



TJÄREBORG'S HIKING TOUR IN MADEIRA – AN ECOTOURISM PRODUCT?

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ABSTRACT

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The purpose of the thesis is to analyse Tjäreborg's tourism product Hiking Tour in Madeira using the ecotourism concept. The tour takes place in the island of Madeira and is conducted in co-operation with a Finnish travel operator Natura Viva. Flights from Helsinki to Funchal and accommodation in the location are included to the seven day tour in Madeira.

The framework of ecotourism is investigated and the analysis is made on the basis of the guidelines of the concept criteria. More precise information on the details of the tour are collected from the creator and the guide of the tour, CEO of Natura Viva, Ilkka Lariola.

The results are analysed by using the World Wide Fund for Nature's guideline for planning an ecotourism product which is based on the definition of the creator of ecotourism and the model of International Ecotourism Society.

The subquestion of this thesis is the ecotourism-type of Tjäreborg's Hiking Tour using the typology by Kreg Lindberg (1991). The research shows that the Hiking Tour in Madeira can be classified as a dedicated ecotourism product.

Keywords: ecotourism

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1 INTRODUCTION

This thesis is a study on Tj äreborg's hiking tour product using the ecotourism framework. The target group of the tour is Finnish customers of Tj äreborg and is implemented in co-operation with tour operator Natura Viva. The tourism product of Tj äreborg includes a return flight from Helsinki to Funchal, accommodation at the location and a Finnish-speaking guide. The seven day tour takes place in the Portuguese island of Madeira and was held for the sixth time in October 2014.

The research process studies the framework of ecotourism and investigates the guidelines for the term by studying the history of the concept and how it can be implemented in practice today. The criteria for ecotourism is used in analysis of the programme and activity of Tj äreborg's hiking tour. Details and additional information are collected from the tour operator by interviewing the originator of the tour product. Results are based on theoretical guidelines and the analysis of the author. In the case that Tj äreborg's hiking tour can be stated as an ecotourism product, the study aims to define the type the ecotourism product of the tour by using the typology by Kreg Lindberg.

The programme of the tour is analysed during the process and is included in chapter four. Subquestion about the type of ecotourism with theory on the subject is included to chapter four of this thesis. Background information on the island of Madeira and the tour operators Tj äreborg and Natura Viva are reviewed in chapter three.

2 RESEARCH PLAN

2.1 Thesis Topic

Currently the Hiking Tour in Madeira of Tj äreborg is marketed as an active tour product. Active tourism shares similar aims as ecotourism but is not defined by the destination as much as ecotourism, but more on combining elements from sustainable, cultural and adventure tourism emphasising the style of visiting (Define Active Tourism 2014). Ecotourism is often perceived as a form of tourism that emphasises the conservation of nature. The sociocultural and economic impacts are in an equal role in ecotourism, although frequently forgotten. Along with the natural environment, the sociocultural aspects serve both the ecotourism attraction and the visitor of the destination (Lindberg & Furze & Staff & Black 1997, 3.4).

Because of the widely known negative impacts that tourism industry has, many operators in the business have started marketing themselves as a greener, more responsible choice to meet the raised interest of ecological values of potential customers. Ecotourism as a concept is an effective marketing tool due to its recognisability. The objective of this research is to resolve whether the Hiking Tour in Madeira by Tj äreborg can be classified and therefore possibly marketed as an ecotourism product.

2.2 Thesis Objective

The research question of this thesis is whether Tj äreborg's hiking tour to Madeira can be classified as an ecotourism product. The author of the thesis will analyse the details and the content of the tour by using the ten commands of WWF's Code of Conduct as an analysis tool. The Code of Conduct follows a similar guideline with The International Ecotourism Society and can be considered as a competent theoretical base for results. The two objectives of the founder of ecotourism term, preserve and develop, are used as a core in the analysis to respect the founder of ecotourism and meet the origins of the concept.

2.3 Concepts and Theory

An interview of founder and CEO of tour provider Natura Viva, Ilkka Lariola was made to collect the additional information needed to analyse the tourism case in this thesis. The interview was made via email September 2014 and the participants was the author and Lariola. WWF's guideline Code of Conduct was used as a baseline to form the questions. Details of the implementation and values of the programme of Tjäreborg's Hiking Tour are a valuable data in the analysis part of this thesis. A more precise conclusion can be made according to the outcome of the interview. The following sections in this chapter are results from the interview with Ilkka Lariola, attached in Appendix no. 1 of this thesis, September 2014

2.4 Working Methods and Data

The data used in this thesis is an interview of founder and CEO of tour provider Natura Viva, Ilkka Lariola and the programme of Tjäreborg's Hiking Tour. The interview was made via email October 2014 and can be read in appendices (Appendix.1). Also a research on the theoretical framework is made to support the analysis part of the thesis in chapter four.

2.5 Thesis Process

The theoretical framework of ecotourism and background information of the operators of the tour, Tjäreborg and Natura Viva are presented in the following chapter. Also an introduction of the destination of the tour, island of Madeira, is included in the chapter. After defining the concept of ecotourism, shedding the history and values and separating the concept from other forms of tourism, the guidelines presented in chapter three of this thesis are used in analysing Tjäreborg's tour product in chapter four, using interview results and the programme of the tour. The subquestion of this thesis is the type of ecotourism Tjäreborg's Hiking Tour can be categorised in and is processed in chapter five.

