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TAÏSSY PATRIS

# **Exporting a Product from the Yrttipaja Brand of Finnish Company Nordic Herbs Oy to Belgium: An Ex- port Feasibility Study**

BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION IN 2024-2025

Patris Taïssy: *Exporting a Product from the Yrttipaja Brand of Finnish Company Nordic Herbs Oy to Belgium: An Export Feasibility Study*

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This thesis studied the market feasibility of introducing Finnish organic nighttime herbal infusions into the Belgian market. As nighttime infusions represent the top-selling product category for the case company in Finland, this research focused on the potential of exporting this signature product to a new European market.

The objective of the study was to evaluate whether a Finnish organic infusion brand could successfully enter the Belgian market. The study was conducted as a market feasibility analysis, combining qualitative and quantitative methods. First, secondary research was carried out using academic literature, market data, and sector reports on herbal tea consumption trends. Then, primary research was conducted through interviews with professionals in the Belgian organic retail sector, including bio shop managers, wholesalers, and specialized retailers.

The results showed that Belgian consumers are increasingly interested in organic and functional beverages, especially those related to well-being, such as sleep-enhancing products. Nighttime infusions are a recognized category in Belgium, and their demand is growing. However, the market is already competitive, and success would depend on the brand's ability to differentiate itself through storytelling, ecological values, and taste. Distribution in trusted organic shops was considered a key success factor.

In conclusion, it was found that exporting the Finnish nighttime infusion to Belgium is feasible, provided that the company adapts its branding and marketing to local expectations, invests in visibility, and partners with relevant actors in the organic retail ecosystem.

**Keywords:** Organic tea, nighttime infusions, Belgium, market research feasibility, Finland, herbal products, bio shops, sustainable branding, consumer behavior

## PREFACE

This thesis was conducted as part of the final requirements for completing my Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration at Satakunta University of Applied Sciences in Rauma, as well as my Degree in International Business at EPHEC Brussels.

The study was carried out in collaboration with the client company Nordic Herbs, a Finnish organic infusion company that approved my proposal to conduct a market study in Belgium. The company expressed particular interest in assessing the export potential of its best-selling nighttime infusion product. I would like to thank Nordic Herbs for their trust and for giving me the opportunity to work on such a concrete and meaningful project. My sincere thanks go especially to Keir Cornelius, Chief Operating Officer at Nordic Herbs, for his consistent availability during interviews and for his valuable support throughout the process.

I would also like to express my gratitude to all the professionals from the Belgian organic retail sector who agreed to participate in interviews and shared valuable insights particularly the staff of the organic store "Autre Chose" in Rixensart. Their contributions were essential for gaining a solid understanding of the field.

Finally, I would like to thank my supervisor, Jamie Haanpää, for her guidance and continuous support during the writing of this thesis.

Brussels, January March 2025

Taïssy Patris

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

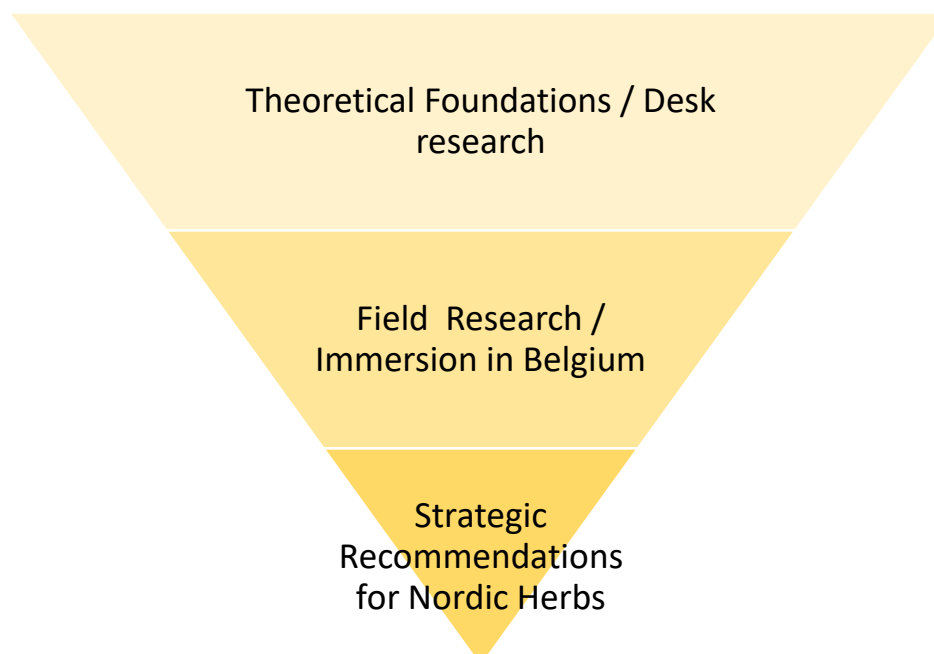
This research focuses on evaluating the potential of introducing the Yrttipaja brand infusions to the Belgian market by exploring the opportunities and challenges associated with this expansion.

Framed by the central question, “Exporting a product from the Yrttipaja brand of the Finnish company Nordic Herbs Oy to Belgium: a feasibility study,” this research combines a thorough theoretical analysis with field research to present a precise and well-informed assessment.

This work aims to provide a clear and well-reasoned perspective on the feasibility of an expansion into Belgium, highlighting the key levers to activate in order to maximise the chances of success for my client company.

### 1.1 Key axes

I've separate this study around three key axes :



*I Study Key Axes*

- 1) Theoretical foundations : An exploration of key concepts, including export strategies, market entry barriers, and consumer trends in the infusion sector.
- 2) Field research : A direct immersion into the Belgian market to understand consumer preferences, competitive dynamics, and the prevailing regulatory framework.
- 3) Strategic recommendations : Building on the insights gained from the first two sections, a set of concrete recommendations will be formulated to guide Nordic Herbs Oy's decision-making process.

## 2 RESEARCH CONTEXT AND METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Research Problem

The research problem addresses the question of whether the Belgian market presents a viable opportunity for the export and commercialization of the “Good Night” herbal infusions under the Yrttipaja brand by Nordic Herbs Oy. This problem arises from the need to assess the potential demand, consumer preferences, competitive landscape, and regulatory environment specific to Belgium. Identifying these factors is essential to determine the feasibility of successful market entry and to minimize risks associated with international expansion.

### 2.2 Relevance to Market Entry

Understanding the Belgian market is crucial for Nordic Herbs Oy to develop an informed export strategy. This research contributes valuable insights into the alignment between the company's product offerings and the preferences of Belgian consumers. Moreover, it sheds light on market-specific challenges, such as distribution networks, pricing strategies, and compliance with EU regulations. By addressing these aspects, the study supports Nordic Herbs Oy

in making data-driven decisions regarding market entry, ensuring resources are allocated effectively to maximize the likelihood of success.

### 2.3 Objectives and Hypotheses

To raise awareness of Yrttipaja's products in the Belgian market, it is essential to conduct in-depth market research to understand consumer preferences and the specific demand for herbal products in Belgium. This analysis will help identify potential customer segments and the most relevant distribution channels. Based on this, effective marketing strategies can be developed to promote Yrttipaja's products and strengthen brand awareness in the Belgian market.

It will also be important to communicate the results of this study within the Satakunta University of Applied Sciences (SAMK) community. Sharing the findings from the market research and feasibility study can provide useful insights to other students and researchers interested in international trade and export strategies.

At the same time, a set of clear recommendations will need to be formulated for Nordic Herbs Oy. These recommendations will address the feasibility of entering the Belgian market, analyzing the opportunities, challenges, and potential risks. Concrete suggestions will be offered to help the company successfully establish itself in Belgium, specifying the necessary steps for market entry, such as regulatory requirements, cost estimates, pricing strategy, and promotional actions to be implemented.

A SWOT analysis will be conducted to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats associated with this export approach.

To ensure effective implementation, a clear and concrete action plan will be developed for Nordic Herbs Oy. This plan will detail the steps to follow to ensure a smooth entry into the Belgian market, including product positioning

strategies, distribution logistics, and marketing campaigns adapted to the local context.

Finally, an assessment of Nordic Herbs Oy's current supply chain will be conducted. The objective is to identify the adjustments needed to meet the specificities of the Belgian market and to propose improvements in order to optimize efficiency and reduce costs within the supply chain.

## 2.4 Formulation of Hypotheses

The hypotheses are :

- Good reception of the products from the customers
- Too crowded sector for the brand
- Working under the name of an other brand.

