

# Sustainable Hospitality Experience

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## Abstract

The purpose of this study is to investigate what attracts guest to resorts and having a destination weddings, while also examining how sustainability is considered to users in these settings. By doing this, this study will determine why people visit these resorts, which aesthetic they enjoy better in lodges and hotels, and what are sustainable solutions they would participate in at these resorts. Since hospitality impacts the environment, it is important that research is conducted on sustainable hospitality experiences. The results of the studies concluded that majority of participants would act on sustainability.

## Review of Literature

Destination weddings have always been a popular selection amongst engaged couples in the United States. Because weddings can be contributor to our waste problem, this study focuses on finding a way to merge these two popular aspects into a guilt free, waste less wedding experience.

### Sustainability

- Sustainability “as a concept contains environmental, economic, and socio-cultural dimensions” (Kim, Barber & Kim, 2019, p. 576-577).
- Feiock et al., (2013) investigates the possibilities of nature-based solutions for more sustainability in the tourism development to protect natural areas. They explain how cities can design a healthier and safer community based on its people and the environment.

### Biophilia

- Biophilia is defined as “our inherent human connection to the natural world” (Interface, 2020).
- “Ecological friendly features, such as technology, will/can be used while not pushing away the other demographic characteristics” (Chen, 2015, p. 261). This also ties into our research that showed that 50% of the participants would consider receiving electronic confirmation/bills rather than paper.

### The Wedding Experience

- “Carefully utilize elements such as architecture, décor, furnishings and ambience to enhance the guest experience” (Alonso & Ogle, 2008, p. 331).
- Design unique architectural features that can be used as a personalized element for events. (Carter & Duncan, 2016)

## Methodology

In order to obtain accurate information regarding sustainable hospitality experiences, a survey and in person interviews were conducted.

### Survey:

- Open 24 days
- Distributed through email listserve to students and faculty of North Dakota State University (NDSU)
- Likert scale questions focused on sustainability practices in hospitality
- 290 complete responses

### In person interviews:

- 5 individuals interviewed
- 10 scripted questions
- Based off questions that pertained to their wedding experience

## Conclusion

### Sustainability

- Around 50% of the participants indicated they would reuse towels or consider receiving electronic confirmation rather than paper.
- 23% indicate they would utilize recycling receptacles within guest rooms; while almost 40% indicated they would utilize recycling receptacles within community spaces.

### Biophilia

- Only 37% of participants were worried about if sustainability was practiced.
- About 42% preferred everything located within the resort.

### The Wedding Experience

- Almost 50% of participants would choose a destination wedding if it was all inclusive or a vacation could be incorporated within the wedding.
- About 20% claimed that the location played an emotional role to them or their spouse.

## Demographics

### In person interviews (5 couples)

- Recently engaged couple in 2019
- Married in Walker, MN in 2016
- Married in Maui, Hawaii in 2010
- Married at Moon Palace, Cancun in 2006
- Married in the Dominican Republic in 2016

