

Development of Wedding Themes for the Wedding Town Loviisa

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<p>Loviisa is a small town by the sea, located about 87 km east of Helsinki on the way to St. Petersburg and it has recently been named to "The Wedding Town". The aim of this study is to develop wedding themes connected to certain events in Loviisa in order to strengthen Loviisa's brand as wedding town.</p> <p>The theoretical scope of the study provides a definition of the tourism product and a discussion of the process of new product development in tourism. Also, a topic on wedding tourism explains the components of a wedding. Further, a comparison of Loviisa and other wedding cities shows that other towns and islands offer mainly lists of wedding services, but no wedding themes or wedding packages. Also included is the history of wedding traditions and customs as well as recent wedding trends to better understand the essence of a wedding. To connect Loviisa events to the wedding themes, various events and locations in Loviisa were visited for familiarisation. Opinions of real brides regarding themed weddings and how they would want their own wedding themes were sought through interviews using a mini questionnaire. All responding brides wanted a tasteful wedding with focus on the happy occasion.</p> <p>The final product is a careful consideration of themes guided by results of the questionnaire. It includes six wedding theme boards out of an initial ten. They are Winter Wonderland, Spring Fever, Archipelago, Midsummer, Rustic September and Christmas. The themes are interpreted into two versions, the web version, which the customer can access upon first contact and the full version which is available to the customer upon making a final decision to use the product. The single paged web version shows the colour scheme, a few pictures for visualisation of the wedding theme and some general explanation about the theme without mentioning specific sites and companies. The full version is two paged, more detailed and shows more pictures on the first page and an explanation with the chosen venues and service providers on the second page. Adoption of these themes by Loviisa will make it a unique wedding town with a ready to go product and profitability of its tourism related businesses will be boosted.</p>	
Keywords wedding planning, wedding theme, wedding design, product development in tourism, Loviisa	

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1 Introduction

According to Baker (2012, 87.), formulating a new brand can take five to twelve months or more, depending upon the size of the community, research required, level of consultation, the decision-making process and the speed of decisions and approvals along the way. This does not apply to Loviisa and its new brand as a wedding town. According to Johanna Waltonen, tourist secretary of the city of Loviisa, it was not a long planned marketing decision to announce Loviisa as a wedding town, it was much more of a citizens' initiative. Some local people sent to the city of Loviisa a request regarding Loviisa becoming a wedding town and since it does suit well in the other marketing actions and the image of Loviisa, the idea was included in the marketing actions right away (Waltonen 2013a).

Loviisa - Small town, great experiences. Whether you wanted to get married at sea or on dry land, Loviisa is the town of weddings, offering perfect scenes for unforgettable ceremonies. The most beautiful wedding churches of Southern Finland are located in Loviisa, not to mention the other venues in the city. That is why Loviisa has been named to "the Wedding Town". (Visit Loviisa 2013b)

That is how Loviisa promotes itself on the webpage visitloviisa.fi. Furthermore on the Swedish and Finnish pages are lists provided which show the churches in Loviisa area, possible reception venues and catering services and even ideas for the honeymoon. These lists are not available on the English pages.

One organised wedding per year is currently offered in the wedding town Loviisa, a tradition which was launched and is continued by the Loviisan Wanhat Talot ry (the organisers of the Wanhat Talot weekend in Loviisa). A love story competition is held every year where the participating couples write a story about themselves, their love story and their connection to Loviisa. A committee decides who the lucky couple is, mainly depending on the connection to Loviisa, and it can be a benefit if the couple represents both languages (Finnish and Swedish). The winning couple gets married in a public ceremony, the so called Rose Wedding. Local shops give presents, like the rings, makeup, hair and nails done for the bride, bouquet and shoes for the bride, wedding cake, pho-

tos and some things more. The last Rose Wedding was held this year on July 6th, and the next is planned for July 5th 2014 (Felin-Aalto 2013.).

1.1 Facts about weddings in Finland

Church weddings are no longer a given for the Finns. It is becoming increasingly common to choose civil marriage. While 16,620 couples, which represented 71.2 per cent of all weddings in Finland got married in church in 2000, nearly 20 per cent less tied the knot in church last year. 14,927 couples had a church wedding in 2012, which was 51.7 per cent of all weddings that year (Statistics Finland 2013b.). Dean Jussi Mäkinen from the parish of Viinikka in Tampere said “We need newer service products. One concept is no longer enough. We must renew ourselves and have some imagination and holy humour.” (Helsinki Times 2013)

In most European countries there is a civil wedding requirement, since the recognition of the marriage has to be done by the state. After the civil ceremony, couples are free to have a religious ceremony as well; however, such a ceremony only provides a religious recognition of the marriage. In Finland, civil and religious marriages, both are legally equivalent.

According to Statistics Finland:

- There were 28,878 weddings in Finland in 2012 and 13,040 divorces.
- The average age at the first wedding was in 2012 for women 30,8 years and for men 33,1 years
- 76 percent of all marriages in 2012 were first marriages
- The most popular wedding month in Finland was July in 2012, followed by the months August, June and December

(Statistics Finland 2013a)

1.2 Author's background

I am German but have been living in Loviisa in Itä-Uusimaa in South Finland for six years. I like the small city at the sea and when I had first thoughts about topics for my

final thesis, I thought to write related to tourism in Loviisa, but did not have a clear idea. After joining Chrysoula Skodra's unique wedding planning and management course in HAAGA-HELIA University of applied sciences Porvoo Campus, I got very interested in wedding planning and management. Especially the wedding theme assignment made me excited; it was so much fun for me to think about themes and how such a theme can show in all the aspects of a wedding. Since Loviisa promotes itself nowadays as a wedding town, combining these two topics for my final thesis was a logical inference. Soon the idea was born to develop wedding themes which are connected to events in the city of Loviisa. After presenting my ideas to Pirkko Salo, Programme Director at HAAGA-HELIA University of applied sciences Haaga campus, and Johanna Waltonen, Tourism Secretary of the city of Loviisa, the thesis commissioning agreement was formulated and signed very quickly.

This project is justified because the final product will help promote Loviisa as a wedding town and at the same time promote tourism in Loviisa. Further, it will open up research on wedding themes, a topic which had very limited resources from which to build my theory.

1.3 Aim and objectives of this study

The aim of this study is to develop wedding themes that are related to certain events in Loviisa to strengthen its brand as a wedding town. To achieve this aim several objectives have to be accomplished. **Events and locations** in Loviisa considered relevant have to be identified, also **what real brides want** or dream of as their wedding themes has to be investigated in order to design wedding themes according to customers' demands. Furthermore I want to find out if there is a national and/or international **market for wedding themes**. These objectives will then guide the development of **wedding themes** for Loviisa. The wedding town Loviisa wants to have the wedding themes by end of the year on the table, in order to be able to include them into their marketing activities on www.visitloviisa.fi for next year.

2 Development of a tourism product

Product development improves the profitability of tourism businesses by increasing the number of products and services available for tourists. New products also increase the number of visits, length of stay and spending by individual visitors. Definitions of the tourism product are introduced in this chapter as well as the process of new product development. The wedding tourism product is investigated in general, as well as some specific cases in particular.

2.1 Definition of the tourism product

The tourist product means customer value, which is “the perceived benefits provided to meet the customer’s needs and wants, quality of service received, and the value for money” (Middleton & Clarke 2001, 89). According to Middleton & Clarke (2001, 130) are the three levels of a tourism product the core product, the formal (or tangible) product and the augmented product. The core product is the idea, the essential service to meet the needs of customers. The formal product makes the idea a concrete offer that is what the customer gets for money. It contains the services and goods that must be present to make it possible for the guest to consume the core product. All forms of added value are the augmented product. It makes the product more attractive than the competitor’s product.

Smith (1994) writes that the tourism product consists of five components: physical plant, service, hospitality, freedom of choice and involvement. The core of every tourism product is the *physical plant*; it refers to place and condition of the physical environment. The *services* are an important input for the physical plant; it means that specific tasks have to be performed, which are necessary for the tourists. *Hospitality* is the “extra” the tourists want to get their expectations fulfilled. The range of options a tourist has in order to be able to choose a preferred product is called the *freedom of choice*. The last element, *involvement*, refers to customer’s participation in the service process. According to Smith (1994, 588), does the importance of each component vary depending on the type of the product, but all components are included in every tourism product.

Edvardsson and Olsson emphasize that the service companies do not provide the service, but the conditions for the various services. The company sells opportunities for services that are produced by partially unique customer processes. The aim of the service development is to produce the best results and proper conditions for well-functioning customer processes and attractive customer results. The correct conditions can be described by a model with three basic components: service concept, service process and service system (Edvardsson & Olsson 1999, 401.).

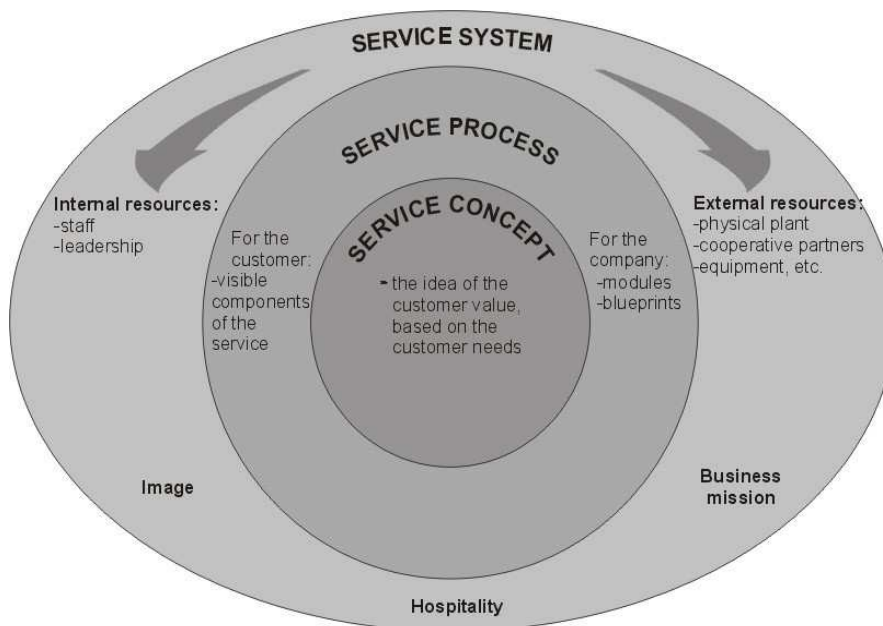


Figure 1: The nature of the customer-oriented tourist product by Komppula & Boxberg (2002, 24.)

Figure 1 illustrates the nature of the customer-oriented tourist product (Komppula & Boxberg 2002, 24.). The core of the tourism product is the *service concept*. It is the idea of what the customer expects and how to create the conditions to achieve this experience. The service concept is based on needs and motives of the customer. The *service process* is for the customer something visible, like for example a brochure. In the company and for the employees it could be the determination and definition of activities in the customer process and the production process. The *service system* includes the resources to realize the service concept. These include among other things the customers, the employees of the service company, the organisation and the environment. All of this to-

gether, the service concept, the service process and the service system are prerequisites for the tourist experience (Komppula 2005).

2.2 New product development in tourism

According to Zeithaml and Bitner (1996) vary the kinds of new products from small changes to major innovations, what can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1: New-tourist-product strategy matrix for identifying growth opportunities by Komppula (2001,9.), modified from Zeithaml & Bitner (1996, 199.)

Offerings	Markets	
	Existing markets / Current customers	New markets/ new customers
Existing products	<i>Market penetration</i> modification to existing product for present market	<i>Market development</i> reposition present product to attract new market
New products	<i>Service development</i> introduce new product to present market	<i>Diversification</i> launch of new product to new market

Diversification represents major innovations, like new services for not yet defined markets. *Service Development* means new services presented to existing customers, a service that was previously not available from the company. *Market development* stands for service extensions of existing services, these service improvements are the most common type of service innovations. The most modest service innovation is *market penetration*, , although they are often highly visible and can have a significant impact on customer perception (Komppula 2001, 8.).