At the end of the study, we'll see how thinks

## 3 COMPANY OVERVIEW

### 3.1 History of Nordic Herbs Oy

Nordic Herbs Oy is a Finnish who operate in the promotion of health and well-being through natural and high-quality herbal products. Since 2015 Nordic Herbs have been growing steadily toward becoming one of the biggest suppliers of dried herbs in Finland. The company's mission is to provide consumers with authentic, sustainably produced solutions that harness the benefits of nature while respecting the environment. (Nordic Herbs , s.d.)

Founded by a group of passionate herbal enthusiasts, Nordic Herbs Oy has its roots deeply embedded in the Nordic tradition of utilizing wild herbs for health and wellness. The company began its journey in Finland, drawing inspiration from the country's pristine landscapes and rich botanical heritage. Today, it

remains headquartered in Finland, where it continues to prioritize sustainability and innovation in every aspect of its operations.

A significant milestone in the company's history was the development of its Yrttipaja brand. This product line focuses on delivering herbal infusions crafted from locally sourced, organic ingredients, emphasizing purity, quality, and the therapeutic potential of nature. The brand embodies Nordic Herbs Oy's core values by offering products that are as beneficial for the consumer as they are for the environment.

Nordic Herbs Oy is also heavily invested in research and development to ensure its products meet the highest standards of quality and innovation. The company collaborates with local farmers and partners to uphold its commitment to sustainability while fostering a positive impact on the community.

Through its website, [nordicherbs.com](https://nordicherbs.com), the company showcases its wide range of herbal products and provides valuable insights into the benefits of herbal wellness. Nordic Herbs Oy positions itself as a trusted leader in the herbal infusion market, delivering authentic, eco-friendly solutions to customers across various markets

## 3.2 Company Profile (Identity Card)

### 3.2.1 Target Audience & Industry Sector

Nordic Herbs Oy primarily targets health-conscious and lifestyle-conscious consumers seeking natural, sustainable, and high-quality products. Their core target audience consists of individuals seeking organic alternatives for their daily well-being, as well as those passionate about holistic health and herbal teas with therapeutic benefits. These customers are often well-informed, sensitive to product ingredients, and committed to ethical and responsible consumption.

The company operates in the herbal and wellness sector, specializing in the manufacture and distribution of herbal infusions and natural remedies. This sector is constantly growing, driven by the growing interest in alternative medicine, organic products, and wellness routines based on natural ingredients.

Nordic Herbs positions itself as a reliable and committed player in this thriving industry.

### 3.2.2 Type of Goods & Headquarters

Nordic Herbs' products fall under the category of tangible goods, specifically physical wellness-related items such as dried herbal infusions. These tangible goods are sold in the form of tea bags or ready-to-infuse blends, intended to improve health or provide moments of relaxation. The law classifies these products as non-food consumer goods, subject to specific quality, hygiene, and traceability standards.

The company's head office is located in Eura, a town in southwestern Finland. The exact address is **Satarantie 8, 27500 Eura**. This location houses the company's administrative activities, as well as part of its production. The choice of this location reflects a strong local connection and a closeness to nature, consistent with the brand's values. (Nordic Herbs , s.d.)

### 3.2.3 Legal Structure & Revenue

Nordic Herbs Oy is a limited liability company incorporated under Finnish law, as indicated by the suffix "Oy." It operates under Finnish commercial law, which entails limited shareholder liability, a minimum share capital defined by law, and specific accounting requirements. This status is very common in Finland for small and medium-sized enterprises, as it combines flexibility and legal certainty.

Exact revenue figures for 2024 are not yet publicly available. However, according to the latest estimates, the company's revenues are approximately €600,000 (Keir, 2025). This revenue level reflects a well-established domestic business, with potential for international growth through export projects such as the one developed for the Belgian market.

### 3.2.4 Geographical Reach & Founder

Although the company is based in Finland, Nordic Herbs is actively expanding its presence in the European market. Its international expansion strategy is based on targeted partnerships and pilot projects in neighboring countries, such as this feasibility study project in Belgium. This international expansion is

part of a strategy to diversify distribution channels and adapt to new consumer trends across Europe.

The company was founded in July 2015 by Petri Koivisto. He discovered medicinal plants after being treated with horsetail tea for a kidney infection, on the advice of Sari who would become his wife. This personal experience sparked in him a passion for herbal medicine, leading him to create Nordic Herbs. Since then, the company has grown to become one of the leading suppliers of dried herbs in Finland. (Nordic Herbs , s.d.)

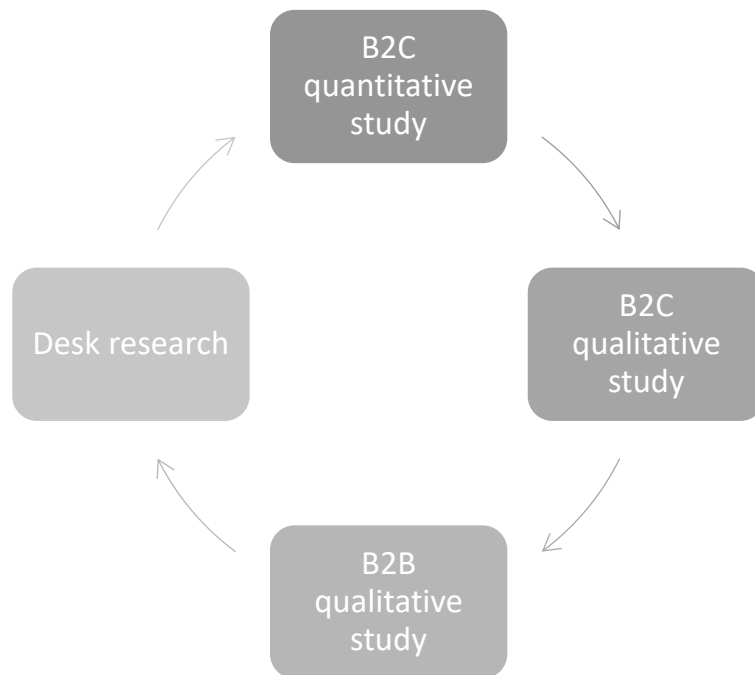
### 3.2.5 Number of Employees & Website

The Nordic Herbs team consists of six permanent employees, which corresponds to an SME-type structure. This permanent team is reinforced, during periods of peak activity, by two to six seasonal workers. This flexible organization allows the company to respond effectively to production peaks, particularly during harvests or periods of high demand. The model reflects a human-scale business, where each member plays a vital role in the value chain.

For more information, the company has an official website: <https://nordicherbs.com/>. This site presents its product catalog, philosophy, commitment to nature, and contact details. It is an essential tool for online visibility and international business development. (Keir, 2025)

## 4 METHODOLOGY

To handle my study research and organize my work I've planning a methodology in 4 parts and I will describe each.



*II Study Methodology*

#### 4.1 B2C Quantitative Study

A quantitative study will be conducted to quantify consumer demand and identify trends within the target market. To achieve this, online surveys will be used, using platforms such as Google Forms. The target sample will consist of a large panel of potential customers, selected according to criteria defined in accordance with the project objectives. This method offers several advantages: it allows for rapid reach to a large audience while being cost-effective. However, it also presents certain challenges, including the need to limit the length of questionnaires to maintain respondent engagement, as well as the risk of underrepresenting certain demographic categories. (Scribbr, 2025)

#### 4.2 B2C Qualitative Study

The B2C qualitative study aims to better understand the behaviours, motivations, and pain points of target consumers. The approach begins with a market analysis to define the typical customer profile. Focus groups are then held to gather detailed perceptions and preferences. The goal is to formulate concrete

recommendations aligned with customer needs. Focus group discussions are preferred to encourage participation, but for sensitive or very specific topics, individual interviews may be more appropriate. I personally opted for a qualitative B2C study because it was essential to better define our target audience, understand their true needs, and understand their underlying motivations. Our primary audience is adults who are fans of natural solutions to their sleep problems. I interviewed people about their sleep problems, how they manifested themselves, and so on, which allowed me to identify a large number of Belgian households affected. To test the product, I visited various homes directly to have them try the "Good Night" infusion and gather their impressions. I also distributed questionnaires with samples. The only focus group I was able to organize was composed of young people aged 20 to 30. For older people, I visited their homes in the early evening so they could share with me the effect, or lack thereof, of the tea during the night following our meeting.

#### 4.3 B2B Qualitative Research

The objective of the B2B qualitative research is to gather the opinions of industry professionals to better understand market dynamics, opportunities, and challenges. The target audience is comprised of professionals such as organic store managers, pharmacists, parapharmacists, and other experts in the field. The methodology is based on semi-structured interviews that allow for an in-depth exploration of their professional experience, industry knowledge, and opinions on the product or service under study. One of the main challenges encountered in this approach is interview scheduling, as professionals have busy schedules. Furthermore, conducting discussions in English can be a logistical barrier. Nevertheless, it was essential for me to gather their feedback before launching our product on the market. Back in Belgium, I divided my search for professionals into five categories: pharmacists/parapharmacists, organic store managers, supermarket department managers, a general practitioner, and a café manager. For each category, we aim to interview five experts to cross-reference information and obtain a diversity of perspectives. However,

we are aware that this figure remains ambitious, given my constraints as a student and the limited time spent on site (six weeks).