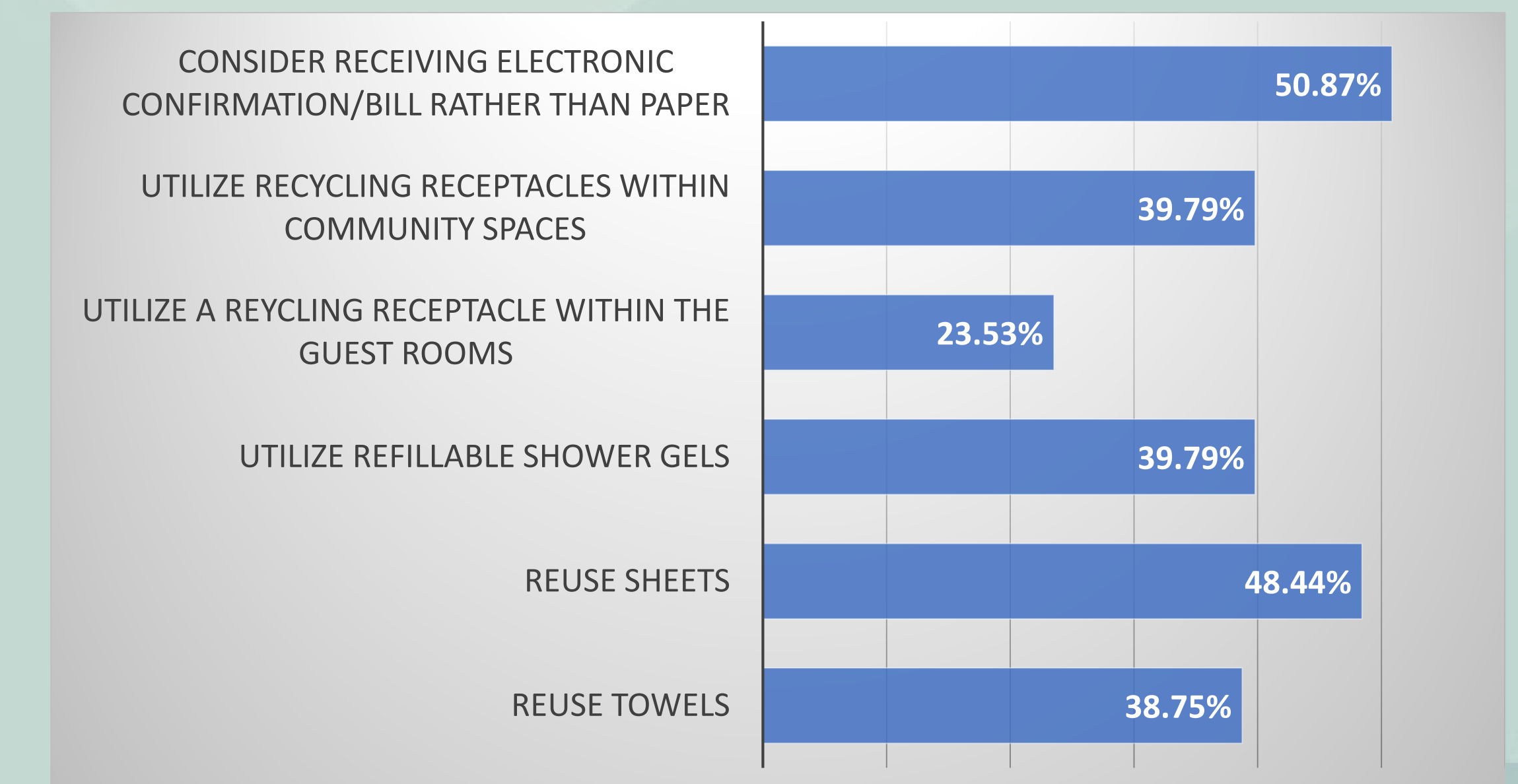
### Survey

- Total Responses: 290
- Male: 69 Female: 214
- Non-Binary: 1
- Prefer Not to Say: 4
- Over 60% of participants were the ages of 18-25 years old
- Majority of the participants stayed at resorts for vacations