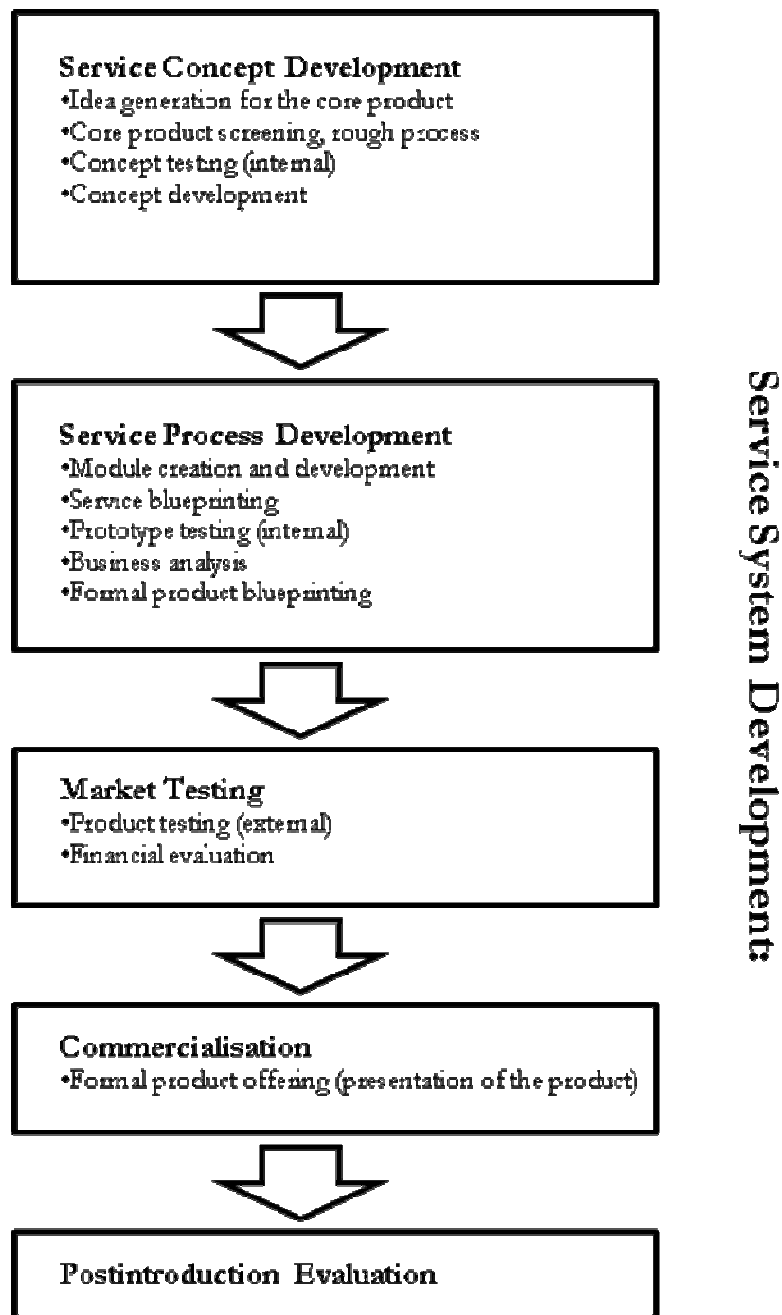


Figure 2: Service System Development (Komppula 2001, 19.)

The framework in figure 2 needs to be seen as Komppula's (2001, 19.) first preliminary proposal. The first stage in the frame is the *service concept development*, which can be divided into four phases: idea generation, core product, concept testing and concept development. The service concept answers the customers' question what is the new service offer. The sources of ideas for the experience can be divided into internal and external sources. A rough blueprint of the new idea should be tested by service employees and possibly the idea needs to be developed according to the experiences made. As soon as the core idea is ready, the next stage can be started. *Service process development* shows the

precise planning and pricing of the tourism product. Each module must be presented as a chain of activities to identify scheduling, cost and service quality factors to find potential gaps in the system. In the *market test* phase, the service concept and the processes are tested by an external group of people, for example friends and family of the employees. During the market test phase, the key components are tested and the main message for the marketing of the product is identified. After launching the product on the market, it is important to examine the sources of the success or failure of the product to be able to use this information in other development processes (Komppula 2001, 17-18.).

However, there are researchers who claim that the development of new services is a largely informal process. Few companies tie systematically staff into the process. Service firms remain steady in their view that ideas can be generated as and when required. In general, they do not have formal mechanisms with which to generate new ideas (Kelly & Storey 2000).

2.3 Wedding tourism product

Tourism products are a collection of tangible and intangible elements. This applies also to wedding tourism. This intangibility causes uncertainty by the customer about what to expect from the offered wedding service(s). Brochures and websites of wedding cities, wedding venues and/or wedding themes can help to make the intangible more tangible. However, a wedding cannot be evaluated beforehand, since it is produced and consumed at the same time. The wedding experience must be planned by anticipating customer's expectations, wants and needs. The components of the wedding have to be arranged accordingly and layers of detail have to be added to each component (Silvers 2012, 8.). Through my education as a wedding planner I gained knowledge about the different components of a wedding, which can be seen below in figure 3.

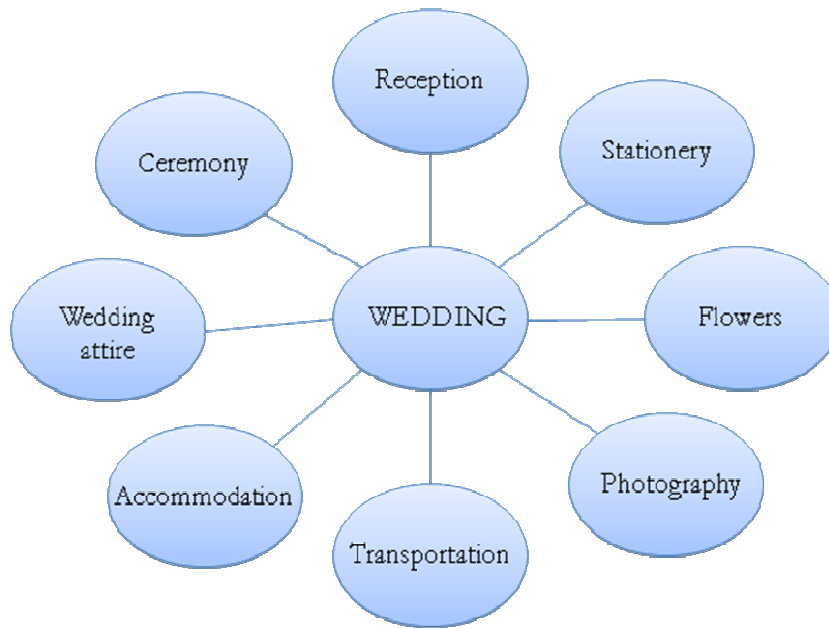


Figure 3: Components of a wedding

Stationeries are amongst other things save-the-date-cards, invitations, ceremony programs, menu cards, place cards and thank-you-cards. These should fit the wedding style or theme as well as the flowers. *Flowers* are an important component in weddings; they are everywhere, e.g. the bridal bouquet, the boutonniere, floral arrangements for the ceremony venue and for the reception venue. *Photography* does not just mean photography, but videography as well and is not less important. Photographers and videographers capture the day in pictures. The component *transportation* includes travelling to the wedding for out of town guests as well as transport for the couple and the wedding party to ceremony and reception. The out of town guests need also *accommodation* and the couple possibly wants to spend the wedding night in a honeymoon suite. Bride's and groom's gown as well as hair and make-up, rings and other jewellery are part of the *wedding attire*. The ceremony venue, music, flowers and confetti are merged in the *ceremony* component. The *reception* might be one of the biggest components of a wedding, the wedding cake, food and beverages, decoration, flowers and entertainment are included.

The components of a wedding show clearly, that several businesses are involved in a wedding. To have such a wedding party in town means business for several enterprises,

for example for restaurants, shops, accommodation services, transportation services, entertainment providers, jewelers, florists and many more.

2.4 What other wedding cities, towns and islands offer

I ordered some wedding brochures from European destinations to compare them with the ideas for Loviisa's weddings. The brochures came from the wedding town Füssen, the wedding city Vienna and from two wedding islands, Jersey and Malta.

Table 2: Comparative analysis of Loviisa to other wedding towns/cities/islands

Wedding city/town / island	Distribution/ promotion	Important Features	Themed weddings	Target market
Loviisa Finland	Web version showing some features of each wedding theme and a short description of the wedding, the printed version is more detailed	Colourful pictures of bridal attire, bouquet, cake, location etc	Choice of six themed weddings	Local National International
Vienna Austria	6 page DIN A6 brochure, same information as in the web	Serious, mostly pictures of venues	No themes	National International
Jersey Great Britain	39 page A5 brochure, Jersey has an own wedding webpage http://www.weddinginjersey.co.uk/	Clearly structured, at least one page to introduce a venue, pictures of playful couples	No themes	International
Malta and Gozo Malta	25 page A4 brochure, only available in the web	One page per venue, couples posing in beautiful surroundings	No themes	International
Füssen Germany	12 page DIN A6 brochure (only in German)	Serious, few pictures	No themes	National

Table 2 shows that the brochures are very different in size and style; they vary in size from DIN A6 to A4, in number of pages from 6 to 39 and in style from playful to serious. All brochures are very colourful and contain mainly photos of possible venues

and/or happy couples in different locations. All brochures introduce venues with a shorter or longer description and offer furthermore contact information for all services, including churches and register offices. No wedding themes are offered.

3 Traditions and trends

Weddings have a long and rich tradition, and according to Wood & Wood (2011, 2.) many traditions can be traced back to the Egyptian, Greek and Roman civilisation, whereas Haeberle (1981, 430.) also mentions Hebrew and Germanic roots in our wedding tradition. All agree that the Western marriage has also been shaped by the church of the Middleages, reformation and the industrialisation.

Although a wedding has always been the union of a couple, it has not always been a decision between two people, but mostly a matter of two families. Schmidt (2012) explains that marriages were often arranged because they were just an economic necessity, which could not be left to fortune. The main goals of marriage have long been the protection of goods, as well as reproduction. Also marriage by capture was practised in ancient cultures, probably when the groom could not pay for the bride. (Wood & Wood 2011, 37.)

To summarise Haeberle (1981, 432.) the rise of Christianity generated a big change in European marriage laws and customs and in the following centuries marriage was more and more influenced by church, which can also be seen in the development of a religious wedding ceremony. But it was just in the 12th century that a priest became part of the wedding ceremony, and just in the 13th century that he took charge of the proceedings. In most European countries, marriages continued to require a religious ceremony until the French Revolution in 1792, when the compulsory civil marriage was introduced and marriage before some magistrate or government official became the only valid form of marriage in most of the Western world. Religious weddings were still allowed, but only after the civil ceremony had taken place.

3.1 Wedding traditions and customs

Wedding traditions vary from country to country, from region to region and even from family to family. There are not many research publications to find and not much reliable literature either. I compared the book “Wedding Traditions and Customs throughout the Centuries” written by Janet and Michael Wood in 2011 with “The Bride’s Book

of Etiquette” of 2003 written by the Bride’s Magazine Editors with several internet sources to find the origin of traditions. The most common and popular stories behind Western Christian wedding traditions can be found in the following two chapters. These chapters do not claim completeness, since the list of wedding traditions and customs is endless.

3.1.1 Traditions in Western Christian Weddings

Many couples decide to get married in church, one reason might be that the ambience and the ceremony is seen as more romantic and personal than at the registry office. In Finland for example more than half of all couples still do tie the knot in church; even when the share of church weddings steadily decreased over the last 25 years (Statistics Finland 2013b.). But this decision also means that the couple has to decide which traditions and customs to follow and which ones they do not want to have in their wedding ceremony and party. For this decision one has to know first where these traditions are coming from and what their meaning is.

Giving away the Bride

The father of the bride brings her down the aisle to her husband to be. Back in times, when a woman was owned by her father, it was him who gave her away and from then on she was property of the husband (Wood & Wood 2011, 30.). This tradition is today just a symbolic gesture and shows the bride the support of her family and their blessing of the marriage. Anyway, the father brings her nowadays often just half way down the aisle, to show that it is her own will to go the whole way.

Positioning of the Couple during Ceremony

The bride stands to the groom’s left. This comes from times when the groom had eventually to fight for his bride and therefore had to have the right hand free for the sword, if needed. (Wood & Wood 2011, 28.). Even if the groom does not have to literally fight for his bride anymore, the positioning of the couple is still the same.

The Rings

The wedding ring is a never-ending circle, which symbolises everlasting love according to Wood & Wood (2011, 15.) and Olson (2007). Wood & Wood (2011, 16.) write that there was belief that in (Egyptian, Greek and Roman) ancient times that a nerve run through the ring finger of the left hand straight to the heart, that is why it was called medical finger. Olson (2007) explains that believe was, that there is a vein going through the ring finger of the left hand directly to the heart and was therefore called love finger. Kaminsky (2006, 12.) writes that this vein even has a Latin name: Vena Amoris and that medical science has proved that there is no such nerve or vein. The tradition of wearing the wedding ring on the ring finger of the left hand however still remains. Christian couples in very few countries, wear the wedding ring on the ring finger of the right hand, for example in German speaking countries (Germany, Austria and Switzerland). I was not able to find an explanation for this exception.

Bridal Bouquet

Early Roman brides carried a bunch of herbs under the veil to symbolise fidelity and fertility and to ward off evil. The Editors of Bride's Magazine (2003, 12.) write that these herbs served as a precursor to the modern bridal bouquet. Flowers stand for a variety of emotions. Red roses are preferred for weddings, since they stand for love. Other popular choices are lilies, which stand for happiness and truth and daisies which stand for beauty and empathy (Roney 2012, 112.). But every flower has more than one meaning and a special flower might have a very personal meaning to a couple; so there is no right or wrong choice.