#### 4.4 Store Check and Mystery Shopping

This phase aims to analyze the retail landscape of targeted retail outlets, such as organic stores and pharmacies, in the French-speaking regions of Belgium. The objective is to identify sales patterns, product presentation, and the quality of customer service. To this end, visits were made to independent organic stores, pharmacy chains, and large supermarkets. A detailed analysis of the retail structure was conducted, focusing in particular on visual merchandising and customer flow in the store. In addition, a mystery shopping approach was implemented to simulate the experience of an average customer, in order to assess the quality of service and ease of purchase.

## Second Part : Export Strategy

### 5 EXPORT STRATEGY OVERVIEW

#### 5.1 Export Diagnostic

Export readiness is a strategic process that involves assessing whether a company is adequately equipped to enter foreign markets. The key components of this diagnostic include production capacity, product range, financial health, export preparation, management quality, and digital maturity. (Wallonia BE, 2025)

## 5.2 Production Capacity

Nordic Herbs' export readiness is intrinsically tied to the seasonality of its production. The company cultivates and forages herbs, meaning that any export project must be planned in winter or early spring to ensure harvest and supply by autumn. This natural production cycle directly affects the company's ability to meet international demand on time. Label design and translation are also part of the preparation process, requiring 1–2 weeks for design changes and an additional 2 weeks for printing.

The company currently operates with 6 permanent staff members and 2 to 6 seasonal workers, reflecting a lean but flexible workforce that scales with demand. (Keir, 2025)

## 5.3 Product Range

Nordic Herbs specializes in:

- Herbal teas and infusions
- Aromatic herbs
- Culinary spices
- Wellness oils
- Scented birch bundles for saunas

Although the company primarily sells raw ingredients to other businesses (B2B), it has also developed its own consumer product line under the brand Yrttipaja. These are slowly being introduced to niche markets such as boutique stores. (Nordic Herbs , s.d.)

## 5.4 Financial Situation

Nordic Herbs operates on a seasonal cash flow model:

Jan–Mar: Lowest sales, cash flow impacted by annual service invoices; cash balance varies between €2,000–8,000.

Apr–Jun: Deposits from cultivation contracts (30%) received; spending and income increase.

Jul–Oct: Harvest and fulfillment period for contracts; high expenses related to drying and foraging.

Nov–Dec: Strongest sales period driven by B2C (Christmas) and white-label production. (Keir, 2025)

## 5.5 Key financial indicators:

| <b>Category</b>                   | <b>Indicator</b>                          |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| <i>EBIT (2024)</i>                | €690,000                                  |
| <i>Return on Investment (ROI)</i> | 5.7%                                      |
| <i>Return on Equity (ROE)</i>     | 4%  |
| <i>Profit Margin</i>              | ~5%                                       |
| <i>Inventory as % of Revenue</i>  | 15%                                       |
| <i>Debt</i>                       | €220,000 (primarily for factory mortgage) |
| <i>Ownership Structure</i>        |   |
| • Perti & Sari (Founders)         | 60%                                       |
| • Risto (Director)                | 20%                                       |
| • Keir (Director)                 | 20%                                       |
| <i>Private Investors</i>          | None                                      |

## 5.6 Export Preparation Level

Currently, Nordic Herbs exports primarily through B2B ingredient sales and limited Yrttipaja products in Switzerland, France, Germany, the UK, and the US via wholesale platforms. While these are passive sales, the company is looking to actively expand its consumer brand into Europe, with a focus on adapting the product line to fit target market expectations. At present, no formal export strategy exists, but the company acknowledges the importance of understanding local consumer behavior before scaling. (Keir, 2025)VIII Second Interview with Keir the COO of Nordic Herbs

## 5.7 Management Quality

While Nordic Herbs is not yet ISO certified, it adheres to Finnish health and safety standards and maintains a strong internal quality control process. There is a clear commitment to achieving international standards in the future to support scalability and workflow optimization. The management team is composed of experienced directors and founders who are actively involved in strategic decisions. (Keir, 2025)VI First Interview with Keir

## 5.8 Digital Maturity

The company has made considerable progress in the digitization of its operations, having successfully implemented digital systems for invoicing, inventory tracking, batch control, and a webshop integrated with its physical store. In terms of marketing, 90% of outreach is conducted through digital channels, including social media, newsletters, and e-commerce platforms. However, the actual manufacturing process remains non-digitized, and while there is no intranet in place, a digital staff handbook is available to employees. Looking ahead, the company aims to further enhance its operations through increased automation in packaging and labelling, as well as the integration of artificial intelligence to optimize crop planning, inventory management, and marketing strategies. (Keir, 2025)

## 6 GENERAL EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT ANALYSIS

### PESTEL Analysis

Belgium offers both opportunities and challenges for Finnish organic products. While consumer demand is growing and the country's location is ideal for EU distribution, strict regulations and a shifting political landscape require strategic adaptation. Finnish brands can succeed by aligning with health and sustainability values, ensuring compliance with EU standards, and leveraging innovation in eco-packaging, marketing, and product quality.

### 6.1 Political

- Federal structure: Belgium is a federal state composed of three regions (Flanders, Wallonia, Brussels-Capital) and three communities (French, Flemish, German-speaking). This complex structure influences food regulations and distribution.
- Public health policies: Government policies encourage the consumption of healthy, natural beverages. (StatBel, 2025)
- Political stability: Overall stability supports investment in the agri-food sector.
- European influence: EU policies directly impact national standards and regulations. (Eurostat, 2025)
- Current government: As of February 2025, Belgium is governed by a federal government led by Bart De Wever (N-VA), marking the first time a Flemish nationalist leads the federal level. The government promotes a neoliberal and austerity-driven agenda. (RTBF, 2025)
- Budget cuts: Plans to reduce public spending by €23.3 billion by 2029 could affect subsidies and import incentives.

- Regulatory reforms: Introduction of “no-rule test zones” may offer opportunities for innovative product launches, including Finnish imports, but also require careful adaptation to evolving procedures. (Awex Export, 2025)

## 6.2 Economic

- Growing market: There's increasing interest in alternatives to traditional coffee and tea. (Belgium Economic Gouvernement, 2025)
- Strong purchasing power: Belgian consumers have relatively high disposable income. (Belgium Economic Gouvernement, 2025)
- Retail dominance: Major retailers such as Delhaize, Carrefour, and Colruyt significantly influence product distribution. (Belgium Economic Gouvernement, 2025)
- Inflation: As of December 2024, inflation based on the Harmonised Index of Consumer Prices (HICP) was 4.4%, impacting raw material costs and consumer behavior.
- Fair trade and organic products: Growing awareness influences consumer purchasing decisions. (Bureau Fédéral du Plan , 2025)
- Bio market expansion: In 2023, organic product spending reached €1.15 billion (+20.7% compared to 2022), largely driven by inflation and demand for healthy, sustainable options. (Plan BIO, 2025)

### 6.3 Social

- Health and wellness trends: Increasing demand for natural and health-oriented products. (Pro VEG, 2025)
- Ageing population: Older consumers seek healthier alternatives.
- Urban lifestyles: City living shapes consumption habits, especially for convenient, ready-to-drink options.
- Multicultural society: Cultural diversity, especially in Brussels (where over 74% of residents are foreign-born), drives a wide range of product preferences. (StatBel, 2025)
- Post-COVID consumption: Habits have shifted toward sustainable and immune-boosting products.

### 6.4 Technological

- Innovation in production: Advances in extraction and preservation techniques enhance product quality.
- E-commerce: Online sales of herbal infusions are growing.
- Automation: Automation is increasing in production and packaging processes.
- Traceability: New technologies support full product traceability, which is key to consumer trust.
- Digital marketing: Social media and influencer marketing are crucial for brand visibility and engagement.

## 6.5 Environmental

- Carbon footprint concerns: Belgian consumers are increasingly attentive to environmental impact.
- Eco-certifications: Demand for certified organic and sustainable products is rising. (Bio Wallonie, 2025)
- Pesticide regulations: Strict EU standards apply to pesticide use and crop cultivation.
- Eco-friendly packaging: Preference for recyclable, biodegradable packaging solutions.
- Climate change: Affects the availability and quality of aromatic plant raw materials.