3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK & BACKGROUNDS

3.1 Tjäreborg's Hiking Tour in Madeira

The research case of this thesis, Tjäreborg's Hiking Tour in Madeira, takes place in Portuguese archipelago Madeira, one of the autonomous islands of Portugal (Visit Madeira 2014). The tour was held for the sixth time in October 2014 (Lariola, I. 2014) and is to be arranged again in March 2015 (Vaellusmatka Madeiralle kev ääll ä2014). The tour is implemented in co-operation with a Finnish tour operator Natura Viva, the operating facet responsible for the programme and guidance of the tour.

The programme of the tour consists of hiking six days out of seven, 9-14 kilometres per day with one day off. The required fitness level to participate is to be able to move five to six hours a day. The route changes daily, taking the group from the most Eastern point of the island to both North- and Southern coast and to the highest peak of Madeira. The route goes along capes, cliffs, coasts, natural parks and forests (Vaellusmatka Madeiralle 2014).

The price of the tour is 1394-1519 euros, double or single room, and includes flights from Helsinki to Funchal, airport transportation, accommodation and breakfast in the location and a planned programme of the tour with a local and a Finnish-speaking guide (Vaellusmatka Madeiralle 2014).

3.2 Tjäreborg & Environmental and Social values

Tjäreborg is part of Thomas Cook Group plc, a leading international tour operator quoted in the London stock market. Over 23 million people use the services of providers under the name Thomas Cook organisation every year and the revenue of the company is twelve billion euros. Thomas Cook Northern Europe is the biggest travel corporation in the Nordic countries. There are branches of Thomas Cook Northern Europe in Finland, Sweden, Denmark and Norway. The corporation also includes Sunwing Family Resorts, Supreme Hotels-chain and the biggest Scandinavian charter

flight company Thomas Cook Airlines. Thomas Cook Northern Europe made a profit of 1.47 billion euros last published financial year, 1.10.2012-30.9.2013 (Yritystietoa 2014).

In Finland Tj äreborg is the third biggest tour operator with 190.000 customers annually. It was one of the strongest companies in Finland in 2013 according to Rating Alfa – research by Suomen Asiakasliitto. Its head office in Finland is located in Helsinki. The revenue made last financial year in Finland was 138.9 million euros. Tj äreborg made a profit of 14 million (Yritystietoa 2014).

Tj äreborg's environmental board works to find ways to reduce the negative impacts of their services. The company's airline Thomas Cook Airlines Scandinavia is the most environment-friendly charter-flight company in Nordic countries and the hotel concern Sunwing Family Resorts was the first one in Europe to get the EU Ecolabel (Tj äreborgin ymp ärist öty ö 2014). EU Ecolabel is the most demanding environment certificate for hotels today (Sosiaalinen vastuu 2014). The company is also part of ECPAT (End Child Prostitution Child Pornography and Trafficking in Children for Sexual Purposes) -association since 1999. Partnering hotels and operators are committed to function by the laws of the association and react immediately in the case of any signs of child abuse (ECPAT - Vastuuntuntoinen matkailu 2014).



Picture 1: The ECPAT-symbol (www.ecpat.net)



Picture 2: EU Ecolabel (www.ecolabel.eu)

Tj äreborg works in co-operation with Travelife, a Sustainable System developed by travel industry for tour operators and travel agencies (Sosiaalinen vastuu & Travelife Travel Companies, 2014). The supervision of the partnering companies is performed by nonalignment facets of Travelink. Basic ideology of the organisation is to follow

principles of social and environmental matters and operate by the guidelines based on Children's Rights by United Nations, such as collective labor agreement, child labor, environment and child prostitution (Sosiaalinen vastuu 2014).

3.3 Natura Viva

Natura Viva is an outdoor company located in Southern Finland. The company offers tours such as kayaking, hiking and snowshoeing in the Helsinki area. In the summer Natura Viva's most popular tours are Helsinki by Kayak and Nuuksio Forest Lake Trail. In the winter the company does snowshoeing in the Nuuksio National Park (Natura Viva 2014). The guides of Natura Viva are both experienced and educated and are personally involved in their tours and events. The company's goal is to plan a memorable and unique tour product to their customers by practicing responsible and sustainable business implementing laws and restrictions of the authorities. Natura Viva is also supporting the nature activities of youngsters (Yritysesittely 2014).

Natura Viva is a part of Vision Four Ab which is a family owned business. With the co-operation of the partnering companies of Natura Viva they are able to provide events for larger groups in and outside of Finland. Natura Viva together with their partners arranges activity based tours and travel packages in other countries such as paragliding, adventure tours, hiking and paddling tours in Austria, Switzerland, Mallorca, Teneriffe, Madeira, Norway, Greece and Turkey. Natura Viva aims to develop their business constantly and find new, sustainable and qualitative destinations (Yritysesittely 2014). In Trip advisor, a review portal for hospitality and tourism destinations, Natura Viva is ranked as #2 of 77 activities in Helsinki (TripAdvisor 2014).

The tour products operated together with Tjäreborg by Natura Viva are currently: Hiking Tour to Madeira, Hiking Tour to Mallorca, Hiking Tour to Teneriffe and Hiking Tour to La Gomera (Aktiivilomat ulkomaila 2014).

3.4 Madeira as a Destination

Portugal's archipelago Madeira is located in the north of Atlantic Ocean. It became an autonomous region in 1976 and has been politically and administratively independent ever since. The island has its own government and parliament and is legitimated to make its own decisions on study- and health care system and its agriculture (Svensson 2005, 14). Portugal became a member of the EU in 1986. It received a great financial support in the beginning being one of the poorest countries in Europe. Madeira got its portion of the shore and used it to developing the country's infrastructure. Motorways, roadways and tunnels were built to ease the transportation on the island making the distances more convenient. A big terminal was built at the airport and the airstrip of Madeira was extended (Svensson 2005, 17).