The Dress

Wood & Wood (2011, 17.) found out that there is no traditional colour for weddings; all kind of bright colours were popular in the past. The tradition of a white wedding dress is quite young; it is commonly credited to Queen Victoria's choice to wear a white wedding dress at her wedding to Prince Albert in 1840 (Otnes & Pleck 2003, 31.). A white wedding dress represented high social status and wealth, as the dress was especially made for the wedding and to be worn only once. These days the colour

white is seen synonymous with purity and virginity; therefore it is not seen appropriate to wear white for a second (or third...) marriage.

Brides from other cultures and believes prefer other colours for their wedding dress. Hindu brides in India, wear traditionally the colour red on their wedding day, which stands for good luck (Sharma 2013.). The same applies to Chinese brides (He 2013.)

Veil

In the past a veil was worn to keep the bride safe from evil spirits and the evil eye (Wood & Wood 2011, 8.). But Wood & Wood also refer to another account which states that the veil tradition comes from the days when a groom captured the bride and would throw a blanket over her head and carry her away. However, nowadays, the bridal veil is seen only as a fashion accessory of the bride. Some brides like to wear the bridal veil of a friend or relative who is happily married (Webster 2007, 39.)

3.1.2 Other wedding related traditions and customs

There are also many other traditions and customs, which belong to weddings, but are not part of the ceremony itself. Some of these pre-and post-ceremony traditions are explained in this chapter.

Wedding month

Wood & Wood (2011, 11.) explain that May was considered to be an unlucky month for weddings in Roman belief and preferred were the months April and June. April was sacred to Venus and June to Juno, May, the month between, was considered a risk of disparaging them both. I found out that the opinion about the right time to get married varies very much from country to country. In Austria is June the most popular month for weddings (Weddix) and in Switzerland it is August (Hochzeitsportal). The most popular months for weddings in Germany recently changed to July, before it was May for many years (Weddix). But May seems still to be a difficult month for weddings in many countries for diverse reasons:

May is in France seen as malediction month for weddings. Nowadays this month of bad malediction is not so present anymore, but couples still prefer to get married in July and August, but also in June and September. (Maysounabe 2013).

The unhappy month in Russia is May: I'm not sure that nowadays everybody knows it, but as my mum said: "who gets married in May, will suffer all his life" It's because in Russian language the words "May" and "suffer" have the same root. (Volkova 2013)

The decision for the wedding months is in these days mostly driven by weather conditions and availability of the most important guests; but still, even young people follow old traditions and beliefs.

Accessories

“Something old, something new,
something borrowed, something blue,
and a silver sixpence in your shoe.”

This old Victorian rhyme is still popular and some bridal accessories, like the blue garter, come from this rhyme. These days, the third line is often skipped.

Something old stands for the old life, something new for the new life. Something borrowed stands for the sharing aspect of a marriage and something blue stands for constancy and purity. A silver sixpence stands for financial stability (Wood & Wood 2011, 9.).

Confetti

Wheat was used in the past to throw over the bride and groom, nowadays rice is more popular (Wood & Wood 2011, 31.). However, all the grains (and their modern alternatives) represent the wish for a fruitful marriage and many children. Nowadays more and more couples consider it irresponsible to throw around food; common alternatives are rose pedals, heart shaped paper confetti or soap-bubbles.

Wedding cake

The Bride's Book of Etiquette (2003, 15.) says that wedding cakes origin from Roman times, when bread was broken over the bride's head as symbol of fertility and good luck. In Medieval times guests brought small cakes to the wedding and piled them up

on top of each other as high as possible. If the bride and groom kissed successfully over the stack they were about to have a happy life together. (Knight 2008.).Cutting the wedding cake is today often turned into a ritual with sharing a symbolic bite of the cake. The wedding cake is usually a multi-tiered decorated layer cake which often fits in colour and decoration to the wedding theme and colour scheme.

Tossing the Bouquet/Garter

Tossing the bouquet and/or the garter is according to Wood & Wood (2011, 6.) and Olson (2007) a tradition from England. In medieval times the wedding guests tried to rip pieces of the bride's dress and bouquet to preserve some of her good luck. To escape, the bride threw her bouquet and garters in the crowd, and run away. Nowadays unmarried women gather behind the bride when she throws the bouquet backwards over her shoulder and whoever catches the bouquet is supposed to be the next to marry. Also the garter is still popular, especially as a blue item (see also below, chapter Accessories). The medieval bride used to wear many garters according to Wood & Wood (2011, 6.), today's bride wears usually just one garter, which the groom tosses for the unmarried men. Again, whoever catches it, is supposed to be the next to marry.

Groom carries his bride over the threshold

In ancient cultures, the threshold of the home was considered to be a hotbed of evil spirits and since a new bride was incredibly interesting to them the groom better carried her inside, so that she would not bring any bad spirits into the house. Related to that was also the belief, that a bride who tripped over the threshold of her new home would bring bad luck. The Editors of Bride's Magazine believe that this tradition comes from the above mentioned believes, but according to Wood & Wood (2001, 37.) it could also go back to the "marriage by capture" times, when the bride didn't follow the groom peacefully into his housing. If the groom carries his bride over the threshold these days, it is considered as a romantic way to welcome her into his life.

3.2 Wedding trends

Despite all the traditions and customs, weddings are also subject to very current movements and very modern trends. There are several trends in weddings every year

regarding colours and styles which are changing very quickly. Since Pantone declared Emerald the colour of the year 2013, this colour trend can also be seen in weddings (Pantone 2013.). Another trend - the 20's – came up with the movie “The Great Gatsby”, which was released in May 2013.

Other trends last longer than just some months, like for example the trend to celebrate a bit smaller, mainly because of the bad economic situation. For that reason couples might decide for a **Civil Wedding**. There might be also other reasons why couples choose to have a civil wedding; they might not feel that they belong to a church or they might belong to different religions. Another reason could be that the couple wants to cut down costs and with a civil wedding they can save money in clothes as well as the party, which is usually smaller in a civil wedding. Second (and third....) marriages are also mostly closed by a registrar.

A civil wedding ceremony takes place often in the local town or city hall, but more uncommon places like beaches or parks, castles or museums have increased in popularity. Some of Loviisa's wedding themes have the ceremony planned in special places, which are predestined for a civil marriage. In the Midsummer wedding it takes place in the garden Kuninkaan Lampi and in the Archipelago wedding on the boat bridge Laivasilta. However, if the ceremony is planned in a church, it can always be changed to a civil wedding in Loviisa city hall.

Destination weddings are also growing in popularity, since they are typically smaller in size, which results in lower costs.

The destination wedding occurs when a couple decides to hold their wedding in a location where neither one of them resides. [...] the wedding often merges into the honeymoon. The joining of these two events creates what is popularly called the Wedding Moon. (Daniels & Loveless 2007, 94.)

Such a Destination Wedding or Wedding Moon could for example take place at an exotic destination with a beach ceremony. Destinations offer nowadays often ready wedding-packages which are usually all-inclusive. Such packages can help to keep reduce the wedding planning stress. And since some of the guests tend to stay for a small

vacation there with the couple, they avoid the separation anxiety, which some couples can experience during honeymoon according to Medved (1996). Any of Loviisa's weddings can be a destination wedding for anybody travelling to Loviisa from elsewhere in Finland or abroad.

More and more people are concerned with the environment and want to keep their wedding's impact on the environment as small as possible; they go for an **Eco-friendly Wedding**. It starts with invitations from recycled paper, living plants for decoration (which guests can carry home and replant), local grown food and environmentally friendly transportation. Eco-friendly weddings go often together with the vintage wedding theme and the idea to use the old instead of the new. Of course there is much more one can consider; it depends how far the couple wants to go with the green idea. An eco-friendly wedding theme can be found in the Midsummer wedding theme of Loviisa's weddings. But the green idea can be brought into any wedding theme if wanted.

Intercultural wedding is defined broadly, covering five major varieties: International (individuals from different countries), interracial (individuals from different races), interethnic (individuals from different ethnic groups), interfaith (individuals from different religions) and interclass (individuals from different social class background) (Leeds-Hurwitz W. 2002, 13.). One wedding can even combine two or more of the mentioned intercultural aspects. The number of intercultural weddings grows as the number of people travelling, living and working abroad increases. Our world is becoming smaller by the minute writes Macomb in her practical guide for couples planning interfaith, intercultural wedding celebrations (2003, 2.). Individuals of different faiths, backgrounds and cultures meet, get to know one another, fall in love, decide to marry. There is no doubt: intermarriage is on the rise. (Macomb 2003, 2.). There are several options for the ceremony of an intercultural wedding, the couple could choose one culture/faith over the other, they could have a combination of both cultures and faiths or they could even have two ceremonies. One way to get around all these decisions and possible compromises is a civil wedding. No matter which one of the mentioned ceremonies it is, an intercultural wedding requires a certain degree of flexibility from the

couple and their families, which is not necessarily needed for a wedding within one group. The intercultural aspect can be implemented in any of Loviisa's wedding themes.

4 Product development process

The development of wedding themes in this thesis work happens at the very beginning of the product development process. It is idea generation and product screening as part of the service concept development in Komppula's (2001, 19.) service system development framework (chapter 2.2). The analysis of the tourism product in general (chapter 2.1) and the wedding tourism product in particular (chapter 2.3) provided indispensable basic information for the actual product development. The comparative analysis (chapter 2.4) helped me to understand, how wedding brochures should look like (and how they should not). Pictures are essential for wedding brochures, since it is important for the customers to be able to visualise how the wedding could look like. The target group for Loviisa's themed weddings are couples from Loviisa, from all over Finland and the world, who want to have a unique themed wedding in Loviisa, which is memorable and tasteful. With all that in mind, I started the development of the wedding themes.

4.1 Development of the wedding themes

Themed weddings need not to be in conflict with the traditional wedding, because they are simply an enhancement of the mood of the event. It does not intend to replace the cultural and religious context of the wedding. The wedding themes can be considered as an essential component in creating a memorable event.

Practically, 'themed weddings' refers to the application of a certain pattern or concept that guides the overall ceremony. Moreover, what makes the theme a theme is the arrangement of certain colours, historical symbols, and whatever else the couple wants to be a part of the ceremony [...] For example, a medieval theme may involve couples wearing medieval clothing while the venue for the ceremony has been designed in the style of the period, complete with medieval entertainment and a medieval banquet. In order to add more glow to the chosen theme, all other objects or props, as they are termed, will be based on a medieval pattern. This would include the wedding invitations, wedding cake, wedding souvenirs, and so on (Krishnan 2008, 12.).

Such a wedding with a theme and/or a colour scheme is not meant to be a costume party. Like in the above mentioned example guests should feel free to wear whatever they want, it is not necessary to match the medieval theme. Like Krishnan (2008,13.) explains, after all, themed weddings are conceptualised and utilised not to make limitations on the event but rather to add more life and memories to be cherished by the couple and their guests.

4.1.1 Event related wedding themes

The town of Loviisa wanted me to develop wedding themes which are related to certain events in the town. The events and themes were not given and had to be picked by me, my guideline was the event calendar in Loviisa's Tourist Office brochure. To get a picture of the events I visited them all, but only seven were found suitable for wedding themes. I went the same way through possible locations and venues and visited many of them. From the first idea to the final version, nearly all of the wedding themes went through some kind of transformation. All these changes – why and how – are explained in this chapter.

Iron Works Day: from Industrialisation to Steampunk

One can read on the webpage Visit Loviisa (2013) that the Strömfors Iron Works in the westernmost junction of the Kymijoki River was founded in 1698 and the waters spinned the waterwheels for about 250 years, keeping the waterhammers in motion and the blacksmiths and workers busy. The old craftsmen tradition is continued nowadays at the iron works, which makes the setting unique. Life in the century-old area continues whilst maintaining old traditions. People from Loviisa area seem to like the Strömfors Iron Work as a local recreation area.

While I was searching the internet for inspiration for an industrial wedding theme, I came again and again across the trend Steampunk. I tried to find out what it really is, and after reading many blogs and definitions, I found out that Steampunk is specifically concerned with the aesthetics and affectations of the English Victorian era and it tries to show how people of the time were envisioning the future. Steampunk typically features steam-powered machinery and lots of cogwheels and goggles. Sounds like fun I

thought and decided to go for it. It might be good to have a bit of a crazy wedding theme also, it gives more diversity and variety to Loviisa's wedding theme portfolio.

Midsummer dance: Midsummer in Loviisa in sunny yellow

According to Visit Finland (2013) do two thirds of all people living in areas graced by the Midnight Sun reside in Finland. Taking place at the end of June, the Midnight Sun is a key element in the festivities in the northern parts of Finland. This does not mean that it gets dark in the south but nights are white throughout the country. Lighting bonfires and bathing in saunas are two of the most typical traditions in Midsummer celebrations. Barbecuing, fishing and boating have later become standard Midsummer activities while enjoying cottage life. In the old days, Midsummer spells were cast, many of which had to do with hopes of increasing fertility and finding a future spouse. Midsummer was also a popular time for weddings (Visit Finland 2013.). Midsummer celebrations are in Finland a much more important happening as for example in Germany.