## 6.6 Legal

- AFSCA regulations: The Federal Agency for the Safety of the Food Chain (AFSCA) enforces strict food safety standards.
- EU compliance: Products must meet EU rules on herbal supplements and teas. (Agence Bio, 2025)

### Regional laws:

- Flanders: Tight environmental regulations.
- Wallonia: Support for local producers.
- Brussels-Capital: Specific urban distribution rules.
- Labeling laws: Product labels must include all three national languages (French, Dutch, German).

- Advertising regulations: Strict control of health claims and advertising of wellness products.
- Organic product imports: Governed by Regulation (EU) 2018/848; requires TRACES-issued electronic certificate of inspection (COI) and certified importers.

## 7 SPECIFIC EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT ANALYSIS

### 7.1 Offer

I visited various potential points of sale, including independent pharmacies, the parapharmaceutical group “Medi-Market,” supermarkets, and independent organic stores. The direct competitors are as follows:

As for indirect competition, it is worth noting that prescription sleeping medications can be a solution for light sleepers. However, consumers are increasingly turning to the CBD market, which continues to grow in Belgium. CBD is available in various forms such as infusions, capsules, lozenges, and herbs, and has seen significant success among consumers suffering from sleep disorders.

A table listing competitor prices is provided in the appendix.<sup>1</sup>

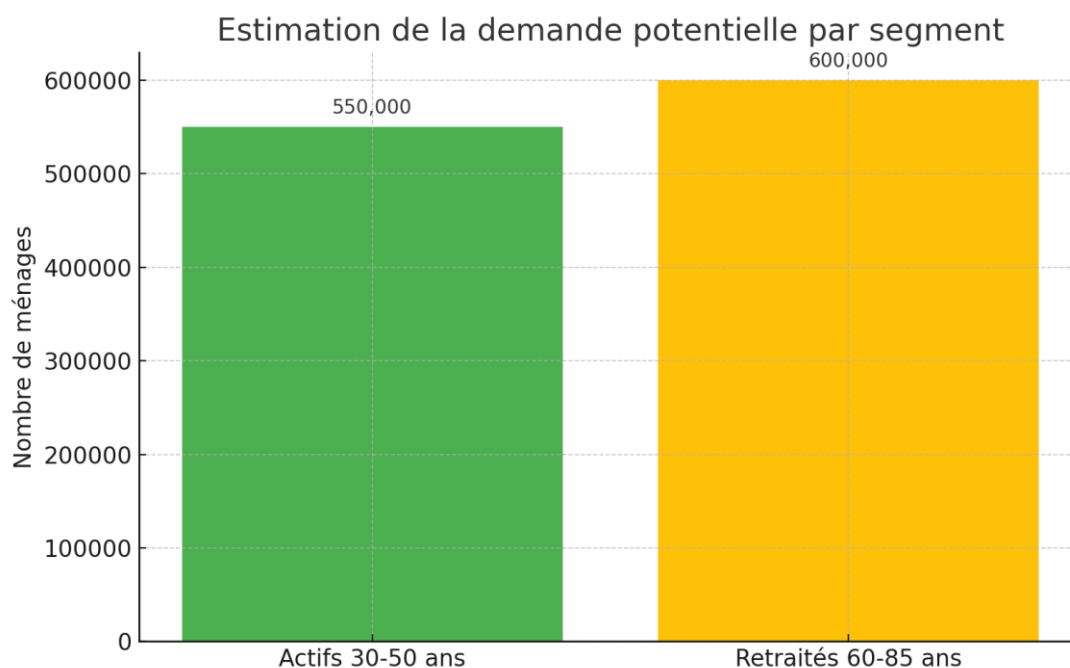
### 7.2 Demand

To estimate the demand, I cross-referenced data sources, focusing on the number of households likely to use this type of product specifically, adult households reflecting my segmentation.

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix V Mystery Shopping Analysis

| <b>Target Segment</b>             | <b>Age Range</b> | <b>Total Household</b> | <b>Estimated Market Share</b> | <b>Potential Demand Households</b> |
|-----------------------------------|------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Health Conscious Adults           | 30-50 years old  | 2 200 000              | 25%                           | 550 000                            |
| Retirees Seeking Calm and Balance | 60-85 years old  | 2 000 000              | 30%                           | 600 000                            |
| Estimated Total                   | /                | /                      | /                             | <b>1 150 000 households</b>        |



*This graph shows the distribution of potential demand by segment based on the age of the parent population*

### 7.3 Wholesalers

Several wholesalers play a key role in the distribution of organic and natural products in Belgium. Biotope SA is a wholesaler specializing in organic products, including beverages and infusions, supplying a wide range of health-focused retailers. Natudis Belgium operates both as an importer and a

wholesaler of natural and organic goods, offering a broad assortment to support sustainable consumption. Biofresh is a distributor dedicated to serving organic and dietary stores, ensuring access to high-quality, health-conscious products. Bio-Planet, part of the Colruyt Group, also acts as a central purchasing unit, making organic food accessible through both its own retail stores and partnerships. Finally, Thee.be is a niche wholesaler specialized in tea and herbal infusions, catering to tea lovers and professionals with curated, high-quality selections.

#### 7.4 Distributors

Some distributors go beyond simple product supply, offering services such as logistics, marketing, and even support for market entry. Distribio specializes in the distribution of natural, organic, and ecological products, ensuring efficient delivery and visibility in specialized retail. Sodibel focuses on the distribution of organic food and beverages, offering tailored logistics solutions. Ecodis, in partnership with Distribio, operates a distribution network targeting organic and eco-friendly stores across Belgium. Greenway Distribution supports sustainable and eco-responsible brands by managing their distribution and helping them grow in the market. For those targeting large retailers, Delhaize Distribution handles its own logistics and supply chain, making it a key player for mass-market entry.

#### 7.5 Other Stakeholders

In addition to the FASFC (Federal Agency for the Safety of the Food Chain), several other entities must be considered when entering the Belgian market:

- FPS Public Health – Responsible for matters related to health, labeling, and product claims.
  
- FASFC (FAVV in Dutch) – Handles market authorization, hygiene standards, and importation procedures.

- CERTISYS – An accredited certification body for organic products, issuing the official EU organic label.
  
- FPS Economy – Manages import regulations, barcodes, VAT, and general economic compliance.
  
- Belgian Customs & Excise – Oversees customs procedures and import regulations for goods entering the country.
  
- hub.brussels – Offers support and guidance to foreign companies operating in the Brussels region.
  
- BECI / UCM / UNIZO – Belgian chambers of commerce representing different linguistic and business communities.
  
- Ecodeveloppement.be – A network promoting responsible and sustainable consumption in Belgium.
  
- Foodlab incubators – Business accelerators for emerging food brands (e.g., Foodlab.Brussels), providing resources and mentorship.

## 8 SWOT Analysis

| STRENGTHS  | WEAKNESSES  |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>High-quality Natural Products:</b> Yrttipaja offers authentic, sustainably produced herbal infusions with emphasis on purity and therapeutic benefits.</li> <li>• <b>Finnish Origin:</b> The Nordic origin provides a strong unique selling proposition and perception of quality, purity, and sustainability.</li> <li>• <b>Established Brand in Finland:</b> Since 2015, Nordic Herbs has grown to become one of Finland's largest suppliers of dried herbs.</li> <li>• <b>Seasonal Production Model:</b> The company's experience with seasonal production allows for effective planning and resource allocation.</li> <li>• <b>Diverse Product Portfolio:</b> Beyond herbal infusions, the company offers aromatic herbs, culinary spices, wellness oils, and other products for potential market expansion.</li> <li>• <b>Sustainable Practices:</b> The company's commitment to sustainability aligns with growing Belgian consumer preferences for eco-friendly products.</li> <li>• <b>R&amp;D Investment:</b> Nordic Herbs' continued investment in research and development ensures product innovation and quality standards.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Limited International Market Experience:</b> Nordic Herbs currently has only passive exports through B2B wholesale platforms rather than an active export strategy.</li> <li>• <b>Seasonal Cash Flow:</b> The company experiences significant fluctuations in cash flow throughout the year, which could impact continuous market development.</li> <li>• <b>Limited Financial Resources:</b> With cash balances varying between €2,000-8,000 during low seasons and existing debt of €220,000, financial constraints may limit marketing investments.</li> <li>• <b>Small Workforce:</b> With only 6 permanent employees and 2-6 seasonal workers, scaling operations for international expansion may pose challenges.</li> <li>• <b>No Formal Export Strategy:</b> The company lacks a comprehensive export strategy, which is essential for systematic market entry.</li> <li>• <b>No ISO Certification:</b> While adhering to Finnish standards, the absence of ISO certification might affect credibility in some market segments.</li> <li>• <b>Language Barriers:</b> Product packaging would need adaptation for the Belgian market's trilingual requirements (French, Dutch, German).</li> </ul> |

## OPPORTUNITIES

- **Growing Wellness Market:** Belgian consumers show increasing interest in natural, sustainable, and high-quality herbal products for health and wellness.
- **Strategic Geographic Location:** Belgium's central position in Europe makes it an excellent gateway for further European expansion.
- **Diverse Consumer Base:** Belgium's multicultural population, particularly in Brussels, creates diverse market niches for specialized products.
- **Aging Population:** Older demographics seeking natural solutions for sleep and health issues represent a significant potential customer base.
- **Post-COVID Health Awareness:** Increased consciousness about health and immunity boosting natural products since the pandemic.
- **E-commerce Growth:** The expansion of online sales channels for herbal products provides alternative distribution opportunities.
- **EU Regulatory Framework:** Operating within the EU simplifies compliance compared to non-EU markets.
- **"No-rule Test Zones":** Belgium's new regulatory approach could provide opportunities for innovative product introductions.

