture to the groom's family.

As many of the wedding guests will be Porvoo locals, only guests from Singapore will need to be accommodated. The accommodation is already chosen, it will be Ida-Maria Bed & Breakfast located in the heart of the old town of Porvoo.

Picture found on: https://unsplash.com/photos/5BB_atDT4oA

VENUES

PHOTO BY HANNU
SÄÄSKILAHTI



KIALA MANOR

Kiala Manor is one of Finland's biggest farms with a long history that begins in 15th Century. It is located few kilometers from Porvoo's Old Town.

Kiala Manor has been owned by many families, each leaving their unique marks. Finnish National artist Albert Edelfelt was born in the Manor and made few paintings from there. Main facility of Kaila Manor is the Assembly hall. It was reconstructed to have it's original look and historical atmosphere with a beautiful view of Kaila Garden and old town of Porvoo. The room fits 120 people and club room 20 people.

HIRVIHAARAN KARTANO-GLASS PAVILION

The Manor of Hirvihaara has a history of 100 years. It combines elegant design with wonderful food, hospitality and beautiful nature. The Manor is located 42km from Porvoo and 60km from Helsinki, which makes it easy to reach from both towns.

In 2013, a marvelous glass pavilion was built next to the Manor. Many famous launches and events have taken place in the beautiful space. Large glass walls with their iron grid and chandeliers make the pavilion a fantastic place to celebrate the wedding. The pavilion fits 170 people.



Picture found on
venue's web page

VENUES



HAIKKO MANOR

The Haikko Manor is one of the most popular locations to celebrate the wedding in Finland. Haikko Manor is only 7 km from Porvoo city centre and 45km from Helsinki.

Historic Manor building of 19th Century located in a wonderful park by the sea. Lovely surroundings will help to create truly beautiful wedding photos.

Elegant and romantic Manor is also known for its expertise on banqueting and fantastic menus. Haikko Manor offers suitable wine selection according to the chosen menu.

VILLA HAIKKO

In addition to the Manor House premises, there is also a Villa Haikko- charming archipelago style villa located by the sea with the view to the park.

Villa's downstairs hall seats up to 230 people in banquets and 100 in meetings. There are also two separate rooms with balconies upstairs. Villa Haikko will be a good choice to celebrate such unique wedding in a relaxed atmosphere.





CONTACT DETAILS



KIALA MANOR
Kiialantie 77, 06500 Porvoo

E-mail: kialagard@kialagard.com

Website: <http://www.kialagard.com>

**HIRVIHAARAN
KARTANO-GLASS
PAVILION**
Kartanonlenkki 56, 04680 Hirvihaara

Email: enquiries@hirvihaarankartano.fi

Website: <https://hirvihaarankartano.fi/fi>

HAIKKO MANOR
Haikkoontie 114, 06400
Porvoo

E-mail: reception@haikko.fi

Website: <http://www.haikko.fi>

PICTURES FOUND ON
VENUES WEB PAGES



FOOD AND BEVERAGES AT WEDDING RECEPTION

LET THE PARTY BEGIN !



SPECIAL DIETS AT YOUR WEDDING:

- gluten-free
- lactose-free
- dairy-free
- pescetarian
- vegetarian

BEVERAGES AT YOUR WEDDING

- selection of red and white wines
- sparkling wine
- non-alcoholic drinks/and cocktails

Wedding reception is a very important element of each wedding. Party usually held after the marriage ceremony as hospitality for those who have attended the wedding.

Wedding reception is a great chance to celebrate such beautiful moment with your beloved ones. It is also a great opportunity to introduce two families to each other. In case of upcoming Finnish-Singaporean wedding some relatives will meet for the first time.

Wedding ceremony will take place at the same venue at 2:00 p.m. Between ceremony and reception guests will be offered a to have a sparkling wine or a non-alcoholic drink. It is essential to have a good selection of non-alcoholic drinks for the groom's family. Special diets are another aspect that should be carefully discussed with a catering company or venue's restaurant. Since the wedding is taking place in Finland, dishes of traditional Finnish and European cuisines should be served.