Madeira is full of flora and vegetation. As a tourist destination it is a choice of a nature lover. Over a million visitors come to the island every year. The island is only 741 square kilometres big, which is approximately half of the size of Finland's Åland. The archipelago is mountainous which makes the acreage slightly larger. The highest peaks are up to 2000 metres high. Madeira offers seasonal fresh food with a good value, good wines and exotic fruits and vegetables. The locals on the island are kind and the crime statistics are extremely low. The price range is lower than in Finland (Svensson, 2005, p. 36). Best time to travel is spring and autumn, when the flora of the island is at its best and the weather is not too hot. The overall temperature difference between seasons is only six degrees (Svensson 2005, 6). The climate of Madeira is classified as subtropical (Svensson 2005, 23).

Madeira's capital Funchal is a small and vibrant city with the population of only 104.000 inhabitants. It is a modern, safe and a clean city and the leading re-cycler of Portugal (Madeira-web 2014). It has a tragic history with pirate invasions, war threat and agricultural crisis. The island had two migration waves from England in the 17th and 19th century. This raised the awareness of the island of Madeira and its pleasant weather, kind people and good food in the United Kingdom. This particular event made Madeira and especially Funchal an attractive tourist destination in the late 19th and early 20th century. The British inheritance can still be seen on the population nowadays (Svensson 2005, 47).

Accompany tourism of Madeira rose significantly in the 1960's when the airport was built and most of the one million annual tourists came to Funchal. The biggest medium of transport is via air but also a number of cruise ships stop in Funchal bringing visitors to the island. The travel periods of tourist in Funchal and the island are short, which contributes the tourism of Madeira (Svensson 2005, 47).

3.5 Definition of Ecotourism

Ecotourism as a concept is very complex and explaining the definition can be difficult. This is because so many academic and industry facets have their own definition of the concept although usually based on a similar ideology (Lomine & Edmunds 2007, 60). Ecotourism is often associated with sustainable and nature based tourism fields as an alternative to mass tourism (Higham & Weaver & Fennel 2007, 25) and the author of this thesis aims to define the analysis case by using the ecotourism framework separating it from the other fields of tourism. In 2001, David Fennel found over 80 different definitions for ecotourism (Lomine & Edmunds 2007, 60). In his research, *Critical issues in Ecotourism*, the author James Higham analyses the definition of ecotourism by gathering the most commonly used approaches to the concept and narrowing it down to the basic principles of ecotourism. Higham found that the most common values in ecotourism turned out to be responsibility, conservation, protection and sustainability. The World Wide Fund for Nature, WWF, defined ecotourism as the following in 1995:

“Ecotourism is responsible traveling contributing to the protection of natural areas and the well-being of the local population” (Higham & Saeb órsd óttir 2007, 32).

3.5.1 History of Ecotourism

The concept of ecotourism is complex and has been reshaping ever since it was first introduced. The history of the term can be traced to the 1960's when the awareness of the negative impacts of tourism started to raise amongst ecologists and environmentalists. A Mexican ecologist Claus-Dieter Hetzer first introduced the term

ecotourism identified by the following principles: (1) minimum environmental impact, (2) minimum impact – and maximum respect for – host culture, (3) maximum economic benefits to the host country's grassroots, (4) maximum recreational satisfaction to participating tourists [in tourism] (Higham 2007, 26).

The first National Ecotourism Strategy was presented in Australia in 1993. It was based on an ecotourism definition, “*Ecotourism is nature-based tourism that includes an educational component and is managed to be sustainable*” by a various initiatives and had the following four principles:

- Natural area component: the natural value of an area is in focus
- Ecological sustainability: the carrying capacity of an area should not be exceeded or the bioversity altered significantly
- Education and interpretation
- Local and regional benefits: the benefits should be equitably distributed

(Higham etc. 2007, 28-29).