## THREATS

- **Crowded Market Sector:** The Belgian herbal infusion market already has established competitors across various price points and distribution channels.
- **Strict Regulatory Environment:** Belgium's food safety regulations through AFSCA and EU organic product standards require detailed compliance.
- **Trilingual Labeling Requirements:** Product packaging must include French, Dutch, and German, increasing complexity and cost.
- **Seasonal Demand Fluctuations:** Consumer interest in sleep-aid products may vary seasonally, affecting consistent sales.
- **Price Sensitivity:** In a market with 4.4% inflation (as of December 2024), consumer price sensitivity may impact premium-priced products.
- **Distribution Channel Challenges:** Major retailers (Delhaize, Carrefour, Colruyt) have significant influence over product accessibility.
- **Competition from Alternative Products:** CBD-based sleep solutions are gaining popularity in Belgium as direct competitors.
- **Political and Economic Uncertainty:** The new Belgian federal government's austerity measures could impact consumer spending patterns.

## 9 MARKET SEGMENTATION

### 9.1 Segmentation Criteria

Market segmentation relies on various criteria, such as geographic, psychographic, behavioral, and consumption habits. Drawing from my Digital Marketing course, I developed two buyer personas for the Finnish market. To establish a meaningful comparison, I also analyzed consumer behavior in Belgium, incorporating insights from focus groups. This research allowed me to identify two key niche segments. The first segment includes active adults aged 30 to 50, composed of working professionals who integrate organic products into their daily lives. They are health-conscious individuals seeking a balanced and sustainable lifestyle, viewing herbal infusions as part of a holistic wellness routine and favoring high-quality, ethically sourced products. The second segment consists of retirees aged 60 to 85, who lead a slower and more peaceful lifestyle. They prioritize calmness, relaxation, and overall well-being, often turning to herbal infusions in the evening to promote better sleep and tranquility.

#### Key segmentation

- Age & Occupation: Differentiating between working professionals and retirees.
- Sleep Issues: Identifying consumers who seek infusions for relaxation and sleep improvement.
- Organic Awareness: Understanding the level of preference for organic, sustainable, and ethically sourced products.

### 9.2 Target Market Identification

Based on this segmentation, the primary target market consists of active individuals in their 30s-40s who are interested in organic products. They lead busy lifestyles, speak French, and are looking for natural herbal infusions to help them relax and improve their sleep quality.

## 10 Product Positioning

For consumers who seek a natural and organic way to unwind, Nordic Herbs offers premium herbal infusions crafted from high-quality, sustainably sourced Nordic plants. Thanks to their calming and sleep-enhancing properties, these infusions provide a soothing and restorative experience, allowing customers to relax and maintain a healthy lifestyle effortlessly.

## 11 Marketing Mix

### 11.1 Product Strategy

Exclusive blends create a sense of added value. This would be the only viable option to modify the products themselves, which are already high-quality and well-received by consumers. One participant suggested mixing the infusion with honey to sweeten its "herbal taste," so a potential collaboration with an organic honey brand could be explored. However, what I personally recommend is a packaging redesign, as the current one does not align with the suggested positioning. During consumer tests, it was often described as "old-fashioned," "cheap," and "simplistic."

### 11.2 Place Strategy

There are various target markets and sales channels for Nordic Herbs' "Good Night Infusion," including organic stores such as Färm, Sequoia, and Bio c' Bon; concept stores and fine grocery shops like Rob, Natural Corner, and Joluwa; as well as local cafés and tea rooms such as Chyl, Hinterland, and

Maison Renardy in Brussels. The product is also suited for e-commerce platforms like Bol.com, Kazidomi, Farmaline, and other websites specializing in organic products.

After conducting field analysis and interviews, the most commonly preferred points of sale are organic stores, followed by pharmacies. I believe our product does not belong in supermarkets, as this would undermine its "herbal-friendly" positioning.

### 11.3 Promotion Strategy

I plan to organize in-store tastings in organic shops and establish partnerships with HORECA establishments. It's essential to highlight the Nordic origin of the product, as it reinforces the perception of quality. I also intend to design posters specifically for pharmacies and take part in trade fairs such as organic product expos in Belgium.

### 11.4 Pricing Strategy

The market entry strategy integrates competitive pricing with value-added differentiation to establish Nordic Herbs as a distinctive yet accessible offering in the herbal tea segment. By combining penetration pricing with premium product attributes, the brand can rapidly establish market presence while building the brand equity necessary for long-term premium positioning.

A penetration pricing approach appears most suitable for rapidly establishing market presence and capturing consumers accustomed to existing price points.

Entry price point: €5.90 for 40g packages (approximately €14.75/100g)

Strategically aligned with *L'Herboriste du Velay* pricing to eliminate purchase barriers

Designed to attract organic product consumers willing to explore new brand offerings

Positioned competitively to facilitate retail distribution channel adoption

Phased price evolution: Following 6-12 months of market presence, gradual price increases to €6.50-€6.90 for 40g packages will be implemented as brand recognition and loyalty develop

The market benchmark analysis reveals:

- L'Herboriste du Velay currently prices at approximately €5 for 30-36g packages (equivalent to €14/100g)
- Nordic Herbs, with its distinctive premium and organic Nordic positioning, can justify a slightly elevated price point through enhanced quality perception and authentic regional sourcing  
(V Mystery Shopping Analysis) 54

## 12 International Presence Mode

### Entry Modes and Strategies

I do not recommend industrial or commercial establishment for strategic reasons, particularly in terms of cost and flexibility. This decision allows us to focus on the key aspects of our market strategy and to adapt our presence in the Belgian market. I suggest that the company work with commissioned agents and purchasing centers here in Belgium, as they have in-depth knowledge of the local market. Collaborating with regional import-export support groups is also a good idea for them, such as:

- AWEX (Wallonia)
- HUB Brussels (Brussels)
- FIT (Flanders)

## 13 Logistics Management

The only logistical constraint to consider is the expiration date of the herbs, as well as the need to store them in a dry environment. This product is highly shelf-stable, and there is no need to relocate production.

For reasons of quality and efficiency, it is not recommended that the company offshore its production. Instead, we propose adopting a push strategy. In this model, products are manufactured in advance, based on accurate forecasting of future demand. It is crucial for the company to closely monitor stock turnover and anticipate its annual demand.

Furthermore, Nordic Herbs will sell its production **EX Works (EXW)** in Belgium, meaning they will not be responsible for transportation. The main challenge will be to manage production efficiently within their facilities to minimize waste, both in terms of products and energy.

Nordic Herbs will therefore be responsible for packaging and making the goods available at their warehouse. The key documents the company must provide under the EXW incoterm include:

- the commercial invoice,
- the packing list,
- the certificate of conformity,
- the proof of collection,
- and the ECS (Export Control System) information.

## 14 Legal Formalities

In Belgium, food supplements are governed by several royal decrees, including:

- Royal Decree of August 29, 1997: concerns foodstuffs containing plants or plant preparations.
- Royal Decree of March 3, 1992: concerns nutrients and foodstuffs enriched with nutrients.

- Royal Decree of February 12, 2009: concerns food supplements containing substances other than nutrients or plants (fasfc.be).

These decrees define the requirements for composition, labeling, advertising, and prior notification before placing products on the market.

Language: Documents must be written in French or Dutch, depending on the linguistic region of the country (FAMHP). (Droit Belge, 2025)

## 15 INTERNATIONAL PAYMENT MANAGEMENT

Regarding payment risk management, we recommend that the company use a letter of credit (Credoc). This choice is explained by the fact that these are new clients, and the risk of non-payment is therefore high. Several advantages justify the use of this letter of credit:

**Security:** The Credoc provides a high level of guarantees in collaboration with the involved banks.

**Commitment fulfillment:** For the importer, payment only occurs if the seller meets their contractual obligations.

**Timely payment:** The exporter is assured of being paid within the agreed deadlines.

However, the main disadvantage of this letter of credit is its cost. Despite this, given the high risk of non-payment, it remains a relevant option (Mezerette, 2024).

