

# gina jokilehto- schigel

Shi Shi Events Wedding Planning & Design  
Cleveland  
[Shi-ShiEvents.com](http://Shi-ShiEvents.com)

## tread lightly around trends

I hate to see a bride and groom hopping onto a trend just because it's pretty. Pretty is great, but there are a million ways to make a wedding beautiful. You don't want to look back and say, "I only did this because it was trendy at the time." Instead, stay true to what you love—you'll always produce something classy, timeless and elegant that way.

## don't count out local culture

A big misconception about Ohio is that we don't know what's up stylistically. For a long time, Cleveland has been written off as a mistake city, and we're not. Cleveland has a lot to offer. We have wonderful gastronomic delights everywhere, and we have absolutely incredible architecture and landscape: beautiful theaters, exceptionally restored hotels and a beautiful lake. So don't worry about not being able to have a hip, gorgeous wedding here.

## consider a winter date

I used to hate winter weddings; the season is so dismal and gray. But now I love them. In November and December, people have this sentimental sensibility that's really lovely, and I think that feeling translates to the event in a way that makes everything so warm. We always use lots of candlelight, whites and creams and dark, lush florals—that's really beautiful in the winter. Plus, it gets darker earlier, so all those candlelit ceremonies shine a little brighter.

## get the groom excited too

I love it when grooms are involved. Some of the best weddings we've done are the ones where we really got to know the groom—after all, half the guests are there for him, and a lot of times the groom's family gets the short end of the stick because the bride's family takes over. The groom's friends and family should feel as though they're just as important, so make the wedding about both partners equally. >>



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP Arrange your ceremony chairs in an arc instead of a circle to give your guests a better view; sugar flowers sculpted to look like different types of blooms create gorgeous texture; paper lanterns have bigger visual impact when clustered together; choose grand centerpieces to suit a venue with high ceilings.