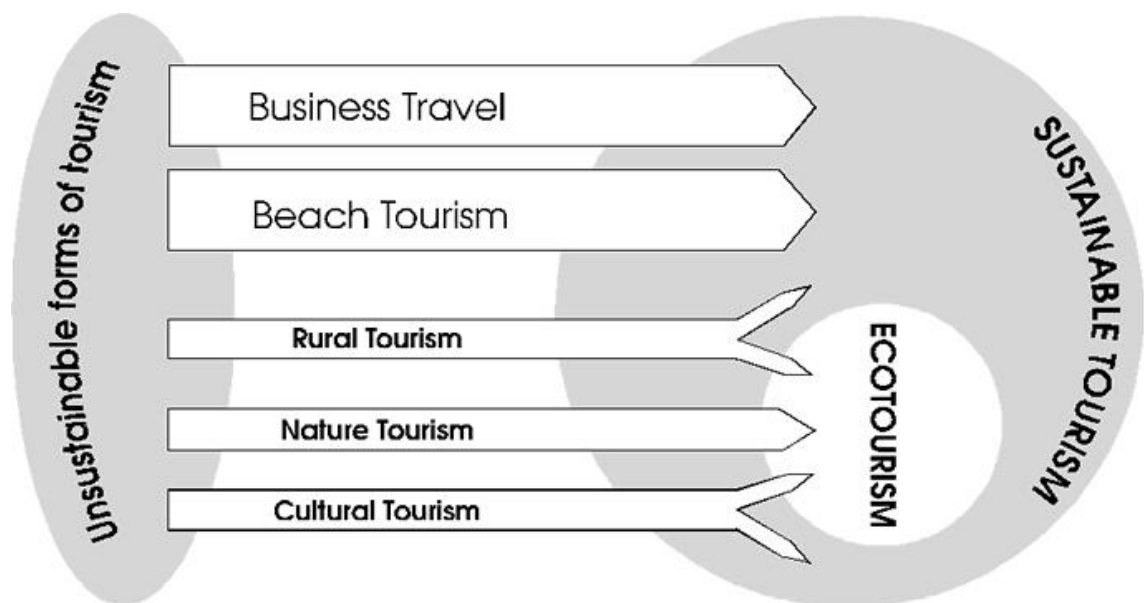
One of the first Nordic ecotourism initiatives introduced the Code of Conduct based on WWF's definition of ecotourism (Higham 2007, 29), introduced more precisely in chapter 3.5.3 of this thesis, in 1994. The Code of Conduct of WWF is still in use as a guideline to ecotourism in professional tourism business and is the baseline used to analyse the research case of this thesis. The International Ecotourism Society, TIES, uses a definition very similar to WWF's, mentioned earlier in chapter 3.5. TIES defines ecotourism as following: “*Responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and Improves the well-being of local people*” (What Is Ecotourism? 2014). Considering the unitedness of these two facets the author of this thesis considers the guideline of WWF that is based on the values of The International Ecotourism Society as well, to be component as an analysis tool.

3.5.2 Ecotourism and related fields of Tourism

There are principles that separate ecotourism from other subcategories in tourism business. Ecotourism should have minimum effects on the environment (preserve) and culture (respect), and maximize the economic development of the host population and

the satisfaction level of the visitors (Higham & Hetzer 2007, 26-28). After introducing the concept of ecotourism an educational approach has been added to contribute the awareness of the traveller and to learn about the destination and its culture (develop). Later on the principles are narrowed down to two, preserving and developing. Some of the basic principles of ecotourism are shared with related tourism forms, such as sustainability, sustainable tourism development, rural and nature tourism. (Higham, 2007, 24, 26-27). To respect the origins of the ecotourism concept, these two principles by the founder of ecotourism Claus-Dieter Hetzer, are also used in the analysis case of this thesis. In addition to the WWF guideline, values preserve and develop are included to the analysis chapter of Tjäreborg's Hiking Tour in Madeira of this thesis.

Ecotourism is often mixed with sustainable tourism but is a different form of tourism. Ecotourism is more focused on ecological conservation and educating travelers on local environments and natural surroundings, whereas sustainable tourism focuses on travel that has minimal impact on the environment and local communities. Therefore sustainable tourism can be applied to all the tourism fields when ecotourism is a more designated concept.



Picture 3: United Nations Environment Programme Division of Technology, Industry, and Economics 2014

3.5.3 Code of Conduct by WWF

WWF's Code of Conduct is a guideline for the tourism business to plan an ecotourism product. Code of Conduct by WWF is used in this thesis to analyse Tjäreborg's Hiking Tour in Madeira. The Code of Conduct is known to be designed by a Nordic ecotourism initiative for WWF using the organisation's own definition "*ecotourism is responsible traveling contributing to the protection of natural areas and the wellbeing of location populations*" and originally consists of ten commands (Higham & Saeborsdottir 2007, 29).

The Code of Conduct by WWF discusses that both ecological and social sustainability should be equally important. This should be considered in designing the group size of the tourism product, for example. It requires that all the travel companies should delegate the responsibility of the environment to a particular employee for them to develop an environmental plan. The environmental responsibility needs to apply also to the subcontractors at the destination. Hotel sites should be organised according to environmental values, travel guides should have crucial and genuine knowledge about the destination and areas, local economy should be supported and visitors should be encouraged by a respectful attitude towards the locals. Shopping should be responsible as well, hence Code of Conduct guideline: "Don't buy their lives". To be able to offer an ecotourism product, Code of Conduct requires that the travellers should be able to learn from the destination and the local culture, and that the protection of the nature is contributed. The original Code of Conduct by WWF consists of the following ten commands:

- **Group size**

Ecological and social sustainability shall be all-important

- **Plan**

All travel companies should delegate responsibility for the environment to a particular employee and develop an environmental plan

- **Subcontractor agreements**

Environmental responsibility also applies to subcontractors at the travel destination

- **Accommodation**

Select environmentally adapted hotel sites

- **Guides**

Genuinely knowledgeable guides are crucial

- **Economy**

Support the local economy

- **Visitors**

Encourage a respectful attitude among travelers

- **Purchase/shopping**

Don't buy their lives

- **Education**

Ecotourism requires that travelers are well informed

- **Protect & develop**

Ecotourism shall contribute to the protection of the natural surroundings and local development (Higham & Saeborsdottir 2007, 29).

4 ANALYSING TJÄREBORG'S HIKING TOUR

4.1 The Programme of the Tour

The programme used in the analysis of this thesis took place in Tjäreborg's Hiking Tour in the autumn 2014, from 13th to 20th of October. The programme can be read in Appendix no. 2 of this thesis.

On the first day of the tour the hike takes the group to the most eastern part of Madeira, which is a nine kilometers long peninsula. This area was put under protection in 1982 and special species of vegetation can be found in this area that don't grow in any other place of the world. After the hike a lunch is served in a local restaurant. Duration of the hike is 3.5 hours and length of the hike is nine kilometers.