As for currency risk management, we do not need to worry about this, as Finland uses the same currency as Belgium, namely the euro. Therefore, there is no risk of exchange rate fluctuations between these two countries.

## 16 Product Launch Recommendations

After immersing myself in the world of herbal teas and sleep disorders, I would recommend Nordic Herb as a "GO" for exporting its herbal teas to Belgium, provided they adhere to a list of recommended products, starting with a change in packaging:

During interviews and customer feedback on packaging, adopting a more sober and elegant packaging by implementing touches of gold is very interesting. Leaving the packaging in English allows for easier internationalization as well as the mention "made in Finland." Note that a list of products and ingredients will still be required in the language of the targeted linguistic region, either French or Dutch, or both. Such costs must be taken into account.



### 16.1 P-PLACE

For product marketing, I have excluded supermarkets that do not reflect the brand's positioning. I would recommend opting for organic store groups like Farm and independent organic stores, and finally, pharmacies. Chain stores are more likely to accept more attractive contracts, and pharmacists are a sign of trust in the eyes of consumers. These are the brands that our target audience frequents.

### 16.2 P-PROMO

For promotions, I recommend trade shows and fairs, the hospitality industry, and paid partnerships with yoga associations, etc.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> See Appendix VII List of Events for Promotion

## 17 CONCLUSION

To conclude, this study shows that the product was very well received by potential customers. Although the Belgian market is already quite saturated, there is still promising potential for growth. With the right marketing strategy to raise awareness, the product can succeed. However, I do not recommend operating under another brand's name, as I plan to base the marketing campaign on the Finnish origin of the product.

Here are the responses to the hypotheses:

- Positive customer reception
- Competitive and crowded market
- Not advisable to operate under another brand name

As part of this study, I created a marketing campaign for the Finnish website.

## 18 MARKETING CAMPAIGN FOR THE MOST IMPORTANT CUSTOMER PROFILE

### Customer Profile for Nordic Herbs



#### LISA:

Lisa is a 45-year-old certified life coach and wellness consultant from Stockholm, Sweden. She started her career in corporate marketing but, after experiencing burnout, she turned to holistic health and mindfulness to regain balance in her life. She now runs her own coaching business, helping clients manage stress, improve their well-being, and adopt healthier habits. Her work includes hosting wellness retreats, writing blog posts, and partnering with sustainable brands that align with her values. Lisa's journey with herbal remedies began when she was looking for natural ways to support her immune system and reduce anxiety.

#### Demographics:

- **Age:** 45
- **Gender:** Female
- **Location:** Stockholm, Sweden
- **Income:** Mid-to-high income (successful coaching business)

#### Title&Role:

- Life Coach
- Wellness Consultant
- Mindfulness Advocate

#### Organisation:

- Member of the **Nordic Wellness Coaches Network**
- Regular speaker at **Mindful Living Retreats**
- Active in **Sustainable Health Brands Collective**

**Budget:** She regularly spends €100–€200 per month on wellness and herbal supplements.

#### Identifiers:

- Regularly shares wellness tips, mindfulness exercises, and holistic health insights on social media.
- Prefers organic, sustainably sourced products with clear ingredient lists.
- Engages in wellness communities, yoga groups, and eco-conscious events.

#### Motivations:

Lisa wants to maintain her own well-being while providing her clients with the best natural health solutions. She believes in prevention over treatment and sees herbal remedies as an essential part of a healthy lifestyle. She also values sustainability and prefers brands that align with her ethical standards.

*She said : "Your body is your home ! treat it with care and nature will take care of you."*

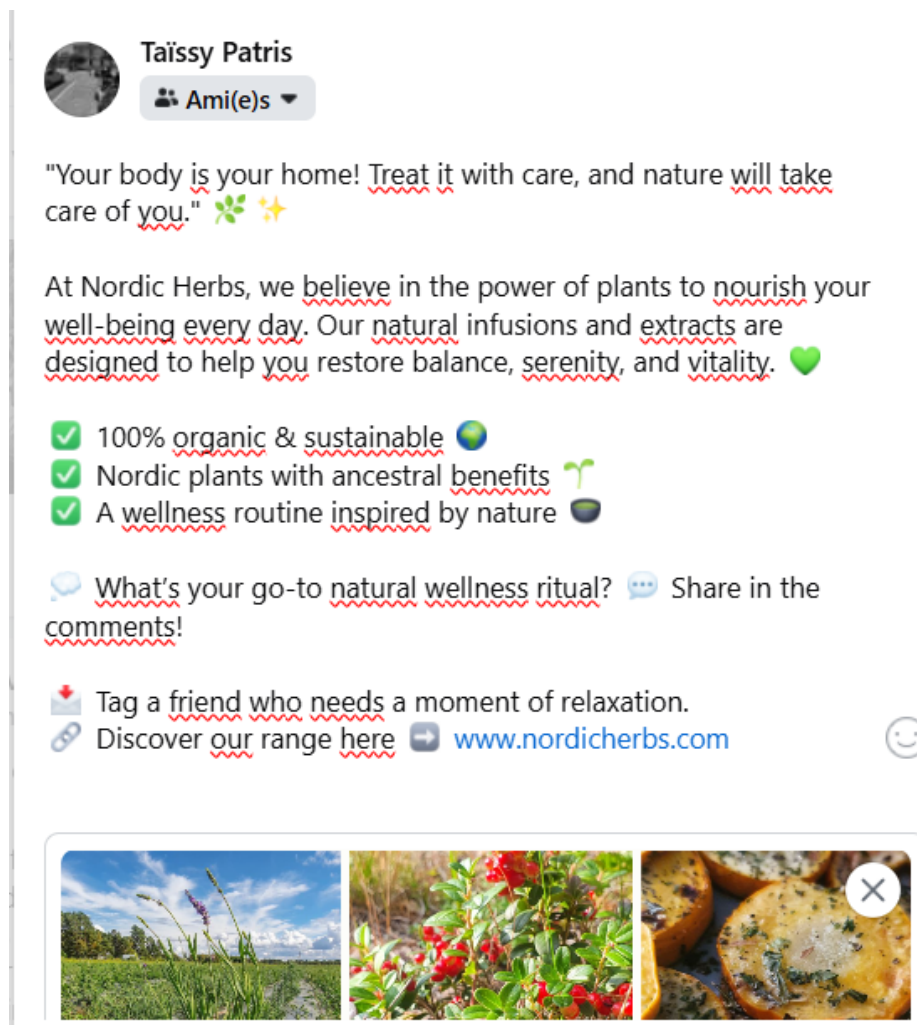
Lisa and other women in Finland and nearby Sweden, who are between the ages of 35 and 45, mainly use Facebook to maintain connections with their personal and professional networks. Instagram is also widely used for posting images of health and wellness-related topics.

Because of this, we will give priority to Facebook and Instagram as our primary platforms in order to reach Lisa and other essential and relevant clients.

The campaign's anticipated outcomes include: a highly targeted audience that shares Nordic Herbs' values; increased engagement through an inspirational message.

Increased sales with well-planned promotions.

An example of a Facebook post



**Taïssy Patris**  
Ami(e)s


"Your body is your home! Treat it with care, and nature will take care of you." 🌿 ✨

At Nordic Herbs, we believe in the power of plants to nourish your well-being every day. Our natural infusions and extracts are designed to help you restore balance, serenity, and vitality. ❤️


- ✓ 100% organic & sustainable 🌍
- ✓ Nordic plants with ancestral benefits 🌱
- ✓ A wellness routine inspired by nature 🍵


💬 What's your go-to natural wellness ritual? 💬 Share in the comments!


📌 Tag a friend who needs a moment of relaxation.  
🔗 Discover our range here 📄 [www.nordicherbs.com](http://www.nordicherbs.com) 😊






 Short Video (30s): A wellness coach prepares an herbal infusion with a voice-over:

 "Your body is your home! Treat it with care, and nature will take care of you."