## Survey Results

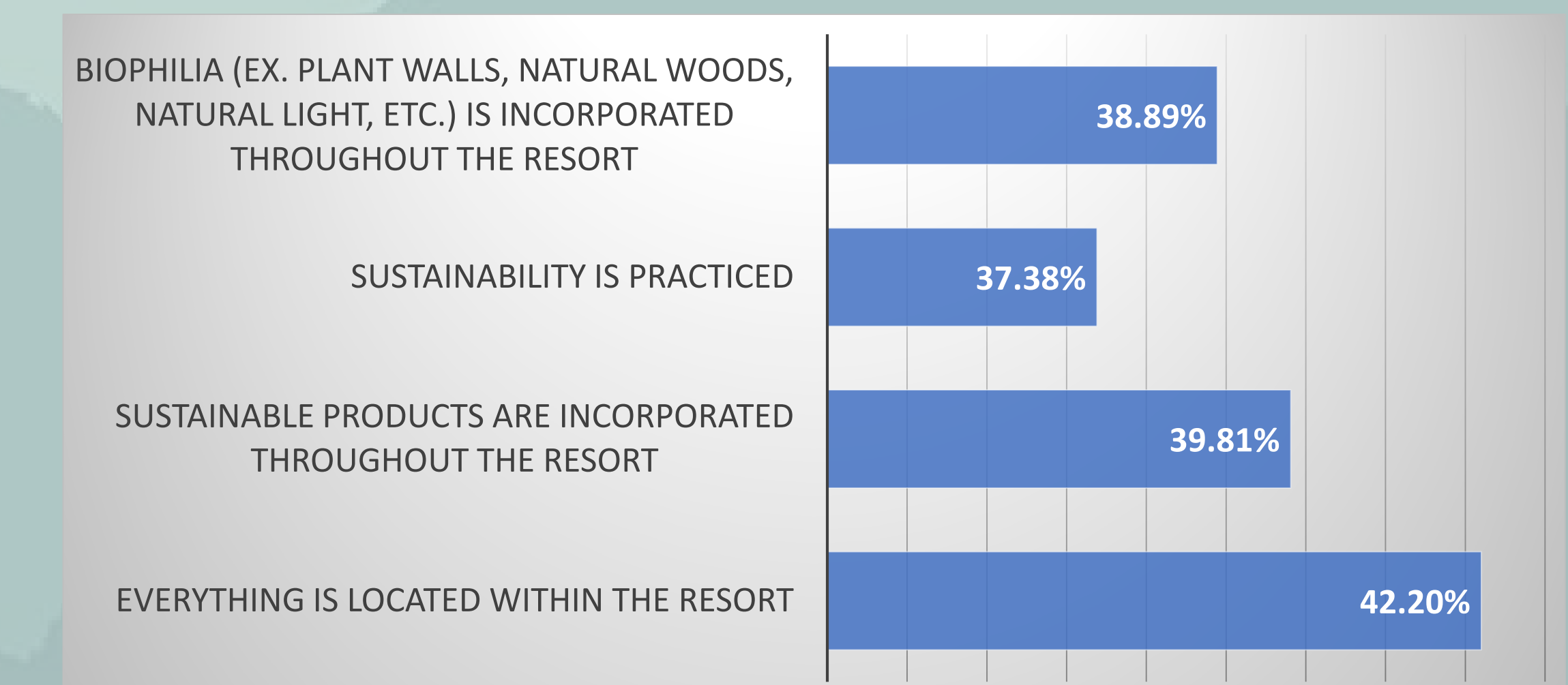
### Sustainability

The results showed that people always do the following more often than not during their stay at hotels/resorts:



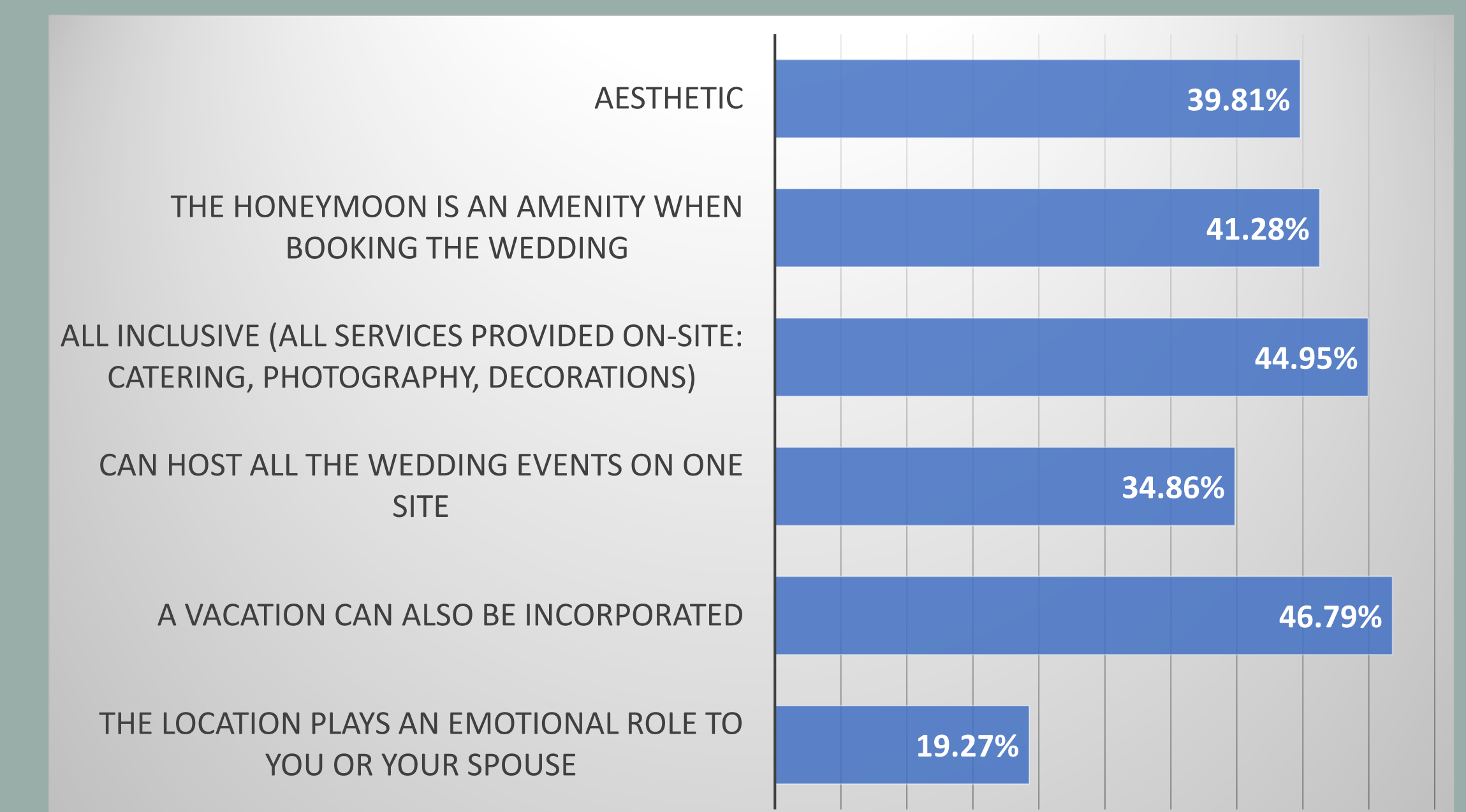
### Biophilia

What amenities would entice you to book your event at a hotel/resort?



### The Wedding Experience

Why would you choose a destination wedding?



### Citations:

Interface (2020). An Introduction to Biophilic Design. Retrieved from [https://www.interface.com/EU/en-GB/campaign/biophilic-design/Biophilic-Design-en\\_GB](https://www.interface.com/EU/en-GB/campaign/biophilic-design/Biophilic-Design-en_GB). Kim, Y.H., Barber, N., & Kim, D.K. (2019). Sustainability research in the hotel industry: Past, present, and future. *Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management*, 28(5), 576-620. doi:10.1080/19368623.2019.1533907. Alonso, D. A., & Ogle, A. (12 September 2008). Exploring design among small hospitality and tourism operations. *Journal of Retail & Leisure Property*, 7(4), 325-337. Chen, R.J.C. (2015). From sustainability to customer loyalty: A case of full service hotels' guests. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 22, 261-265. Carter, J., & Duncan, S. (2016). Wedding paradoxes: Individualized conformity and the 'perfect day'. *The Sociological Review*, 65(1), 1-19. Feiock, R.C., Portney, K.E., Bae, J., & Berry, J.M. (2014). Governing local sustainability: Agency venues and business group access. *Urban Affairs Review*, 50(2), 39: 157-179.