I first planned to connect this theme directly to the Midsummer dance at Laivasilta. But since the Archipelago theme is already taking place at Laivasilta, I thought I should change plan and put the Midsummer theme somewhere else. The idea for the right location came up when I visited several gardens in Loviisa during the Open Garden Weekend. I visited Kuninkaan Lampi and I loved the garden and the atmosphere there. I also saw the potential to host a wedding there. I talked to the owner right away and he said he hosted already small events and he is ready to have a wedding there. Great! The Kuninkaan Lampi Garden is the perfect place for the Midsummer wedding. It furthermore is a venue which again guarantees a wide variety in Loviisa's wedding themes.

The King comes to Loviisa: 18th century and Rococo

The event is about the visit of Adolf Fredrik, King of Sweden, to the eastern area of his kingdom in 1752. During the visit, the King named the town Degerby anew after Queen Lovisa Ulrika (Loviisa Tourist Office 2013, 40.). The 18th century weekend includes also a programmed crafts market and this year for the first time a fashion show.

18th century attires were introduced, showing what the nobility wore as well as dresses worn by middle-class and country women.

While watching the above mentioned fashion show, the idea occurred to have a Rococo wedding theme. Rococo stands for elegance, delicate sensuality, gallant manners and a fine intimate life. I thought that these adjectives go very well with a wedding. I also thought that the wedding should place take at exactly the same place as the fashion show, in Kappelipuiston Helmi. This restaurant was closed for many years for several reasons and it seems like people are really happy to have it back, it reopened in the beginning of this year and is gladly accepted and quite lively.

Ancient Loviisa Market: Middle Age

Dragon-decorated tents are erected in the Ungern fortress when medieval-themed merchants come from all over Finland to Loviisa (Loviisa Tourist Office 2013, 42.). The crafts market, the crafts exhibition, the music and the food give a real feeling of times past. The old walls of Bastion Ungern are a beautiful backdrop for the medieval happening.

Since medieval markets and events are quite popular and common in Germany with all its castles and medieval towns, I found it easy to imagine a beautiful medieval wedding. Bride and groom in medieval clothes, entertainment by medieval musicians and a jester in a historic environment would make this wedding unique and stylish. I decided to go medieval with a tented wedding in the inner yard of the Pilasterit guesthouse.

Small Ships' Race: Loviisa's Archipelago in blue

The Small Ship Race is a sailing race for traditional Baltic Sea workboats; the race takes place on the Bay of Loviisa; Start and Finish line are near Laivasilta area. The red salt warehouses, which have been turned into restaurants or spaces that host art exhibitions and shops, give Laivasilta its historical atmosphere (Visit Loviisa 2013a.). During that weekend one can feel a special atmosphere in the town; the sailors and sailboats underline the connection between Loviisa and the sea.

From the first idea on, it was very clear to me how the Archipelago wedding theme should be, this might be, because I was thinking about my own wedding and I would like to have it exactly like that: the ceremony takes place on Laivasilta bridge and the reception on an island, right after an Archipelago cruise. My original idea was to do the Archipelago cruise with the m/s JL Runeberg, of which the home port is Porvoo. Johanna Waltonen, the tourist secretary of Loviisa, asked me to change it and to use the Östersjernan instead, of which the home port is Loviisa, she said it would be nicer if local services would be used (Waltonen 2013b).

Sibelius Festival: Musical Loviisa in black, white and a bit of red

According to Visit Loviisa (2013a) high level chamber music can be heard during the Loviisa Sibelius Festival. The Festival has a relaxed and intimate atmosphere due to small-scale concerts in Loviisa and Pernaja church, Bonga castle and Kappelinpuisto Helmi.

The related wedding theme is based on music sheets – black notes on white paper. To give it a bit of a joyful colour, some red is added here and there. The musicians of the Sibelius Festival should be involved in the wedding ceremony, which would make this wedding theme very special. Café Saltbodan came into my mind as a reception venue for this theme, just because it suits the colour scheme very well.

Historical Houses of Loviisa: 19th century

During Loviisa Wanhat Talot (LWT) weekend, several private owners of over 100 year old houses open their doors to the public. This is the most popular event in Loviisa and it is organised by the Loviisan Wanhat Talot ry. It is not only about houses; there is the antiques market, the handicrafts market, many flea markets, pop-up restaurants and so on and so on. LWT is definitely my favourite event in Loviisa, but after visiting the event this year again, I realised that there is too much going on already and there is no way to implement another happening into LWT. I skipped the idea of having a wedding theme connected to the Historical Houses event.

Loviisa Christmas: winter in blue changed to Christmas in green and red

“The specialities of our Christmas town are the ‘Traditional Christmas Homes’” states Visit Loviisa (2013a). Private homes open their doors to visitors during the Christmas theme weekends in December. Christmas markets at Laivasilta, Strömfors Iron Works and Malmgård Manor attract visitors as well as the Coronation of Saint Lucia on December 13th. Since Santa Claus comes from and lives in Finland, Christmas is especially in Finland full of atmosphere.

The first idea was to have a winter theme with a colour scheme of different shades of blue, but after looking at all the colour schemes, I realised that this one was very similar to the Archipelago colours. Since I wanted to create a diverse variety of wedding themes and colour schemes for Loviisa, I decided to change to a green and red Christmas theme.

4.1.2 Seasonal wedding themes

All the above explained wedding themes are connected to special events in Loviisa, which take place in the four most popular wedding months in Finland: June, July, August and December (Statistics Finland, 2013a). Since I wanted to offer a choice of ten wedding themes in the first place, I wanted to develop three additional themes. To attract people to get married in Loviisa also off-season, I decided to develop wedding themes for some other months also. I choose a spring, autumn and winter theme.

May: Spring Fever in Loviisa

The spring starts in Finland quite late; there is usually still snow on Easter. In order to have the awakening nature and maybe even some spring flowers around, the spring wedding takes place in May. The park surrounding of the restaurant Kappelinpuisto Helmi suits the spring theme very well. The related colours are light green and soft pink.

Early Autumn: Rustic September in Loviisa

The so called “Indian Summer” is in Finland very colourful and worth a wedding theme. The days in September are often still warm and the sun is shining, what makes a nice backdrop for a wedding. For this wedding I choose as venues the beautiful church in Pernaja and the rustic boat shed Algot’s Lantern.

Winter: Winter Wonderland in Loviisa

The Winter Wonderland wedding theme represents the popular white wedding in a magical snow blanket covered landscape. During my first winter in Finland I learned about the kick sled, a chair mounted on a pair of flexible metal runners, which is driven by the driver standing with one foot on one runner, kicking backwards on the ground with the other foot. The use of this sled is so special and common in Finland, I just had to include it into the winter wedding theme. Since it is possible to go on the sled from the church to Bistro Cantor through the Old Town, I decided for these venues.

4.2 What real brides think about themed weddings

To identify what kind of themed weddings would interest potential customers, I set out to find out what real brides and potential brides think about themed weddings using a questionnaire, which can be seen in Attachment 1. The questionnaire has a total of eight questions. The first three questions seek to identify the brides’ vision of the themed wedding of their dreams. Question number four is related to wedding themes in Loviisa and the interest in them. The next two questions are in general about the willingness to travel to a wedding and the overall opinion about themed weddings. The last two questions are just asking for suggestions and comments.

4.2.1 The questionnaire

The questionnaire was sent to ten women of different age (from 20 to 40), from different countries and different marital status. Some women had been married for one or more years, some got just recently married, some were currently planning the wedding and some were not in the planning process. With some of them I had an additional interview and some just answered the questionnaire in writing. The respondents are listed in Table 3.

Table 3: Profile of the respondents

Name	Nationality	Marital status	Questionnaire	Interview
Sabine	German	got married on 26th Oct 2013	X	22nd Oct 2013
Katja	German	got married on Dec 6th 2012	X	2nd Sept 2013
Marlen	German	got married on Aug 31st 2013	X	27th Sept 2013
Elena	Russian	single and not really planning to get married soon	X	
Heidi	Finnish	currently planning her wedding	X	26th Oct 2013
Jasmine	Finnish	in a relationship and waiting for his proposal	X	
Hanna	Finnish	just celebrated the 5th wedding anniversary	X	30th Sept 2013
Rebecca	British	in a relationship and planning her second wedding	X	26th Oct 2013
Laia	Spanish	single but sure to have her dream wedding one day	X	
Iris	Dutch	just celebrated the 1st wedding anniversary	X	

Four of the women just answered the questionnaire; with the six others I had additional interviews. These interviews took each about 30 minutes, were first recorded and then summarised in MS Word.

4.2.2 Questionnaire results

The multiple-choice data was analysed using MS Excel. Two of the questions were analysed through a rating-system, the answer “yes” was rated with 3 points, “might be” with 2, “rather not” with 1 and “no way” with 0 points. The answer with the highest points is therefore the most popular and the one with the lowest points is the least liked answer. This applies to question 1 and 4. Question number 2 and 7 did not need any rating because I just needed to know how many respondents chose what answer. The answers and comments to the open questions were typed in MS Word, which served as a source for a content and comparison analysis for the questionnaire as well as for the interviews.

To find out what should be included in the wedding themes, I gave some suggestions and asked the respondents to rate them. The results can be seen in figure 4.

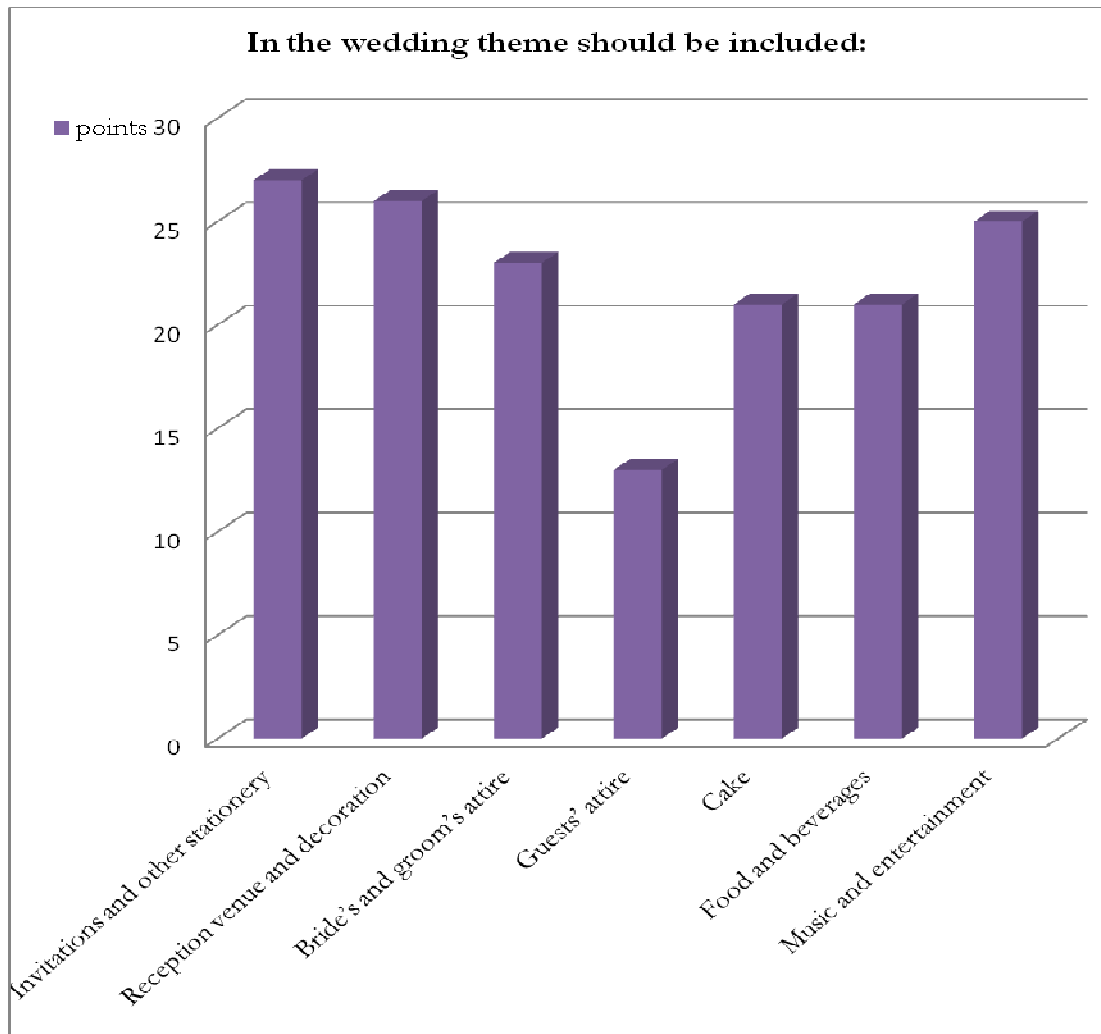


Figure 4: aspects of weddings included in wedding themes

This figure shows that the respondents want to have pretty much everything to be included in the wedding theme. The most important are invitations and other stationery, but these will not be included in Loviisa's wedding themes. But reception venue, decoration, music and entertainment, food, beverages, cake and the wedding couple's attire should fit to the wedding theme and will be explained there. Just the guests' attire seems to be less important to be in the theme.