 Swipe up to enjoy an exclusive 15% off your first order with code **NOR-DIC15!**

 Interactive Story:

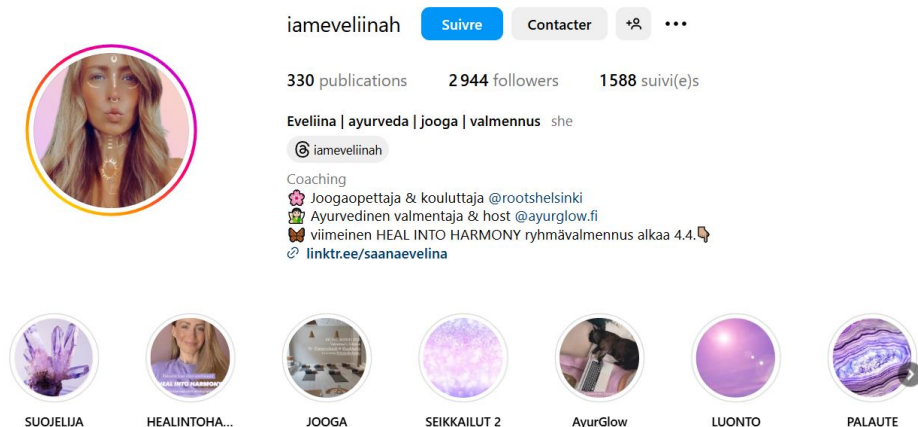
 Question sticker: "What's your favorite plant for relaxation?"



## 19 INFLUENCER MARKETING CAMPAIGN

It would be more effective to use micro or nano-influencers, prioritizing Instagram for its strong visual appeal, while Facebook can be leveraged for storytelling, information sharing, and blog content.

The micro-influencer Eveliina would be a great fit, as she has a small yet engaged community of Finnish women who practice yoga, mindfulness, and favor natural, locally sourced products.



iameveliinah [Suivre](#) [Contacter](#) [+](#) [...](#)

330 publications 2 944 followers 1 588 suivi(e)s

Eveliina | ayurveda | jooga | valmennus she

[@iameveliinah](#)

Coaching

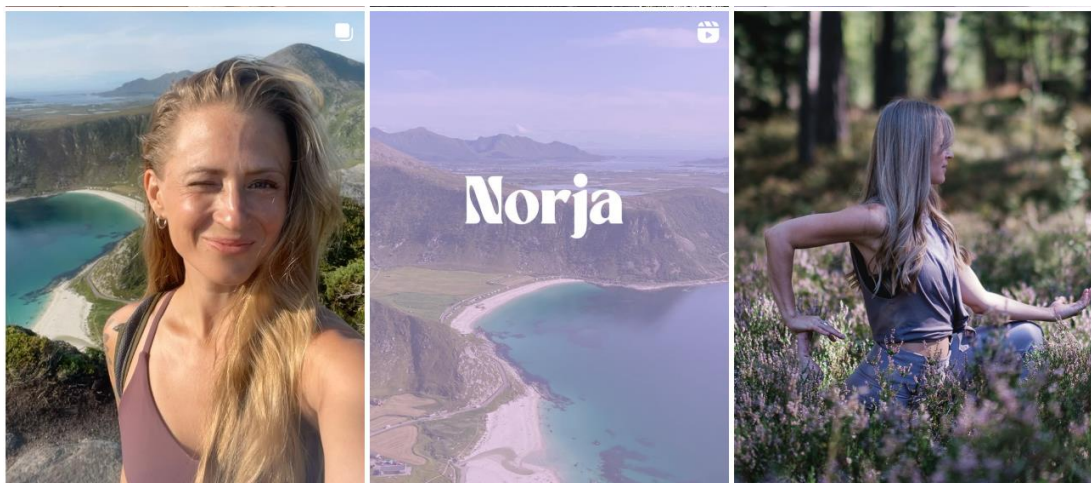
Joogaopettaja & kouluttaja @rootshelsinki

Ayurvedinen valmentaja & host @ayurglow.fi

viimeinen HEAL INTO HARMONY ryhmävalmennus alkaa 4.4.

[linktr.ee/saanaevelina](https://linktr.ee/saanaevelina)

SUOJELIJA HEALINTOHA... JOOGA SEIKKAILUT 2 AyurGlow LUONTO PALAUTE



It would be strategic for Nordic Herbs to collaborate with around 15 similar profiles, targeting women who embody this healthy lifestyle and have high engagement rates due to their close-knit communities.

### Example of a Sponsored Post Collaboration:



#### 💛 Collaboration with a Mindfulness Influencer

#### 👤 Sponsored Post:

- A photo of her enjoying a **Nordic Herbs** infusion.

#### • **Caption:**

*"Since I started using Nordic Herbs, I feel a true sense of balance. As they say: Your body is your home! Treat it with care, and nature will take care of you."* 🌿❤️

#### 📌 **Exclusive Offer for Her Followers:**

🎁 **15% off with the code HERBAL15**

NB : *An influencer can also be a recognized naturopath or pharmacist who sells the products and interacts directly with customers. However, in this case, we are focusing on the e-commerce platform.*

## 20 GOOGLE SEO DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

- 1) Research and strategy for keywords are the first essential component. It is crucial to determine the most pertinent keywords associated with Nordic herbs and natural medicines. Long-tail keywords like "benefits of Nordic adaptogenic herbs" or "best Arctic herbal teas for sleep" should be the main focus. It will also be easier to find opportunities and adjust

the strategy in light of market trends if competitors' strategies are examined.

- 2) The website's technical framework must then be optimised. For a website to score effectively in search results, it must be quick, responsive, and organised. A clear website hierarchy should be formed, pictures should be optimised, and page load speed should be increased. By offering rich snippets and increasing visibility, schema markup can improve search engine results.
- 3) Since content is a fundamental component of SEO, producing high-quality, optimised material is crucial. A blog that highlights the health advantages, background, and contemporary uses of Nordic herbs can draw in a specific readership. Pillar material, such as "Complete Guide to Nordic Medicinal Plants," backed up by in-depth sub-articles, is part of the ideal structure. Every page should be optimised with photos that have the proper alt text, captivating names, and concise meta descriptions.
- 4) At the same time, improving user experience and on-page SEO is crucial. Improved rankings are a result of an intuitive navigation mechanism and an eye-catching look. Engagement can be raised with interactive features like infographics, quizzes, and downloading manuals. Conversion rates can also be increased by refining the user path and optimising calls to action.
- 5) Link-building and off-page SEO are also essential. The authority of the website will be increased by obtaining high-quality backlinks from herbal forums, natural medicine publications, and health and wellness blogs. Online credibility can be further enhanced by guest blogging, collaborating with industry experts, and being highlighted in specialised guides.
- 6) Finally, the strategy needs to incorporate performance monitoring and ongoing optimisation. Frequent examination of Search Console and

Google Analytics data will reveal visitor behaviour and allow for well-informed changes. Long-term outcomes can be enhanced by performing A/B testing on important pages and updating content in accordance with emerging SEO trends.

(Google for developers, 2025) (AHREFS, 2025) (Johanna Ventelä, 2025)

## 21 GOOGLE SEM PLAN

Objectives of the SEM Plan:

- Increased organic traffic through SEO.
- Higher conversion rates with targeted Pay-per-click campaigns.
- Improved customer retention with remarketing and personalised content.
- Better brand awareness via social media & influencer partnerships.

- 1) Nordic Herbs will increase visibility and boost conversions by combining paid advertising and organic SEO efforts in a solid SEO strategy. Targeting and keyword strategy are the first steps, where careful investigation finds high-intent search terms like "buy Nordic herbal tea" or "best Arctic herbs for immunity." The emphasis will be on a combination of branded, product-specific, and informative keywords using tools like Google Keyword Planner in order to draw in both clients who are ready to buy and those who are researching the health advantages of Nordic herbs.
- 2) The second step involves PPC advertising through Google Ads, social media campaigns, and display networks. Google Search Ads will target high-conversion keywords, while Shopping Ads will optimise product listings with clear descriptions and engaging images. On social media, retargeting campaigns on Meta (Instagram&Facebook).

- 3) SEO and content marketing will help The Nordic Herbs grow its online presence in the long run. A blog with helpful articles, like "Top 5 Nordic Herbs for Stress Relief," will build trust and position the brand as a leader in herbal wellness. Improving on-page SEO with better meta tags, structured data, and internal links will boost search rankings. Getting backlinks from health and eco-friendly websites will also increase credibility and visibility.
  
- 4) Tracking performance and making improvements will be key to success. Tools like Google Analytics and Ads Manager will monitor visitor behaviour, while A/B testing on ads, landing pages, and call-to-action buttons will help improve conversions. Heatmaps and user tracking will refine the website experience. By adjusting refining the strategy based on real data, The Nordic Herbs will create a strong and lasting SEM plan.

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## APPENDIX

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**Interview conducted in Rixensart with the Head of the Infusion Aisle at the store “Autre Chose.”**



The interview was carried out in the infusion section on Thursday, January 9th, in French and translated into English one week later.