CATERING

Many venues are accompanied by restaurants that provide food and drinks for their events, but if that's not the case here is the list of catering companies:



ATERIAX

www.ateriaux.fi
+35892415803
myyntipalvelu@haukilampi.fi
Haukilammentie 35, 05250
Nurmijärvi

BASE CATERING

www.basecatering.fi
+358105248210
micke@basecatering.fi
Asentajankatu 5, 00880
Helsinki

CATERING HENRIKSSON

www.cateringhenriksson.fi
+358405477776
myynti@cateringhenriksson.fi
Teollisuustie 4, 06100 Porvoo

RUNDA MUNKEN

www.rundamunken.fi
+358400905541
loviisa@rundamunken.fi
Aleksanterinkatu 6, 07900 Loviisa



WEDDING RECEPTION MOOD BOARD



PICTURES FOUND ON:
WWW.PINTEREST.COM

WEDDING

ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW



REMEMBER!

- check the food allergies with your baker
- order a separate cake or desert for special diets if needed
- agree on transportation of the cake
- control the temperature and place of your cake's storage
- ask your baker where is the best spot to cut the cake
- discuss the desired poses during your cake cutting with the photographer. Explain how do you image it

The cake cutting is a popular and meaningful reception moment. The wedding cake cutting has a history and traditions that were evolved with the times. According to The Knot 2016 Real Weddings Study, 89% of couples cut the cake during their wedding reception. This tradition is a symbol of couple's first mutual task as newlyweds. After cutting the cake they feed each other the first slice, it means commitment to provide for one another.

This tradition is a perfect moment for taking great photos. Make sure to agree with your photographer how would you want to be captured, discuss how do you imagine this important shot.

After the cake cutting and taking photos, the staff of the restaurant or catering will bring the cake to the kitchen and slice it for the guests. If there are any special diets the separate cake or desert could be prepared and served.

WEDDING CAKE

where can you get it?

There are many nice places to order your cake, but to make it easier here are some amazing providers you can choose from



SAY IT WITH A CAKE

www.sayitwithacake.fi
+358445463473
contact@sayitwithacake.fi
Isokaari 40 B, 00200
Helsinki



KAKKUKUNINGATAR OY

www.facebook.com/Kakkukuningatar
+358405752111
Lohentie 54, 06150 Porvoo



KAKKU GALLERIA

www.kakkugalleria.com
+358092412014
info@kakkugalleria.com
Bulevardi 34, 00101
Helsinki

YOUR WEDDING CAKE

Cake at your wedding should be of simple design, in white or pastel pink color. The decoration of the cake would be live flowers, eucalyptus plant leaves or other suitable plants. It is important that leaves and flowers do not look dry as it is not acceptable in a Singaporean culture (dry plants/flowers would symbolize death).



WEDDING CAKE MOOD BOARD



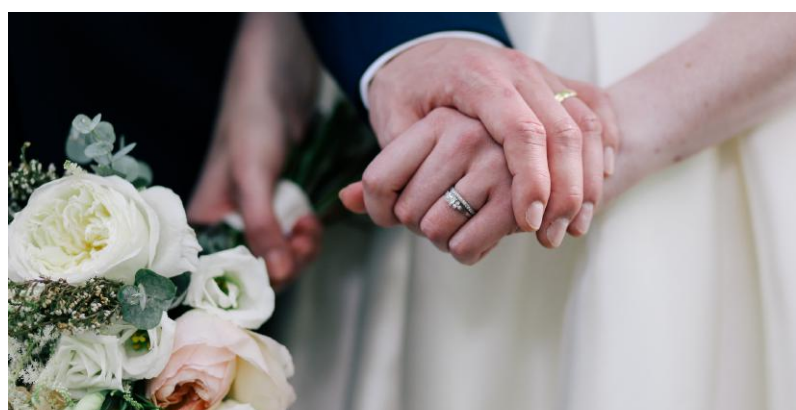


FLORAL ELEMENTS AND DESIGN AT THE WEDDING

Here is the list of decoration elements for your wedding to discuss with a floral designer:

- wedding arch
- decoration of the chairs outdoors (for the ceremony)
- decoration of the way to altar (plants and flowers on both sides, candles, or white carpet)
- candles (for the wedding reception and/or the way to the Altar)
- center pieces for your wedding reception
- bridal bouquet
- boutonniere for the groom (should be in the same style with a bridal bouquet)
- flowers and plants for the wedding cake (should also be discussed with your confectioner)

Visual examples of required elements can be found from the ceremony mood board, wedding reception mood board, wedding cake mood board and bridal bouquet & boutonniere mood board.