The second part of the questionnaire was about the respondents own wedding. I wanted to know if they did think about a themed wedding for themselves or if they even had a themed wedding. The results are shown below in figure 5:

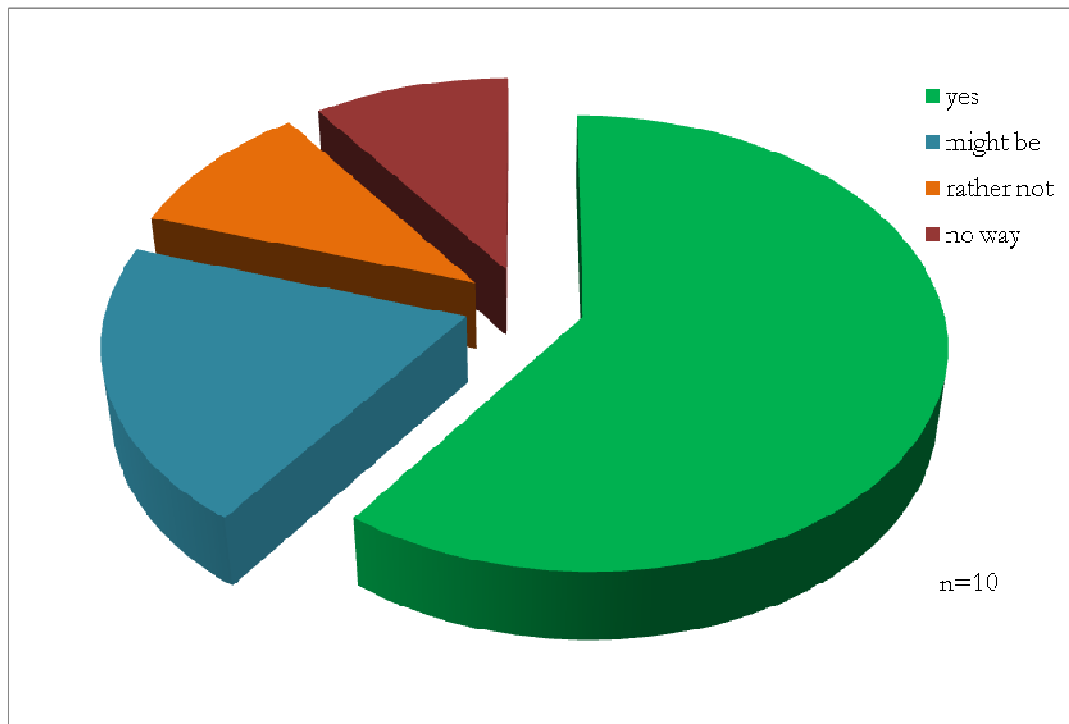


Figure 5: Popularity of themed weddings in general

Six out of ten respondents answered that they would consider having a wedding theme or they even did have a wedding theme on their own wedding. Two answered “may-be”, just one answered “rather not” and another one “no way”. The majority, 80% of the respondents, think positive about themed weddings.

The next question was an open question where I asked to explain the chosen answer from the question before. After analysing the answers from the respondents with a positive attitude towards wedding themes, I got as pros for wedding themes, that the wedding is than easier to plan the wedding (decoration etc.) and the guests have an idea what to expect. The theme says furthermore something about the couple and gives their wedding a very personal touch and it is refreshing, because most weddings are formulaic – almost identical. The two negative set respondents have shared their experiences with me that they have had as guests of themed parties (not themed weddings). These events were not to the liking of the respondents and that is why they now have a negative attitude towards theme parties and weddings in general.

In the third part of the questionnaire I presented ten wedding theme ideas with a very brief description to the respondents and asked them to rate these. The results for the themes are shown in Figure 6.

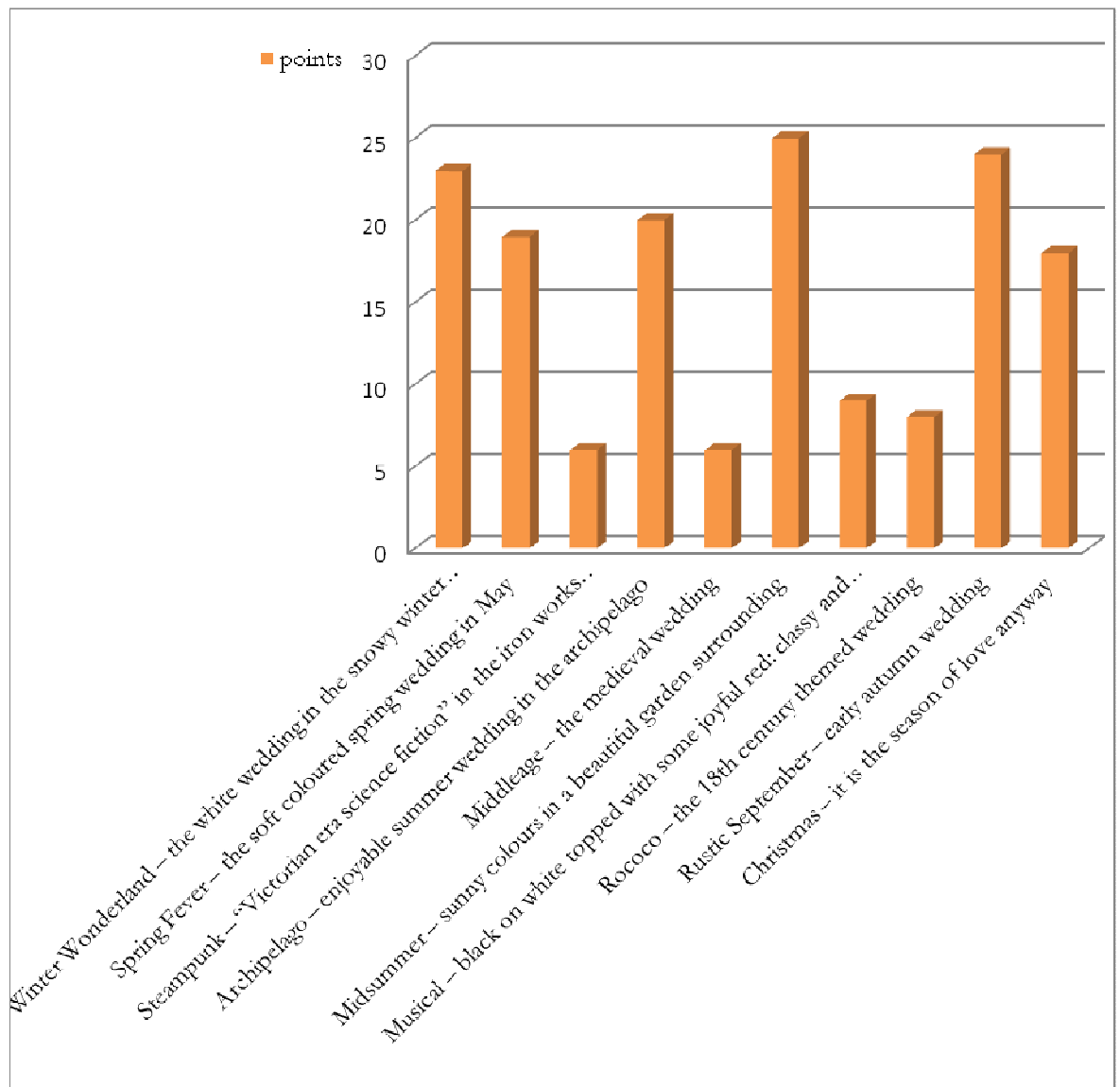


Figure 6: Wedding themes and their popularity

The figure shows that the most popular theme is the Midsummer theme with 25 points out of 30, followed by Rustic September with 24 points and Winter Wonderland with 23 points. The respondents also liked Spring Fever with 20 points, Archipelago with 19 points and Christmas with 18 points.

It can be seen very clearly, that the Musical theme, Rococo, Middleage and Steampunk are not very popular; with just 6 to 9 points they are far behind the other themes.

I asked some general questions in the fourth part of the questionnaire. I asked for their opinion about themed weddings in general and for suggestion for other wedding themes in questions 5 and 6. In these answers as well as in the rating of the themes (question 4) could clearly be seen, that the women are not enthused by very strong themes; they justify this with the risk that such a wedding could turn into a ruction or carnival. These concerns apply especially to the wedding themes Steampunk, Middleage and Rococo. Themes like Midsummer, Rustic September or Winter Wonderland are much more appreciated, because they are more about a colour scheme which fits in the season and less about costumes. These themes are considered more tasteful and unobtrusive. The suggestions given for wedding themes were so diverse and personal, that they did not show any general trend. But I have read several times, that the women are interested in green, non-wasteful weddings.

Question number 7 was asking for the willingness of the brides to have a themed wedding away from home, to travel for the wedding and have kind of a destination wedding. As can be seen in figure 7, all respondents would be ready to travel for their own wedding.

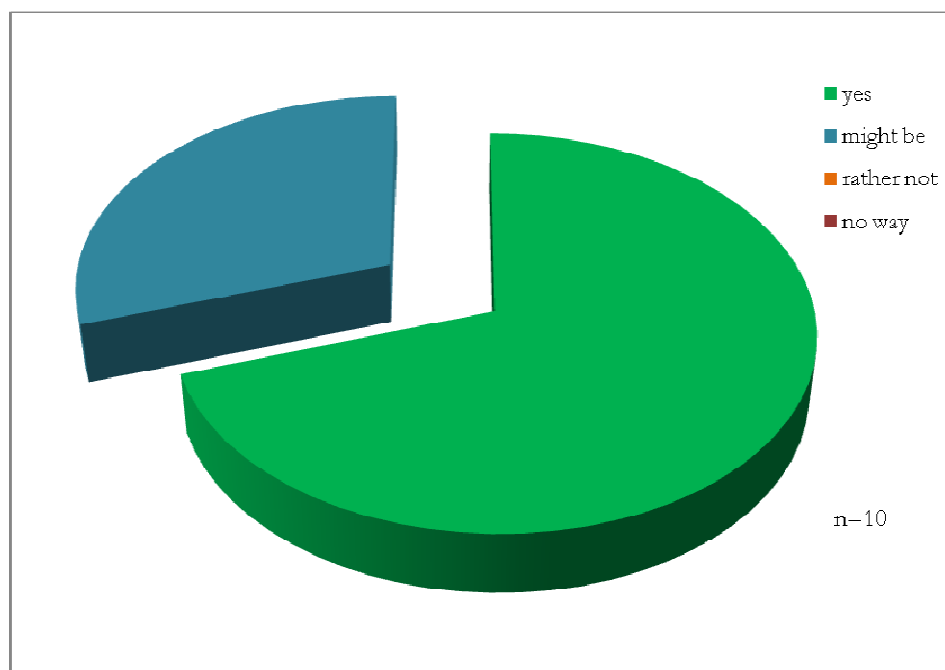


Figure 7: Willingness to travel for the own wedding

In question number 8 I asked for further comments, but did not get any answers related to wedding themes.

5 The final product

I arrived at the final product by considering each theme carefully and how it would fit into Loviisa's profile as a wedding town. The results of the questionnaire also supported my decisions about the final wedding themes. The final product has been interpreted into two versions, the web version which is what the customer can access upon first contact and the full version which will be made available to the customer upon making a final decision to use the product.

The list of events, seasons, related wedding themes and colour schemes was set and can be seen in attachment 3. The final list includes the event-related themes Midsummer, Archipelago and Christmas; the Winter Wonderland, Spring Fever and Rustic September themes are not really related to an event, but more to a season. Four of the event related wedding themes had to be dropped because the questionnaire results revealed some of them to be unpopular and probably not suitable for Loviisa's wedding themes. These themes are Steampunk, Middleage, Musical and Rococo and they can be identified by the grey background.

5.1 Web version of wedding themes for Loviisa's webpage

The web version of the wedding themes shows the ideas without mentioning the venues and companies. These are done for the internet pages of the wedding town Loviisa www.visitloviisa.fi and no promotion for any company should be shown there. The web version of the wedding themes can be seen in attachments 4 to 9.

5.2 The full wedding themes

The full wedding themes show the ideas and also the venues and companies I have chosen for the themes. On the first page of the wedding theme board is the colour scheme shown through big colour dots as well as some pictures to give a visual impression of how the wedding could look like. The pictures show for example the dress, the bridal bouquet, the table setting, the venue and/or the cake. Further explanation about the theme can be found on the second page; different aspects of the wedding are de-

scribed, like the ceremony and reception venue, transportation, bride's and groom's attire, cake, food beverages and decoration, music and entertainment. Also the information where the pictures were found and web-addresses of the included service providers are included. The full version of the wedding themes is in each case directly after the web version in attachments 4 to 9.