On the second day the tour goes to the highest peak of the island. The hike starts at *Pico de Areeiro* which is approximately 1810 metres above sea level. The path goes up and down the hills of the mountain and the destination is the peak of *Pico Ruivo*, 1862 metres high. The length of the day is five hours and the route 11 kilometres.

Third day, *Levada do Rei & Espetada*. In the King's Levada the group is taken to a place which demonstrates what the nature looked like when the first Portuguese arrived to the island in 1419. After a half an hour hike the tour leads to the forest of Laurisilva, one of the best preserved forest areas in the island. After the hike the group is taken to a local restaurant to see how the local specialty, Espetada, is made. The length of the day is four hours and the hike altogether is ten kilometres long.

On the fourth day the hike takes place in the hilly mountains again, but this time in different surroundings. The route leads through different plant zones where rare heather trees and Laurisilva forests can be seen along the paths. After a lunch break the group is taken to climb the plateau of *Paul da Serra*. From there the hike continues to the peak of *Pico Ruivo do Paul da Serra* 1639 metres high, where the scenery can be seen all the way to the Northern coast. The route altogether is 14 kilometres long and takes five hours. The fifth day is free of programme and the participants can make their own plans. Advice and tips on attractions and places to visit are offered by the guides of the tour.

The sixth day of the tour starts from *Ribeiro Frio*, where the group visits a local fish plantation. The route to the plantation goes along a recently constructed Levada and exceptional views can be seen on the way. After the hike of the sixth day the tour arrives to *Santo de Serra* where a local rural market is held every Sunday. The group is introduced to the local products and lifestyle. After the market the tour takes the group to have lunch in a local restaurant. The length of the day is four hours and 13 kilometres.

4.2 Interview Results

Ecological values are a part of everyday action in Natura Viva. Lariola reassures that the values and work of their organisation is ecological and that they implement sustainable thinking in preserving the operational environment. The ideology of Lariola is that when they plan a successful tour or a product by offering fine experiences to the customers in exquisite environment in natural areas, the partakers become aware of the importance of preserving such areas. The aim is to strengthen the personal relationship between a customer and the nature. The motive for Lariola himself is to preserve the natural areas to be able to maintain such operations in the future.

The services at the location are bought from local operators as well as the operations of all Natura Viva tours. This includes transportation, local guides, hospitality, etc. The main partnering companies at the location in Madeira have maintained the same throughout operating years. All the operations excluding accommodation and airport transportation, which are offered on Tjäreborg's behalf, are planned by Natura Viva. When choosing a partnering operator Lariola emphasises that the values and actions of the company or organisation are evaluated and possible changes on policies are discussed.

The safety of the tour is assured by using only experienced and educated guides and personnel. The routes are chosen to meet the required level of all the customers. Two guides, a Natura Viva guide and a local corresponding are always present on the hikes (Lariola 2014).

4.2.1 Practitalities

The routes on the hikes tour along marked paths to minimise the strain of the nature. The tour guides ensure that nature is not damaged by any activity on the tour and everything that is brought to the hike, including rubbish, is taken back and nothing is left behind. All the waste is recycled in the way that is possible under the circumstances of the location (Lariola 2014).

4.2.2 Professionality & Additional value

The guides on Madeira Hiking Tour are professionals with the required education for the operations. Safety of the customers is ensured by using experienced guides and having two operating guides on each hike. The local guide, Sam, has years of experience in the business and possesses a diploma on mountain hiking. The operating Finnish guide is a specialised wilderness- and nature guide. Lariola himself, whom operates as one of the guides, has a Masters in Forestry from University of Helsinki. All the guides have years of experience in the business in a natural working environment (Lariola 2014).

The guides offer information on the flora and fauna of the island as the tour goes along routes next to extremely rare species of plantation, of which few of them can only be seen in the Eastern part of Madeira, such as *levadas* and the UNESCO Forests. The guides know the history and the culture of the island well and share the information to the customers depending on the interest level of the participants of the tour. The local guide has an education of several years to master the knowledge on the island specialties. The Finnish guides also know the nature of the island well (Lariola 2014).

The local guide is born and raised in Madeira. He owns a small farm on the island and he shares his culture and history with his heritage to the participants of the tour. One of the experiences of the tour is to visit a local restaurant to observe the preparation of the traditional food of Madeira. Sam, the local guide participates to this part of the programme by explaining about the meaning of food in the local culture in the together with the chefs (Lariola 2014).

There is a day off in the programme without planned activities. The accommodation is located close to the city of Funchal and Lariola explains that not many customers seek for advice for their day off and they usually go explore the surroundings. In the case of advice, the guides suggest the local services of partnering organisations (Lariola 2014).

4.2.3 Local Services

The local partner of Natura Viva organises the food services in the location. The restaurants are small-sized and locally owned. Lunch and other snacks for the hikes included to the tour package are bought from a local cafe. The participants are also taken to a local fish plantation, where one of the guides hold the tour for the customers of Madeira Hiking Tour (Lariola 2014).

4.2.4 Wellbeing

Lariola concludes that the wellbeing of the customers are taken well care of. By giving pre-information on the physical requirement of the tour, Lariola aims to give the customers a realistic image of the level of the fitness required. He tells that one of the challenges on the tour is the different levels of stamina amongst participants. During the tour everyone is encouraged and helped to help prolong (Lariola 2014).