**Customer Profile:**

Our clientele is quite diverse, but mainly consists of women between the ages of 30 and 60. Many of them are health-conscious and appreciate organic and natural products. Some customers are also looking for solutions to specific issues such as sleep, digestion, or stress.

**Purchase Frequency:**

Most customers buy herbal teas weekly or bi-weekly. There is a core group of regulars who return frequently, especially during the colder months. Demand tends to rise in the fall and winter.

**Sought-after Benefits:**

Customers are primarily looking for functional benefits. They often ask for infusions that help with sleep, digestion, stress relief, and immunity. Taste is also important, but the health aspect tends to come first.

**Top-Selling Brands:**

The most popular brand in our store is Yogi Tea.

**Advice to the Brand:**

Stay transparent about your ingredients and sourcing. Customers are increasingly attentive to origin, certifications, and eco-responsibility. Packaging also plays a key role it should be both attractive and sustainable. Finally, continue innovating with blends that meet current health concerns.

*III Interview Autre Chose*

*IV Focus Group Q&A*

**Focus Group Questionnaire: "Good Night" Infusion Test**

**General Information**

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Gender: \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation/Student field: \_\_\_\_\_

How would you rate your usual sleep quality?

Excellent / Good / Average / Poor / Very poor

Do you often experience sleep problems?

Yes / Sometimes / No

If yes or sometimes, what kind? (e.g., difficulty falling asleep, waking up at night, feeling tired in the morning):

Experience With the “Good Night” Infusion

When did you drink the infusion?

- 30 minutes before sleep
- 1 hour before sleep
- Right before going to bed

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

How would you describe the taste of the infusion?

- Very pleasant
- Pleasant

- Neutral
- Unpleasant
- Very unpleasant

Please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

Did you notice a difference in how you fell asleep after drinking the tea?

- Yes, I fell asleep faster
- No difference
- I had more difficulty falling asleep

Please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

How did you feel the next morning after using the tea?

- More rested
- Same as usual
- More tired

Describe any physical or emotional effects:

Did you experience any side effects?

No

Yes → Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

### Section 3: Perception and Willingness to Buy

- Would you consider buying this product if it were available in stores?
  
- Definitely
  
- Maybe
  
- Unlikely

No

Why? \_\_\_\_\_

What would be an acceptable price for a box of 15 tea bags?

Under €3

€3–€5

€5–€7

Over €7

Would you recommend this infusion to others who have trouble sleeping?

- Yes
  
- Maybe
  
- No

Please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

Final Feedback

What do you like most about the “Good Night” infusion?

What improvements would you suggest (taste, packaging, effects, etc.)?

Do you have any other comments or ideas to improve this product?



V Mystery Shopping Analysis







*VI First Interview with Keir*

## Thesis Questions

Taissy Patris

- What is the annual revenue (sales) for Nordic Herbs in 2024?

We have not yet received our final year results. However we expect the result to be around

600 000 €

You can find our historic revenue here -

<https://www.finder.fi/Vihannekset+hedelm%C3%A4t+ja+marjat/Nordic+Herbs+Oy/S%C3%A4>

kyl%C3%A4/yhteystiedot/3088442

- Can you provide information on the company's current cash flow situation?

We have noticed that our cash flow is affected by the season.

Our base income comes from our b2b wholesale orders of Yrttipaja products and b2c from

our website and farm shop. This base income pays for our running costs and keeps cashflow

at a level that we can meet our minimal spending.

The majority of our revenue comes from b2b ingredient sales via contract cultivation - this is

a high revenue, low profit model that we intend to scale each year. We also offer Whitelabel

service that accounts for a small portion of income and is a growing area of our business.

Jan - Mar - Low season for sales and lowest cash flow times. Invoices for yearly services

arrive in Jan and all profit from previous year is used to pay for these.

Apr - Jun - Cultivation Contract 30% deposits for larger ingredient order received, we use

this to pay for our farming and foraging work. Income starts to increase and so does

spending in this period.

Jul - Oct - This is the harvest season when Cultivation Contracts are fulfilled and we send

the customer the ingredients and 70% payments for these orders. We also started to forage

berries and mushrooms during this period. High spending for drying costs, and collection

fees for foraged ingredients.

Nov - Dec - The majority of income in this period comes from our Yrttipaja sales from

Christmas sales. During this period we are focused on manufacturing and B2C sales for

maximum profitability. White label sales are also at the highest point here. After Christmas

there is a sudden drop-off in sales. This is a high profit low expense period.

- What is the current cash position or net cash balance of Nordic Herbs as of 2024?

Our cash balance is at its lowest in Feb - Mar after paying for all the yearly services. It

fluctuates between 2k-8k in this period.

- What is the company's debt level and what percentage of the capital is financed

through external loans or bank financing?

In the last 2 years we built our own factory and the mortgage account for the majority of our

outstanding debt. We currently have around 220k of debt from bank Financing.

- What is the EBIT (Earnings Before Interest and Taxes) for Nordic Herbs in 2024?

Approx. 690 000 €

- What is the ROI (Return on Investment) for Nordic Herbs?

5.7%

- What is the ROE (Return on Equity) for Nordic Herbs?

4%

- What is the margin rate or profit margin for Nordic Herbs' business?

Approx. 5%

- What percentage of Nordic Herbs' annual revenue is tied up in inventory (stock)?

Around 15%

- Can you provide information about the ownership structure and sources of capital

for Nordic Herbs?

There are 4 owners:

60% Perti & Sari - Founder owners and original source of capital investment

20% Risto - Director also capital investment

20% Keir - Director

Currently there are no other private investors or owners of the company.

**◆ Wellness, Lifestyle & Yoga Events**

- **Healthy Lifestyle Show** (Brussels Expo)  
Focus: Wellness, organic products, fitness, yoga, nutrition.  
Timing: Usually in Spring.
- **Yoga Festival Belgium** (Brussels or Antwerp)  
Focus: Yoga practice, natural therapies, healthy living.  
Ideal for direct partnerships or booth presence.
- **BioXpo VitaSana** (Brussels Expo)  
Focus: Organic, natural, and sustainable products.  
Professionals from retail, hospitality, and wellness.
- **Zen & Bio** (Namur Expo)  
Focus: Organic lifestyle, spirituality, mindfulness.  
Yoga teachers, therapists, and eco-conscious consumers attend.

**◆ Hospitality & Tourism Fairs**

- **Horeca Expo** (Flanders Expo, Ghent)  
Focus: Hotel, restaurant, and catering professionals.  
Great for connecting with spas, eco-hotels, and resorts.
- **Salon des Vacances** (Brussels Expo)  
Focus: Travel and leisure – ideal if you promote wellness tourism.

*VII List of Events for Promotion*

**What is your export readiness level?**

The primary concern for any export project would be the supply to meet the demand. Depending on the expected level of demand, it would determine our level of readiness. Since we are a natural product we would need to start planning the export project in the winter /spring and we would have the herbs necessary by the autumn.

Other than this we would need to update our labels. Lead time for label printing is 2 weeks and design changes with translation could be another week.

**In how many countries are you currently present?**

Until now our focus has been to build our customer base in Finland. We are in a couple of wholesale trade websites that have brought us some customers from Switzerland, France, Germany, UK, USA.

**What is your current international presence and strategy?**

We are currently only focused on selling our B2B ingredients direct to industry in Europe. However, we would like to start selling Yrttipaja products in Europe for the consumer market. There is currently no strategy for this as we feel it's important to first understand the new market and adjust the products we offer to meet the market demand.

**In what form do you currently sell your products abroad?**

Raw ingredients. Some minimal sales of Yrttipaja products to some boutique stores.

**How would you describe the quality of management?**

We are not registered with internationally recognised certification - ISO. We currently operate on the Finnish standards of health and safety. Internally there is a big focus on product quality and our products go through many stages of quality assurance.

In the future we would like to become certified with ISO. This would also help us to better assess our workflow and make improvements if needed.

**How many employees do you have?**

6 permanent staff and 2-6 seasonal workers.

**What is your level of digital maturity?**

We would like to automate more of our production process such as packing and labeling. However, we are already integrating as much automation into our process as possible and we will continue to work towards automation over the coming years. We are also interested in integrating AI tools into our workflow to help with crop planning, marketing and operations such as inventory ordering and management.

**What type of digitalization has your company implemented? Do you have an intranet?**

Our main area of digitalisation currently revolves around marketing and operations. We have digitalised our invoicing, stock management and batch details. We have a webshop linked to our physical store that helps us track inventory between physical and online sales. 90% of our marketing is digital via social media, newsletters ect. The only aspect of our business that has not been digitalised is the manufacturing process itself. We don't have intranet but we do have a digital handbook that is restricted to staff members only.