5.3 Implementation of the wedding themes

Loviisa city would implement the wedding themes as follows: Customers will be able to access the web version of Loviisa wedding themes through their internet pages www.visitloviisa.fi. They then take contact to Loviisa Tourist Office to ask for more detailed information and the Tourist Office then sends them the full version of the wedding theme boards. If everything goes well, the customer falls in love with one (or more) of the wedding themes and decides to get married in Loviisa. At this point the wedding planning process starts and this process can be handled by Loviisa Tourist Office or by a professional wedding planner (like me). Date, guest list and budget have to be set first. Location, transportation, caterer, photographer, musicians, hairstylist and florist have to be booked; decoration, menu and cake determined. If the couple needs assistance with stationery and gown, they will get all the support they need from Loviisa. The wedding themes are put together very carefully and everything fits together well, but the wedding themes are not carved in stone and are possibly changeable. There might come up the wish to change or to combine wedding themes or whatever the special ideas of the customers are. The couple needs to have the certainty that they are taken care of and their wedding is in good hands, especially when they are coming from somewhere else in Finland or even abroad.

6 Conclusion

The objectives of this study were achieved. **Events** had to be identified through simply visiting all events throughout the year. **Locations** had to be found as well; these were also visited and checked one by one. Many photos of the events and locations were taken, which made it easier later on to think about **wedding themes** that would go with the events. Through the questionnaire I found out that there is a **market for themed weddings** as well as for destination weddings, which means couples would be ready to travel to Loviisa to have the wedding of their dreams. The aim of this study, to develop wedding themes which are related to certain events in Loviisa, was achieved to 50%, since only three of the six developed wedding themes are related to events, the other three are seasonal themes.

6.1 Wedding town Loviisa tomorrow

I developed wedding themes which can be offered to customers that are not necessarily from Loviisa and the wedding town Loviisa can use these themes as one way of boosting Loviisa's image as a wedding town. As mentioned in chapter 2.4, wedding brochures from other countries did not offer any wedding themes. That means that Loviisa has something very unique to offer and would make a real difference to other wedding town/cities/islands. The wedding town Loviisa does currently not plan a wedding brochure, since Loviisa has to allocate the budget on their main target, but they want to drive forward the development of the wedding town brand on www.visitloviisa.fi (Waltonen 2013a.).

6.2 Limitations, reliability and validity

Very few studies about weddings and specifically wedding themes have been published and therefore the study had to rely on literature that is partially over ten years old which are nevertheless still valid. A quantitative method was used to collect some of the data in this study. Only a small sample of ten was used and this meant that the results do not necessarily reflect the views held by the rest of the population.

It turned out to be difficult to get contact to people related to marketing, culture, tourism or the rose wedding in Loviisa. It seems they do not really have time to support a student's work in addition to their daily work load. Emails were just answered in a very brief and telegraphic style and there was no time for meetings. Therefore possibly valuable (insider) knowledge could not be attained.

6.3 Evaluation and recommendations

The objectives mentioned in chapter 1.2 were achieved. Events suitable for a wedding theme had to be identified. Loviisa's event calendar was the guideline for that and then I simply visited all events throughout the year to feel the atmosphere there and get ideas for a fitting wedding theme. Appropriate locations had to be identified as well and these locations were found in the service section of Loviisa Tourist Office brochure (2013, 34.). These were also visited and checked one by one. Many photos were taken of the events and locations, which made it easier later on to plan the wedding themes which would go with the events. In order to be able to visit all events in 2013, I was given time until end of the year to deliver the ready wedding themes to the wedding town Loviisa. This objective was achieved and they can include them in their internet pages on www.visitloviisa.fi right away.

Through the questionnaire I was able to assess several things. I found out that brides want every aspect of the wedding taken into account when planning a themed wedding. It must be very carefully considered how such a themed wedding should look like; it has to be tasteful and discreet, not too loud or exotic. Brides do not want the wedding theme in the foreground and they do not want to have a costume party. That is the reason why the stronger wedding themes Middleage, Rococo, Steampunk and Musical were not so popular among the respondents; they preferred softer themes like Winter Wonderland, Spring Fever, Archipelago, Midsummer, Autumn and Christmas. There is a market for themed weddings, because 80% of the respondents think positive about wedding themes in general. I learned that 100% of the respondents are ready to have a destination wedding, what means they would be ready to travel to Loviisa to have the (themed) wedding of their dreams.

The aim of this study, to develop wedding themes which are related to certain events in Loviisa, was achieved to 50%. Only three of the six developed wedding themes are related to events, the other three are seasonal themes. Four other event-related wedding themes were less liked by the questionnaire respondents and have been deselected as mentioned before.

It was revealing for me as a wedding planner to look at weddings from a different perspective, it widened my horizon and will help me in future business. The research about history and trends deepened my understanding for weddings in general and for intercultural weddings in particular. I learned more about what real brides really want, what is essential to know for a wedding planner, and I also learned that brides from different age, nationality and background are not so different when it comes to their wedding: they all want a celebration to remember, where the focus is on the happy event. Last but not least is that I know now many more possible locations for weddings in and around Loviisa.

Since the wedding town Loviisa has currently just one themed and organised wedding to offer, I recommend adapting these additional wedding themes into their portfolio. These wedding themes will make the important difference in the comparison of Loviisa to other wedding destinations, since other wedding destinations do not offer such ready to go wedding themes. It makes it easier for customers from elsewhere in Finland and abroad to decide for a wedding in Loviisa, when ready packages are offered, they know then exactly what they and their guests have to expect. To have such a wedding party in town means also business for various enterprises, thus there are touristic advantages for Loviisa in many ways.

To handle the wedding planning and themes well, the recommendation is furthermore to have a wedding planner in the back-office, to make sure the enquiries can be handled also in Loviisa Tourist Office's high season, and the tourist officers are not overcharged with this additional work load.

Despite all the wedding planning and wedding themes, we should not forget that a wedding is sacramental (for example for Catholics) and a holy religious act (for example for Lutherans). If somebody is not religious in any way, a wedding is still very special, since of the three most important events in life, this is the only one, that can be decided by oneself; birth and death, both are normally not in one's own hand.

“A wedding is a party, not a performance. If at the end of the day you are married to the one you love, then everything went perfectly.” (unknown author).

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Attachments

Attachment 1: Questionnaire

Attachment 2: Loviisa map

Attachment 3: Overview of the wedding themes

Attachment 4: Wedding theme board Winter Wonderland – web and full version

Attachment 5: Wedding theme board Spring Fever – web and full version

Attachment 6: Wedding theme board Midsummer – web and full version

Attachment 7: Wedding theme board Archipelago – web and full version

Attachment 8: Wedding theme board Rustic Autumn – web and full version

Attachment 9: Wedding theme board Christmas – web and full version

Attachments

Attachment 1: Questionnaire

THEMED WEDDINGS - Questionnaire

Page 1 of 2

A wedding theme is based on certain colours, a historical period, a season or whatever else the couple likes (e.g. a certain movie or place). A medieval theme may involve the couple wearing medieval clothing while the venue for the ceremony has been designed in the style of the period, complete with medieval entertainment and a medieval banquet. Also other objects would be based on a medieval pattern, like the wedding invitations, wedding cake, and so on. However, a themed wedding is not supposed to be a costume party, because it is sacramental and is filled with cultural beliefs and values. Therefore, it is not necessary of the guests to match the medieval theme; guests are free to wear any style even it does not correspond to a medieval design. After all, themed weddings are conceptualised and utilised not to make limitations on the event but rather to add more life and memories to be cherished by the couple and their guests.

WEDDING RECEPTION

1. What should in your opinion be included in the wedding theme?

Please rate in the following scale:

	yes	might be	rather not	no way
Invitations and other stationery	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reception venue and decoration	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bride's and groom's attire	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Guests' attire	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cake	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Food and beverages	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Music and entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

YOUR OWN WEDDING RECEPTION

- | | yes | might
be | rather
not | no
way |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 2. Did you (consider to) have a themed wedding yourself? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
3. A) Yes or might be: Please explain why? What theme did/would you choose and why?
- B) Rather not or no way: Please explain why not?

Attachments

Attachment 1: Questionnaire

THEMED WEDDINGS - Questionnaire

Page 2 of 2

WEDDING THEMES IN LOVIISA

Here is a list of several wedding themes.

4. Does one or do more theme/s sound interesting to you?

Please rate in the following scale:

	yes	might be	rather not	no way
Winter Wonderland – the white wedding in the snowy winter landscape	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Spring Fever – the colourful spring wedding in May	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Steampunk – “Victorian era science fiction” in the iron works surrounding	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Archipelago – enjoyable summer wedding in the archipelago	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Middleage – the medieval wedding	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Midsummer – sunny colours in a beautiful garden surrounding	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Musical - black on white topped with some joyful red: classy and elegant	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rococo – the 18 th century themed wedding	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rustic September – early autumn wedding	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Christmas – it is the season of love anyway	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

GENERALLY

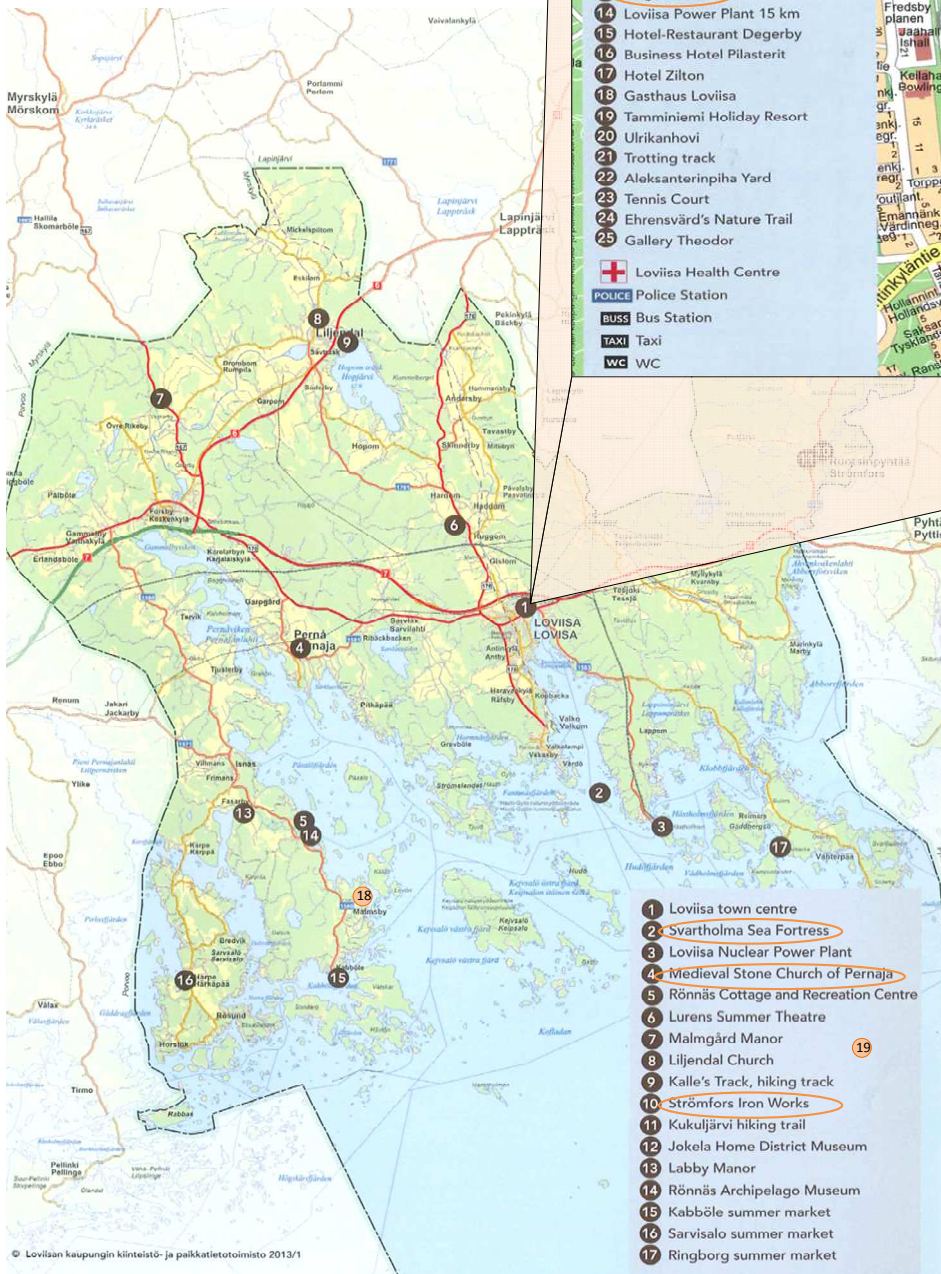
5. Would you be ready to have your dream-themed-wedding in a location where neither you nor your husband are living or at home?
6. What is your opinion about themed weddings in general?
7. Do you have an idea or suggestion for another wedding theme?
8. Do you have any other comments?