On the day of arrival the programme of the week is gone through together in the group and introductions are made between the participants. A good group-spirit is important, Lariola states. The motivated and enthusiastic guides devoted to their work have a great impact on the atmosphere as well and can be seen in the mood of the group, he tells.

The peace and wellbeing of the locals is emphasised and is urged to respect by the participants, especially when justifiable. After the seven day tour, a feedback of the customers are collected by the guides (Lariola 2014).

4.3 Code of Conduct as Analysing tool

The World Wide Fund for Nature has published a Code of Conduct, a guideline introduced more precisely in the chapter two of this thesis, for tour providers to help planning an ecotourism product. By going through these guidelines and reflecting it to the information collected from the interview and programme of Tjäreborg's Hiking Tour in Madeira, the author analyses the competence of this particular product. The ten commands are individually observed and analysed and an additional point of view, *preserve and develop*, are added to each section of the Code of Conduct. The details for the accommodation part are collected from Ana Filipa Ferreira, manager of Alto Lido hotel, the accommodation on Tjäreborg's Hiking Tour in Madeira.

This chapter is the analysis of the author based on the guidelines of World Wide Fund for Nature for tour operators creating an ecotourism product. The analysis is based on information from the programme of the tour and interview with the CEO of Natura Viva, Ilkka Lariola. The analysis consists of the guidelines of WWF and additional qualitative abstracts, *preserve and develop*, by the founder of ecotourism term.

Group size

Ecological and social sustainability should be equally important according to the first command of WWF Code of Conduct. The size of the group in Tjäreborg's Hiking Tour in Madeira is fourteen participants, according to Lariola. A smallish group such as the one on Tjäreborg's Hiking Tour, minimises the consumption of the local areas and nature (Borell & Ministrini & Guarrera 1999, 9). A group of fourteen is more likely to have a social bond as the amount of participants is unlikely have inside cliques and is small enough amount of people to become familiar with each other in a short time than a group of thirty-something that is common in mass tourism field. A proper staff-ratio according to WWF is 15-20 customers for one member of staff so in this case with two guides for fourteen people the group size is more than ideal (Borell & Ministrini & Guarrera 1999, 10; Lariola 2014). An intimate and friendly atmosphere of the group is

likely to increase the wellbeing of the group on the trip. Developing a positive relationship with participants is essential in WWF's Code of Conduct (Borell & Minestrini & Guarrera 1999, 8). The information and education on the tour is also easier for a small-size group, as it is required in the guideline for the tour operators by WWF (Borell & Minestrini & Guarrera 1999, 8).

Preserve - The negative affect for nature and local services are smaller in a group of under fifteen people compared to mass-tourism (Higham & Hetzer 2007, 26-28; Lariola 2014).

Develop - New relationships are more likely to originate in a group of not too many people and the educational aspect of ecotourism can be conducted more easily (Higham & Hetzer 2007, 26-28; Lariola 2014).

Plan

The plan indicates that a particular employee should be delegated the responsibility of the environmental plan (Higham 2007, 27-28). As a professional and both the originator and leader of the tour, Ilkka Lariola has the responsibility of the ecological plan. Ilkka Lariola reports in his interview that ecological values are in a great role in planning the trip and works as a motivation to implement the values in practice. The tour is developed when needed to sustain the values to keep the product as ecological as possible (Lariola 2014). Developing and implementing environmental measures and actions in all operations is a custom in Code of Conduct by WWF (Borell & Minestrini & Guarrera 1999, 8). According to the interview of Ilkka Lariola the environmental plan in their operations are considered and conducted.

Preserve – Preserving the ecological values by managing the impacts with an ecological plan (Higham & Hetzer 2007, 26-28; Lariola 2014).

Develop – Making changes to meet the potential of the product (Higham & Hetzer 2007, 26-28; Lariola 2014).

Subcontractor agreements

Environmental responsibility also applies to the subcontractors at the travel destination (Higham 2007, 27-28). Lariola reports that all the operations in the location are discussed with the local partnering facets and the co-operatives are chosen to meet the required values of Natura Viva and the tour product. The companies the services are bought from are small or medium-sized and locally owned and locally employed (Lariola 2014). Lariola conducts that the partners are annually approximately the same. The money-flow therefore stays at the destination and supports the economic growth in the location. According to WWF, tour operators should use locally owned businesses and develop long-term partnerships operators and suppliers (Borell & Minestrini & Guarrera 1999, 9). It can be stated that Natura Viva's operations fulfill these requirements.

Preserve – The local community is maintained by supporting the local entrepreneurs (Higham & Hetzer 2007, 26-28; Lariola 2014).

Develop – By choosing the responsible local companies, the sustainable businesses are supported and even bred by maintaining the same providers as long as the values meet the requirements (Higham & Hetzer 2007, 26-28; Lariola 2014).

Accommodation

Choosing accommodation compatible with local traditions that minimises environmental impacts is crucial in WWF's Code of Conduct (Borell & Minestrini & Guarrera 1999, 9). The accommodation of the tour is provided by Tjäreborg and is included to the price of the package. The partner hotel, Alto Lido, has been the same each year of the tour (Lariola 2014). Alto Lido is a family business owned by the Cardoso Family. The owner and the personnel of the Alto Lido are all local. The hotel collects and separate their waste and an outsourced company collects and recycles it. The hotel is medium-sized four star hotel. It has a restaurant that serves local specialties for customers (Ferreira 2014).

Preserve – The income that the tourists of Tjäreborg's Hiking Tour bring to the country go to a local family business and employees. By choosing Alto Lido as an

accommodation, Tjäreborg supports a company that is ecologically responsible with their waste management (Higham & Hetzer 2007, 26-28; Ferreira 2014).