FLOWER SHOPS

Inside the Issue

HEY LOOK

Madonna



HEY LOOK

www.heylook.fi
+358207419080
heylook@heylook.fi
Pääskylänrinne 10 LH4,
00500 Helsinki

KUKKAKAUPA MADONNA

www.madonnakukat.com
+3589174941
info@madonnankukat.com
Mariankatu 14, 00170
Helsinki

HENRIETTAS BLOMMOR

www.henrietta.fi
+358401393344
Jokikatu 37, 06100
Wanha Porvoo

AUTHOR'S RECOMMENDATIONS

Considering the fact that floral decoration is one of the most essential parts of your wedding day, i would recommend HEY LOOK. Company has a great experience of designing the weddings in your style.



BRIDAL BOUQUET & BOUTONNIÈRE MOOD BOARD



PICTURES FOUND ON:
WWW.PINTEREST.COM

WEDDING INVITATIONS



WHERE TO GET IT

- www.etsy.com - a website where you can order customized handcrafted wedding invitations with a good price
- prices: starting from 0,50 Euros per invitation. It is possible to buy the whole set as well
- the website allows to get in contact with the seller and discuss the deal
- additional cost for the delivery

WEDDING INVITATIONS DESIGN

- colors: green, emerald, clear white, gold, pastel pink, dusty pink
- textured paper
- wax seal stamp on the wedding invitations
- initials of bride and groom
- watercolor elements, for example flowers, plants, leaves



MUSIC

Duo Ihana

Music at the wedding : soft, acoustic

Who? Duo Ihana

Contacts:

- E-mail: duoihana@gmail.com

- 358408757404

- Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/pg/duoihana/about/?ref=page_internal


- <http://www.starpoint.fi/ohjelmatoimisto-starpoint/duoihana/516>


Whitman, Ella Fitzgerald, John Lennon, The Jackson 5, Al Green, Ray Charles, Frank Sinatra. ,

i Personal Interests

Hääjuhlat, Ristiäiset, Valmistujaiset, Syntymäpäiväjuhlat, Pikkujoulut, Uuden Vuoden kutsut, Illalliskutsut, Cocktailtilaisuudet sekä muut tapahtumat.

CONTACT DETAILS

 Call 0408757404

 @duoihana

[Send Message](#)

1 Mic & 1 Take

Special thanks to Tuukka Heinonen.


Contact:

duoihana@gmail.com
[starpoint.fi/ohjelmatoimisto-starpoint/duoihana/516](http://www.starpoint.fi/ohjelmatoimisto-starpoint/duoihana/516)

Links:

[facebook.com/duoihana/](https://www.facebook.com/duoihana/)
[instagram.com/duoihana/](https://www.instagram.com/duoihana/)

[Comments](#) [Share on your wall](#) [Like 0](#)



Wedding Attire and Stylist Bridal Look

Dresses Brand

S T . P A T R I C K

SINCE 1964

Model

FAUNA

WHITE ONE

Sensual wedding dress with illusion neckline and long sleeves with a second-skin effect. An elegant low waist mermaid design, with a V-neck, which streamlines the silhouette and accentuates feminine curves. A dress made of embroidered tulle, lace and grosgrain complemented with a delicate waistband.

Store

White Dress

Stockmann 7th floor
Aleksanterinkatu 52B,

Helsinki

www.whitedress.fi

info@whitedress.fi

+358400379369



Wedding Attire and Stylist Bridal Look

Model

FORZA

WHITE ONE

Lovely mermaid wedding dress in lace and tulle. A design with lots of movement that plays with the sensuality of the fabric and the sweetheart neckline to enhance the silhouette. A backless dress with detachable sleeves that match the fabric of the dress.



Wedding Attire and Stylist Bridal Look



Makeup and Hairstyle

- Natural makeup, without bright colors
- Hairstyle and flowers as on photos
- Wavy hair

Author's recommendation



Rudneva Beauty Expert is a very experienced makeup artist and hairstylist.

She will help to create an ideal bridal look for your wedding day.

Contact information:

www.rudneva.fi

rudneva.beauty@gmail.com

+358400411081

Kauneushoitola "Rudneva Beauty Expert"

Välimerenkatu 13A Jätkäsaari, Helsinki

An approximate budget of the wedding for the presented vendors

Expenses	Price Range in Euros
Wedding Venue	650-2100
Catering	1250-2500
Beverages	300-700
Decoration (including flower design)	1000-6000
Wedding invitations	50-70
Music	400-1000
Makeup and hairstylist	175
Attire for a bride	500-5000
Attire for a groom	200-1500
Wedding Cake	150-600