Attachment 2: Loviisa map

- 26 Kuninkaan Lampi
- 27 Bistro Cantor
- 28 Kapleipuisto Helmi
- 29 Saltbodan

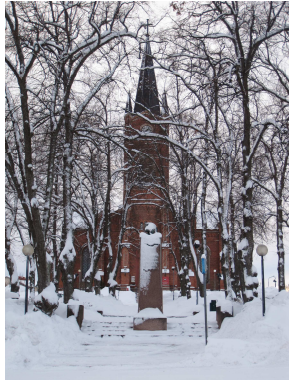
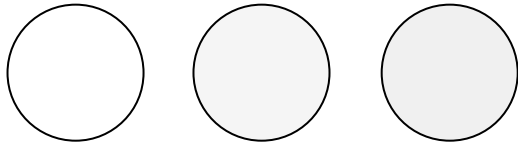


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Event	Winter	Late Spring	Iron Works Day	Midsummer dance	Small Ship Race	Medieval Market	Sibelius Days	The King comes to Loviisa (1752)	Early Autumn	Christmas
Theme	Winter Wonderland	Spring Fever	Steampunk	Midsummer	Archipelago	Middleage	Musical	Rococo	Rustic September	Christmas
Colour scheme	white	light green soft pink	black dark red	yellow green	shades of blue	dark red gold white	black white with a bit red	pink white silver	orange rustic red brown	green red
Ceremony	Loviisa church	Kappelinpuiston Helmi	Strömfors church	Kuninkaan Lampi	Laivasilta	Loviisa church	Loviisa church	Kappelinpuiston Helmi	Pernaja church	Loviisa church
Reception	Bistro Cantor	Kappelinpuiston Helmi	Tallinvintti Gallery	Kuninkaan Lampi	Boistö	Degerby Pilasterit (tented wedding)	Saltbodan	Kappelinpuiston Helmi	Algot's Lantern	Degerby Gille
Transportation	Kick sled	no	walk	no	Österstjernen	walk	Oldtimer	no	boat or car	horse carriage/wlak
Food	Cantor's specialties	Springveggies, fish, meat	Traditional Finnish Wedding buffet	BBQ	Archipelago buffet	BBQ	Saltbodan's specialties	Helmi's specialties	Autumn specialties	Traditional Finnish Christmas table
Entertainment/ Special	Kick sled ride and making snow lanterns	The legendary Kappelinpuisto Helmi from 1865	unusual surrounding for a wedding	Eco-friendly wedding in a private garden	Archipelago cruise	Medieval music and dancers, fire-eaters and a jester	Sibelius Days Musicians	Modern meets Rococo	small wedding for only around 25 people	Degerby Gille is an historical attractions, it dates back to 1695
										

Wedding theme WINTER WONDERLAND LOVIISA



Loviisa Church



Kick Sled



Bridal Footwear



Deco

Wedding theme: Winter Wonderland Loviisa

Colour scheme: shades of white

The wedding: Classy in white. After the ceremony guests are welcomed at the reception venue with warm peppermint hot chocolate, cinnamon coffee and pomegranate ginger tea, which can be enjoyed with a piece of the wedding cake, which is of course white with some white flower decoration. It can easily be minus twenty degrees in January and February in Loviisa, therefore the clothes for the Kick Sled drive have to be really warm. But the bride can sit on the sled (she does not have to drive it herself) and cuddly woollen blankets will do. The same goes if the couple wants to go by horse sled down to the restaurant.

The couple and guests will learn after coffee time how to make a snow lantern, an ice lantern and some icy tree decorations. People who enjoyed the Kick Sled Ride can continue the trip by going on the sled to Loviisa's beach area Plagen, which is wonderful in winter. There is even the possibility to swim in the icy seawater, for the extremely brave ones.

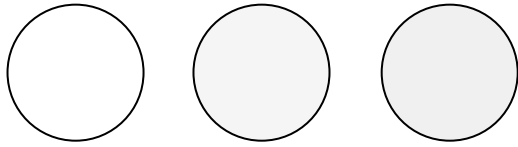
Later the nice winter dinner starts with a creamy mushroom soup and the main course is a local fish served with potatoes, vegetables and white wine sauce or chicken with pesto risotto and garlic sauce. A well selected wine rounds the meal off.

Special: The Kick-Sled Ride and the snow lantern making course

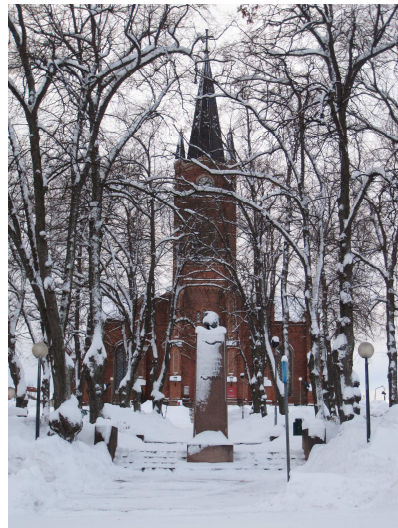
Pictures found on: <http://pinterest.com/lovisasweddings/winterwonderland/>

Wedding theme

WINTER WONDERLAND LOVIISA



Bridal Bouquet



Loviisa Church



Kick Sled



Cake



Bridal Footwear



Deco



Cupcakes

Event: Winter

Wedding theme: Winter Wonderland Loviisa

Colour scheme: shades of white



Ceremony and reception: The ceremony takes place in Loviisa church. After the ceremony the wedding party jumps on the Kick Sleds and drives through the old town to the reception venue – Bistro Cantor. Guests are welcomed with warm peppermint hot chocolate, cinnamon coffee and pomegranate ginger tea, which can be enjoyed with a piece of the wedding cake.

Wedding attire: Classy in white.

It can easily be minus twenty degrees in January and February in Loviisa, therefore the clothes for the Kick Sled drive have to be really warm. But the bride can sit on the sled (she does not have to drive it herself) and cuddly woollen blankets will do. The same goes if the couple wants to go by horse sled down to the restaurant.

Decor and wedding cake: The restaurant is mainly held in the colours white and dark brown, what suits the winter wonderland theme very well. Just little white winter decoration is needed to make it perfect. White candles, white flowers, lace, pearls and snowflakes. The wedding cake is also white with white flowers as decoration.

Food and beverage: Bistro Cantor focuses on local food and acts with zeal and love for food. First course of the dinner is a creamy mushroom soup and the main course a local fish served with potatoes, vegetables and white wine sauce or Cantor's chicken with pesto risotto and garlic sauce. Bistro Cantor has a great selection of wonderful wines to round the meal off.

Entertainment: The couple and guests learn how to make a snow lantern, an ice lantern and some icy tree decorations. People who enjoyed the Kick Sled Ride can continue the trip by going on the sled to Loviisa's beach area Plagen, which is wonderful in winter. There is even the possibility to swim in the icy seawater, for the extremely brave ones.

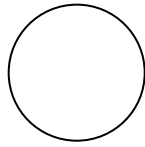
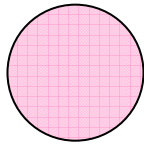
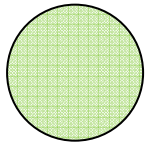
Special: The Kick-Sled Ride and the snow lantern making course

References: Bistro Cantor: <http://www.bistrocantor.fi/>

Loviisa church: <http://www.lovisasvenskaforsamling.fi/> and <http://www.loviisanseurakunta.fi/>

Pictures found on: <http://www.bistrocantor.fi/> and <http://pinterest.com/lovisasweddings/winterwonderland/>

Wedding theme SPRING FEVER in LOVIISA



Wedding dress



Table setting



Macarons

Wedding theme: Spring Fever in Loviisa

Colour scheme: light green, soft pink and white

The wedding: The ceremony as well as the reception takes place in a nice park surrounding, which also offers the possibility to celebrate inside if it gets chilly later in the evening.

During coffee-time plays some easy spring-theme classical music like Pastorale by Ludwig van Beethoven, the four seasons by Antonio Vivaldi and Robert Schumann's spring symphony. There are many light green cupcakes, cake-pops and macarons offered with little pink flowers to fit the theme.

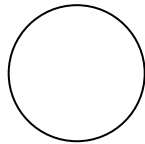
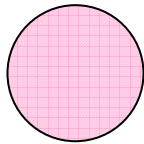
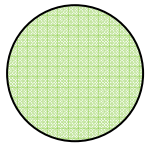
For dinner is a wide variety of spring vegetables prepared as well as local fish and meat. After dinner, is danceable music offered by a DJ or a band.

The spring colours can show in the bride's attire in small details like some soft pink flowers on the dress and a light green sash and in the groom's attire as a spring boutonniere. The bridal's bouquet can beautifully fit the spring theme with soft pink and light green roses. All decoration is about flowers, flowers, flowers in soft pink and light green.

Pictures found on: <http://www.pinterest.com/lovisasweddings/soft-pink-and-light-green/>

Wedding theme

SPRING FEVER in LOVIISA



Wedding dress



Table setting



Wedding Bouquet



Cake



Beverages



Boutonniere



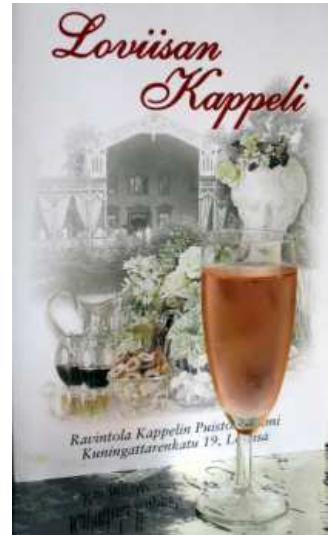
Macarons

Event: Spring

Wedding theme: Spring Fever in Loviisa

Colour scheme: light green, soft pink and white

Venue: The ceremony as well as the reception takes place in Kappelinpuisto Helmi. The open terrace is where bride and groom tie the knot. Guests can sit on the roofed terrace and follow the ceremony.



Wedding cake, food and beverages: The wedding cake will be served on the roofed terrace, it shows the spring colours pink and green and there are also many green cupcakes, cake-pops and macarons with little pink flowers to fit the theme. After coffee-time the wedding party can stroll through the park until dinner is served in the salon. Dinner offers a wide variety of spring vegetables as well as local fish and meat. Rhubarb is another spring's favourite and is used for the rhubarb dessert with vanilla sauce.

Wedding attire: The spring colours can show in the bride's attire in small details like some soft pink flowers on the dress and a light green sash and in the groom's attire as a spring boutonniere. The bridal's bouquet can beautifully fit the spring theme with soft pink and light green roses.

Decor: Flowers, flowers, flowers in soft pink and light green.

Music and entertainment: During coffee-time plays some easy spring-theme classical music like Pastorale by Ludwig van Beethoven, the four seasons by Antonio Vivaldi and Robert Schumann's spring symphony. In the evening, after dinner, is danceable music offered by a DJ or a band.

Special: The legendary Kappelinpuisto Helmi has been renovated to its original appearance from 1865 and is quite a special location in Loviisa.

References: Kapellinpuisto Helmi: <http://loviisankappeli.net/> and <https://www.facebook.com/LoviisanKappeli>

Pictures found on: <http://loviisankappeli.net/> and <http://www.pinterest.com/lovisasweddings/soft-pink-and-light-green/>

Wedding theme MIDSUMMER in LOVIISA



Groom and Bride



Dessert



Table Setting

Event: Midsummer Dance in June

Wedding theme: Midsummer in Loviisa

Colour scheme: bright yellow, green and white

Ceremony and reception: The ceremony as well as the reception takes place outside in a beautiful garden surrounding. This wedding does not need much additional floral decoration since there are lots of flowers all around in the garden. Some daisies, yellow callas and/or lemons or a combination of these can be put here and there. The wedding cake fits to the chosen decoration; it contains and presents the same flowers and/or fruits.

The yellow colour shows in the bride's and groom's attire. It could be a traditional white dress for the bride and just yellow shoes, necklace and bouquet, but it can also be a complete yellow bridal dress. For the groom it could be a yellow bow tie, boutonniere and socks.

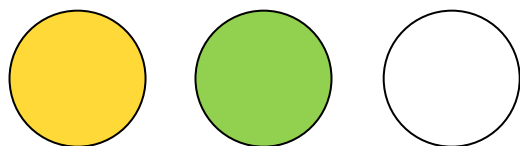
A summer barbecue buffet is set up and delicious specialties fresh from the grill can be enjoyed with exquisite side dishes, like vegetables and salads.

During the afternoon is classical and light music played by a pianist as background music. In the evening he is joined by a guitarist and a bassist and the trio plays danceable music for the wedding party.

Pictures found on: <http://pinterest.com/lovisasweddings/yellow/>

Wedding theme

MIDSUMMER in LOVIISA



Groom and Bride



Kuninkaan Lampi



Table Setting



Cake



Bridal Bouquet



Garter

Event: Midsummer Dance in June

Wedding theme: Midsummer in Loviisa

Colour scheme: bright yellow, green and white

Ceremony and reception: The ceremony as well as the reception takes place in the wonderful garden of Kuninkaan Lampi.