Develop – By serving local specialties, Alto Lido provides new experiences to visitors and introduces the Madeiran cuisine to the customers (Higham & Hetzer 2007, 26-28; Ferreira 2014).

Guides

The fifth command requires that the guides of the product are genuine knowledgeable (Higham 2007, 27-28). The tour has a local guide with not only authentic experience and knowledge but an education to operate as an expert on the tour, as well as his Finnish colleagues (Lariola 2014). The guides of Natura Viva on Tjäreborg's Hiking Tour are capable to provide detailed and specific information and pass their expertised knowledge to the participants. Providing the customers information about conservation, culture and relevant characteristics and encouraging the participants to respect the nature is important part of Code of Conduct. By hiring trained local guides with education the aspect of Guides in Code of Conduct is succeeded (Borell & Ministrini & Guarrera 1999, 10).

Preserve – Having professional guides means that the ecological as well as environmental values are implemented and the local culture is retained as well as the impacts minimized (Higham & Hetzer 2007, 26-28; Lariola 2014).

Develop – The knowledge of the participants is built up with professional guides that can add additional value to the tour product with their knowledge. The awareness of the customers is increased together with the education that the guides provide (Higham & Hetzer 2007, 26-28; Lariola 2014).

Economy

The tourism product supports the local economy by outsourcing all the organs of the package to local operators instead of using Finnish or international facets. The companies used are small- or medium sized and either family owned or independent

entrepreneurs and do not belong to any chain (Lariola 2014). On the day without any planned programme the customers are advised to local and partnering service providers, also advised in the table of Conduct by WWF: “Use locally owned businesses as subcontractors. Develop long-term partnership with local operators, businesses, and suppliers” and “Encourage your customers to buy local hand-made products” (Borell & Minestrini & Guarrera 1999, 9; Lariola 2014). The partnering companies always hold the ecological values required to operate with the tour, tells Lariola.

Preserve – Preserving the local economic community by purchasing local products from local resellers (Higham & Hetzer 2007, 26-28; Lariola 2014).

Develop – Choosing providers with ecological values enhances the economic growth of sustainable facets a good example is shown to other companies and service providers (Higham & Hetzer 2007, 26-28; Lariola 2014).

Visitors

Encouraging a respectful attitude amongst travellers is important (Higham 2007, 27-28). Lariola states that the wellbeing of the locals is enhanced by the tour guides by restoring their peace at the location. By learning about the culture, the visitors - the customers of the tour, are likely to develop a respectful attitude towards the local culture. Professional staff is in a key role to encouraging the visitors' attitudes and respect towards the destination and its communities. Feedback of the customers are collected, which is a good way to find out and develop the success of expectations and attitudes (Borell & Minestrini & Guarrera 1999, 8; Lariola 2014).

Preserve – The participants are encouraged to preserve peace and local pulse in the local communities in Madeira. The learning aspect is an important key in this, as the level of consciousness is likely to grow the respect towards the hosting culture as well (Higham & Hetzer 2007, 26-28; Lariola 2014).

Develop – By treating the locals well and with respect the attitude for tourists should maintain positive and the developing of the tourism services would stay linear and could even increase (Higham & Hetzer 2007, 26-28; Lariola 2014).

Purchase/shopping

”Don't buy their lives” means that the local co-operators should be responsible organisations that do not practice any kind of unreasonable operations that neglect human- or animal rights and doesn't practice money laundering (Higham 2007, 27-28; Kalmari & Kelola 2007, 124-127). Lariola convinces that the local partners all hold required values to co-operate with the tour and all the disagreements according to actions in operations are discussed. The services and hospitality included to the tour are carefully chosen but the choices of the customers can't be controlled except by encouraging the respectful attitude for the local culture which includes responsible shopping. The biggest impact the providers can offer is to advise the participants to shop responsible and local (Borell & Minestrini & Guarrera 1999, 9; Lariola 2014).

Preserve - By choosing the local products and shops for souvenirs as an example, the visitors support the local economy and culture and the risk of unethical business is smaller. Handicrafts and recycled products are a responsible choice in the community perspective (Kalmari & Kelola 2007, 125; Higham & Hetzer 2007, 26-28).

Develop - By favouring the local products and resales the income of the purchase stays in the country and even the destination are and the impact of shopping is designated to the right place. Tax and money income increases the economy of locals and offers jobs for the inhabitants at the location (Higham & Hetzer 2007, 26-28).

Education

Ecotourism requires with the ninth command of Code of Conduct requires that all the visitors are well informed (Higham 2007, 27-28). In his interview Lariola ensures that a certain level of education is provided to the customers and depending on the level of their interest even more precise information on the destination is given. This can be ensured by the expertise of the guides of the tour. Making sure that the activities and operations comply with international and national with local laws and are forwarded to the customers is part of the educational aspect (Borell & Minestrini & Guarrera 1999,

10). According to Lariola's interview the educational level of operations is implemented on tour.

Preserve – Increasing awareness among the visitors the peace of the locals is more likely to retain. The knowledge of ecotourism values passed on the participants will most likely reflect on their actions at the destination positively (Higham & Hetzer 2007, 26-28).

Develop – When the knowledge of the visitors grows, it raises the position of the hosting culture in the world (Higham & Hetzer 2007, 26-28).

