



# Market situation: Destination Weddings.

MySwitzerland.com/weddings  
Instagram @myswitzerlandweddings

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# 1 MARKET SITUATION AND OUTLOOK.

## 1.1 Economic situation

Over 340,000 destination weddings take place every year. Specifically in the US, 24% of weddings are destination weddings and similar trends are booming in regions such as India and southeast Asia.

In terms of economic return, destination wedding is a rewarding segment. The average destination wedding budget in the US is USD 28,000 for the wedding day and this spending excludes pre and post wedding programme for the travelled families and guests. Looking into an average spending per person, it is calculated as USD 673 per guest per day.

As weddings and celebrations are considered as social spending, couples who have decided to marry outside their hometown tend to be less price sensitive on the venue hire, menu cost etc. These couples' top objective is to create the best experience in their lives during the wedding celebration.

Destination weddings often extend to honeymoon trips in the chosen country, which touristic spending records an average spending of USD 8,200 on honeymoon for the US market.

## 1.2 Situation of the wedding industry & trends

According to Destination Wedding Planners (DWP), key trends in 2022-2023 are identified as below:

### **Smaller events but bigger budget**

Following a 2-year of uncertainty and event postponement, many wedding couples have expressed their motivation in hosting smaller wedding receptions but maintaining same wedding budget. Many spend on a bigger and more extensive wedding decoration, massive ceiling structures, over-the-top florals and innovative layouts will be some of the most impressive designs ever seen in the wedding world.



Smaller guest counts (to have more budget for other elements and to be able to go ahead even with new covid related restrictions) also allow creating a more personalized experience, to step away from the norm. This is likely to be the way to go in 2022.

Commented by many wedding photographers and videographers, many couples have an increased budget for photography and videography. With covid, they want to invest more in capturing their special moment amidst all the changes.

### **Sequel wedding**

Many couples were only able to have a legal ceremony and a small reception in 2020-21 and now they plan to have a huger celebration in 2022-23 with their friends and family.

### **Multi-Day Wedding programme**

Multi-day celebrations, creating guest and couple experiences for more than one day. This is another unique element of a destination wedding for both wedding couples and their guests. Typically, destination wedding has an average duration of 3 days. Pre-wedding reception aims to welcome the guests and showcase them with the authenticity of the chosen location. Post-wedding brunch or programme aims to end the wedding programme with a farewell and gastronomic experience.

### **Vacced guestlist**

This new trend ensures everyone's health and safety. This also helps to explain the reduced number of invitees for smaller and more intimate weddings.

### **Outdoor weddings and exclusivity**

This trend that we saw ruling in 2021, will continue to rule in 2022-23. The popularity of open airflow spaces, outdoor dining and an ongoing pandemic has resulted in demand for venues with outdoor flexibility, as well as led wedding planners to get more creative with the outdoor spaces in terms of decor.

With a constant concern over safety for guests, couples are opting for isolated and unique locations like countryside wedding venues or chateaus or an island wedding where they have the luxury to celebrate in private with their loved ones without worrying about COVID. The remote islands of Greece or private chateaus in Europe are increasingly getting booked for 2022 weddings. Hotels are offering buyouts of the complete property to ensure safety. This further explains "Rent a hotel" concept on our ST website.

### **Destinations elopement**

Eloperments continue to be a post-covid trend as it is easier than planning a traditional wedding. An elopement celebration can also eliminate the stress of wedding planning



amidst the current restrictions. It also offers a scope of maximum personalization as it's just the couple and they can have everything according to their taste.

### **Shorter planning and timeframe**

In times of uncertainty, things happen fast and change fast. Gone are the days when wedding couples have more than a year to properly plan the wedding in advance. These couples are making decisions on the go and are okay to finalize things last minute as there are a lot of changes happening in terms of demand & supply and travel restrictions. Even the vendors are offering as much flexibility as they can to accommodate the changes and are keeping financial terms quite open.

### **Same-sex marriage**

It has been legal since 1 July 2022 in Switzerland. Legislation to open marriage to same-sex couples passed the Swiss Parliament in December 2020. The law was challenged in a referendum on 26 September 2021 by opponents of same-sex marriage and was approved with the support of 64% of voters and a majority in all 26 cantons. The law went into force on 1 July 2022. This has helped to broaden our target audience for destination weddings, with a strong business potential noting that same-sex couples are often considered with stronger financial background as majority are "Dual income, no kids" (DINK).

## **1.3 The RFP situation**

Prioritised markets with the most business potential have been identified by SCIB include North America, India, southeast Asia, GCC, China and Brazil.

While we continue to build our network and marketing effort in these prioritised markets, we support new and existing wedding enquiries across the globe. New enquiries often come via direct contact on Instagram and emails, as well as via destination wedding planners.

Key market such as China continues its strict travel policy and thus explain no destination wedding enquiries nor wedding promotion in China. China team will relaunch marketing actions and wedding campaign in 2023 as soon as situation will improve.

In India, a well-known Indian celebrity stylist, luxury consultant and fashion influencer got married in Switzerland in April 2022. Magazines like Vogue, Grazia, cntravelller.in, etc and varied social media (Instagram, YouTube, online articles) platforms covered her Swiss wedding. This one wedding generated a lot of interest and created awareness about 'Weddings in Switzerland'. This positive trend is likely to boost further growth in this segment.



## 1.4 Challenges

As a long-haul destination to the SCIB prioritised markets, travelling to Switzerland is a high expense compared to other wedding destinations of proximity. Financial and logistical implications include flights and airline availability, air luggage allowance, exchange rate against the strong CHF put Switzerland against other popular wedding destinations such as Mexico, Greece, Italy and Spain.

Visa application and long waiting time are also major threads to the destination wedding segment, in particularly for India and southeast Asian regions for their entry to Switzerland.

COVID-19 continues to be an external threat as it gives uncertainty to overseas travel. The ever-changing travel rules may also put off some wedding couples when considering Switzerland as a potential destination for their celebration.

## 2 TARGETS.

- Maintaining and updating contacts with key wedding planners and contacts
- Finding new B2B contacts via industry events attendance (eg. DWP Congress, Bridelux Sympoism)
- Sales calls and local marketing activities conducted by priority markets
- Marketing campaign identified by each market (eg. to be part of luxury wedding directory in the UK, social media campaign in GCC following Ramadan)
- Content creation and management on myS.com/weddings
- Inspiration images and videos sharing on Instagram @myswitzerlandweddings
- e-Newsletter for qualified B2B database
- Hosting of study trip for international luxury wedding planners and media

## 3 DETAILED MARKETING ACTIVITIES.

Further details of past, present and future marketing activities can be found at [www.stnet.ch](http://www.stnet.ch), which can be accessed using your personal username and password.