Wedding attire: The yellow colour shows in the bride's and groom's attire. It could be a traditional white dress for the bride and just yellow shoes, necklace and bouquet, but it can also be a complete yellow bridal dress. For the groom it could be a yellow bow tie, boutonniere and socks.

Decor and wedding cake: This wedding does not need much additional floral decoration since there are lots of flowers all around in the garden. Some daisies, yellow callas and/or lemons or a combination of these can be as decoration here and there. The wedding cake fits to the chosen decoration; it contains and presents the same flowers and/or fruits.

Food and beverage: A summer barbecue buffet is set up and delicious specialties fresh from the grill can be enjoyed with exquisite side dishes, like vegetables and salads. All food is brought from local producers.

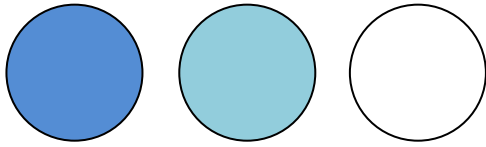
Music and entertainment: During the afternoon is classical and light music played by a pianist as background music. In the evening he is joined by a guitarist and a bassist and the trio plays danceable music for the wedding party.

Special: This wedding is eco-friendly, because no further transportation is needed for the wedding party, not much decoration is necessary and locally produced food is used.

References: Kuninkaan Lampi: <http://www.kuninkaanlampi.fi>

Pictures found on: <http://www.kuninkaanlampi.fi>,
<http://pinterest.com/lovisasweddings/yellow/> and
<http://pinterest.com/lovisasweddings/nature/>

Wedding theme LOVIISA'S ARCHIPELAGO



Dress and Decoration



Bridal Bouquet



Wedding Cake



Table Setting

Event: Small Ships' Race in July

Wedding theme: Loviisa's Archipelago

Colour scheme: shades of blue and white

The wedding: The colours of the Archipelago theme show in the bride's and groom's attire. It could be just a blue sash or a tie, but it can also be a complete blue dress or suit.

An Archipelago-cruise fits perfectly for the theme. The wedding party enjoys the archipelago, including the famous sea fortress Svartholm.

Loviisa archipelago offers several reception venues. The most important elements for a typical archipelago meal are different kinds of fish, potatoes and several salads; the possibilities are endless, and anything is possible from homemade-style food to really fancy food.

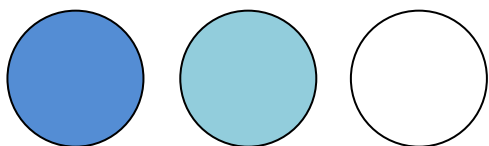
A maritime theme offers many decoration possibilities, there are mainly the nautical symbols such as anchor, compass or sailor's knots, sailing boats can be used as name tags and driftwood and sand are also wonderful elements in maritime decoration. A treasure box can be set up for storing the greeting cards

Typical archipelago music is accordion music and seaman songs; these can be presented as an entertainment show for the wedding party.

Pictures found on: <http://pinterest.com/lovisasweddings/archipelago/>

Wedding theme

LOVIISA'S ARCHIPELAGO



Wedding Dress



Bridal Bouquet



Österstjernen



Wedding Cake



Boistö



Dress and Decoration



Table Setting

Event: Small Ships' Race in July

Wedding theme: Loviisa's Archipelago

Colour scheme: shades of blue and white

Venue: The wedding takes place at Laivasilta/Skeppsbron on the bridge. After the ceremony the wedding party can directly enter the sailing ship Österstjernen, which is waiting there at the bridge.

Cruise: An Archipelago-cruise fits perfectly for the theme. The wedding party enjoys the archipelago, including the famous sea fortress Svartholm, on the way to the reception venue. 25 guests can be on the Österstjernen, if there are coming more people to the reception, the Svartholm line boat can be used for additional transportation.

Reception: The ship brings the couple and the guests after the cruise to the reception venue, to the island of Boistö.

Food, beverage and wedding cake: The wedding cake shows also the colours and patterns of the Archipelago theme. A cake with blue waves is the right choice as well as nautical cupcakes and cake pops decorated with anchors, compasses and life belts.

The most important elements for a typical archipelago meal are different kinds of fish, potatoes and several salads; the possibilities are endless, and anything is possible from homemade-style food to really fancy food.

Wedding attire: The colours of the Archipelago theme show in the bride's and groom's attire. It could be just a blue sash or a tie, but it can also be a complete blue dress or suit.

Decor: The invitations can be sent in a bottle or as a classic map. Small sailing boats can be used as name tags and driftwood and sand are also wonderful elements in maritime decoration. A treasure box can be set up for storing the greeting cards. A maritime theme offers many more possibilities of nautical symbols such as anchor, compass or sailor's knots.

Music and entertainment: Typical archipelago music is accordion music and seaman songs; these can be presented as an entertainment show for the wedding party. In the evening, after dinner, is danceable music offered by a DJ or a band.

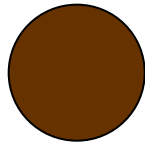
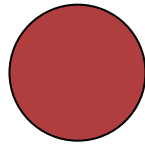
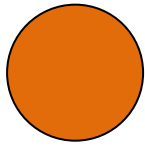
Special: The special of this wedding is the archipelago cruise.

References: Laivasilta: <http://www.visitloviisa.fi/en/attractions/laivasilta>

J.L. Runeberg: http://www.msjlrunenberg.fi/index_eng.html; Boistö: <http://www.boisto.fi>

Pictures found on: <http://pinterest.com/lovisasweddings/archipelago/>

Wedding theme RUSTIC SEPTEMBER in LOVIISA



Bridal Bouquet



Wedding Cake



Table Setting



Boutonniere

Wedding theme: Rustic September in Loviisa

Colour scheme: orange, rustic red and brown

The wedding: The autumn wedding is rustic and celebrated in a barn or boat house. Spiced Cider hot and cold is the signature drink of the autumn wedding. The non-alcoholic version is homemade apple-juice, also hot and cold. The menu takes also the autumn theme up, what means it is made by seasonal raw materials and it is as local as possible. The starter is a pumpkin soup, served in small hollowed pumpkins. The main course consists of autumn specialities like mushrooms, autumn vegetables and game. The dessert focuses on berries: small delicate vanilla cakes with three different kinds of berries are served. Cloudberry wine makes this local and seasonal meal perfect.

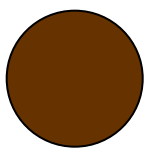
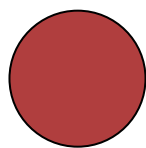
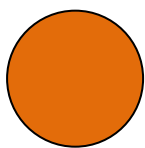
The table setting as well as the cake show autumn leaves, orange pumpkins and red apples. There are a lot of candles in glass vases which are decorated with autumn leaves as well.

The autumn colours can show in the bride's attire as orange and red accessories like jewellery, shoes and sash and in the groom's attire as an autumn boutonniere and tie. Also the bridal bouquet follows the autumn theme with orange and red flowers.

Pictures found on: <http://pinterest.com/loviisasweddings/autumn/>

Wedding theme

RUSTIC SEPTEMBER in LOVIISA



Bridal Bouquet



Algot's Lantern



Wedding Cake



Table Setting



Algot's Lantern



Pernaja Church

Event: Autumn season

Wedding theme: Rustic September in Loviisa

Colour scheme: orange, rustic red and brown

Ceremony and reception: The beautiful and romantic stone church in Pernaja is the place for the ceremony of the autumn wedding. The wedding party drives after church down to the sea where a boat is waiting to bring them to the reception venue - Algot's Lantern in Pernaja (Loviisa) archipelago. If somebody does not want to go by boat, it is also possible to reach the reception venue by car.

Wedding attire: The autumn colours can show in the bride's attire as orange and red accessories like jewellery, shoes and sash and in the groom's attire as an autumn boutonniere and tie. Also the bridal bouquet follows the autumn theme with orange and red flowers.

Decor and wedding cake: The table setting as well as the cake show autumn leaves, orange pumpkins and red apples. There are a lot of candles in glass vases which are decorated with autumn leaves as well.

Food and beverage: Spiced Cider hot and cold is the signature drink of the autumn wedding. The non-alcoholic version is homemade apple-juice, also hot and cold. The menu takes also the autumn theme up, what means it is made by seasonal raw materials and it is as local as possible. The starter is a pumpkin soup, served in small hollowed pumpkins. The main course consists of autumn specialities like mushrooms, autumn vegetables and game. The dessert focuses on berries: small delicate vanilla cakes with three different kinds of berries are served. Cloudberry wine makes this local and seasonal meal perfect.

Music and entertainment: Some stories from the old times are told by an old smuggler. Alcohol was forbidden in Finland from 1919 until 1932. As a result of the total ban was a thriving smuggling with hard liquor developed. The alcohol was mainly brought from countries across the Finnish gulf and the smuggler for sure has some exciting, funny and scary stories to tell.

Special: This wedding theme is for a small and cosy wedding party of around 25 people.

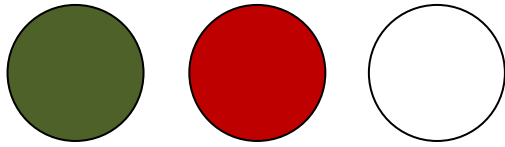
References: Algot's Lantern: <http://www.lukusund.fi>

Pernaja Church: http://www.pernaevl.fi/forsamlingens_utrymmen/perna_kyrka/

Pictures found on: <http://www.lukusund.fi>

<http://pinterest.com/loviisasweddings/autumn/>

Wedding theme LOVIISA CHRISTMAS



The Bride



Decoration



Cupcakes



Table setting

Event: Loviisa Christmas in December

Wedding theme: Loviisa Christmas

Colour scheme: dark green, dark red and white

The wedding: The knot is tied in a beautiful church and a horse-drawn sleigh or carriage brings the couple after the ceremony from church to the cosy reception venue. The newlyweds as well as their guests are welcomed there with warm mulled wine, with and without alcohol. Everything is decorated in dark green and dark red with a lovely Christmas flair. Candy canes, Christmas balls and red roses are the main parts of the decoration. The wedding cake continues this flair through the same kind of Christmas decoration.

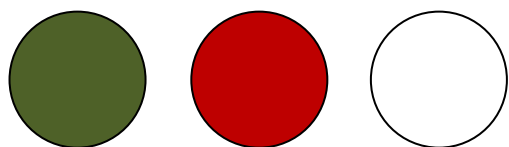
The dark red and dark green colour scheme shows also in the couple's attire. For a change the bride comes not in white, but in dark red and dark green. The groom has a holly or poinsettia boutonniere and wears dark red socks and bow tie or tie.

A typical Finnish Christmas table can be offered, that would be a large Christmas ham served with different casseroles, for example with potatoes or rice and carrots, fish and also Rosolli salad. But if another kind of food is preferred it does not destroy the Christmas theme.

Pictures found on: <http://www.degerby.com/en/degerby-gilles-history> and <http://pinterest.com/lovisasweddings/christmas/>

Wedding theme

LOVIISA CHRISTMAS



The Bride



Decoration



Decoration



Table setting



The cake



Cupcakes

Event: Loviisa Christmas in December

Wedding theme: Loviisa Christmas

Colour scheme: dark green, dark red and white



Venue and transportation: The knot is tied in the beautiful church of Loviisa. A horse-drawn sleigh or carriage brings the couple after the ceremony from church, with a small detour through the old town, to the reception venue Degerby Gille. The wedding party can stroll through Esplanad Park to the reception venue, since it is just a five minute walk. Degerby Gille offers a cosy atmosphere and is just the right place for a Christmas themed wedding. The newlyweds as well as their guests are welcomed there with warm mulled wine, with and without alcohol.

Decor and wedding cake: Everything is decorated in dark green and dark red with a lovely Christmas flair. Candy canes, Christmas balls and red roses are the main parts of the decoration. The wedding cake continues this flair through the same kind of Christmas decoration.

Wedding attire: The dark red and dark green colour scheme shows also in the couple's attire. For a change the bride comes not in white, but in dark red and dark green. The groom has a holly or poinsettia boutonniere and wears dark red socks and bow tie or tie.

Food, beverage and wedding cake: A typical Finnish Christmas table can be offered, that would be a large Christmas ham served with different casseroles, for example with potatoes or rice and carrots, fish and also Rosolli salad. But if another kind of food is preferred, that is fine and does not destroy the Christmas theme.

Music and entertainment: Degerby Gille has inter alia been a hospital, a museum, a school, a private gentlemen's club and of course an inn. Degerby's service manager knows for sure some interesting stories to tell from the old times.

Special: Degerby Gille is one of Loviisa's main historical attractions, the present building dates back to 1695.

References: Loviisa Christmas: <http://www.visitloviisa.fi/en/koe/loviisachristmas>

Degerby Gille: <http://www.degerby.com/en/degerby-gilles-history>

Loviisa Church: <http://www.lovisasvenskaforsamling.fi/> and <http://www.loviisanseurakunta.fi/>

Pictures found on: <http://www.degerby.com/en/degerby-gilles-history> and <http://pinterest.com/lovisasweddings/christmas/>