Protect & Develop

The tenth command of Code of Conduct is protecting the local surroundings and supporting the local development. It is almost identical with Hertzler's approach preserve and develop. The last command of WWF's Code of Conduct summarises Hertzler's aspects into two – the protection and development of the destination and its visitors, a key element in ecotourism cutting the clear line and separating it from other fields of tourism.

In his interview, Lariola tells that all the routes of the hiking tour go along marked paths only. All the waste is taken with the group back to the town and nothing is left behind. The conception of all areas, especially natural ones, are minimized. Choosing local service providers the work and the locals' jobs are protected and the culture of the destination strengthened. The negative effect for nature and local services is smaller compared to mass tourism. Preserving the ecological values are managed by weighting and evaluating the impacts with an environmental plan and by supporting the local entrepreneurs the local community is nurtured and preserved. The income that the tourists of Tjäreborg's Hiking Tour bring to the country go to a local family business and employees. By choosing Alto Lido as an accommodation, Tjäreborg supports both a local family business and a company that is ecologically responsible with their waste management. The local economic community is enhanced also by purchasing local products from local resellers and supporting local partners. Having professional guides means that the ecological as well as environmental values are implemented and the local culture is retained as well as the impacts minimised.

The participants are encouraged to preserve peace and local pulse in the local communities in Madeira. The learning aspect is an important key in this, as the level of consciousness is likely to grow the respect towards the hosting culture as well. By choosing the local products and shops for souvenirs as an example, the visitors support the local economy and culture and the risk of unethical business is smaller. The knowledge of ecotourism values passed on the participants will most likely reflect on their actions at the destination positively.

The development aspect is more complex than the preserving and protecting of the local culture. The development approach focuses not only to the hosting community but the recipients of the visit, customers of Tjäreborg's Hiking Tour. The development point of view seems to be implemented well in the research case. The group size is ideal for new relationships to bond and create communication. By choosing the responsible local companies, the sustainable businesses are supported and bred by maintaining the same providers as long as the values meet the requirements. By serving local specialties, Alto Lido provides new experiences to visitors and introduces the Madeiran cuisine to the customers of Tjäreborg's Hiking Tour. The knowledge of the participants is increased with professional guides that can add crucial value to the tour product with their knowledge. The awareness of the customers is increased together with the education that the guides provide. Choosing providers with ecological values enhances the economic growth of sustainable facets as a good example is shown to other companies and service providers. By treating the locals well and with respect the attitude for tourists should maintain positive and the developing of the tourism services would stay linear and could even increase. By favouring the local products and resales the income of the purchase stays in the destination and the impact of shopping is designated to the right place. Tax and money income increases the economy of locals and offers jobs for the inhabitants at the location. When the knowledge of the visitors grow, it raises the position of the hosting culture in the world.

5 TYPES OF ECOTOURISM

The subquestion of this thesis is the type of ecotourism that Tj äreborg's Hiking Tour in Madeira can be categorized in. In an ecotourism research published in 1997 by Black, Furtze, Lindber & Staff, Professor Kreg Lindberg provides a typology of nature and ecotourism types by the following four types of ecotourism:

- Hard-core

Scientific researchers or members of tours specifically designed for education, environmental restoration, or similar purposes

- Dedicated

People who take trips specifically to see protected areas and who want to understand local natural and cultural history

- Mainstream

People who visit the Amazon, the Rwandan gorilla park, or other such destinations primarily to take an unusual trip

- Casual

People who partake of nature incidentally, such as through a day trip during a broader vacation (Lindberg & Furze & Staff & Black 1997, 3.1).

According to the definitions of the ecotourism typology by Lindberg, Tj äreborg's tour product Hiking Tour in Madeira could at first glance be categorised to either mainstream or dedicated ecotourism type. The motivation of an individual visitor in Tj äreborg's tour could be to participate in an unusual trip as subscribed in definition of mainstream ecotourism. When the marketing and the subscription of Tj äreborg's tour is considered, dedication ecotourism type would be nevertheless more accurate. As the tour product of Tj äreborg is advertised with its protected and unruined natural areas and experienced guides, is the most likely type of tourist a nature and culture orientated. Considering the price of the tour product, a traveller with the goal of participating an

unusual trip could fulfill their wish in a different matter less affordable and more unusual. Therefore the author of this thesis suggests that the ecotourism type of Tjäreborg's Hiking Tour in Madeira is classified as a dedicated ecotourism product.

6 CONCLUSIONS

As the theoretical of this thesis shows, ecotourism is not just environmentally sustainable friendly traveling to natural areas although it is a part of its framework. The term is often mixed with nature- and sustainable tourism and shares many key elements with such forms of tourism but as a concept is more designated. Equal demands of ecotourism with the environmental factors are the social- and economical values of tourism. Minimising negative impacts is as important as maximising the positive effects. What often is forgotten or unrecognised is the educative factor of the recipient, in this case, the visitor of a destination which is equally important in terms of defining ecotourism. In order the educational component to result, travelling to a natural area isn't enough to fulfil the concept of ecotourism. The terms preserve and develop apply to all these grounds and are included in creation and implementation of an ecotourism product. When analysing a tourism product there are several theories and methods to use to approach the product, nevertheless all of the most significant levels of them are based on the same ideology as can be seen in chapter 3.5 of this thesis, defining ecotourism.

As a destination, the island of Madeira is an ideal ecotourism destination with its unruined, unique natural areas and the opportunities to support local communities at the location with the experiences it has to offer for the visitor. In chapter 3.2 *Tjäreborg & Environmental and Social sustainability*, of this thesis, it can be seen that the tourism product provider Tjäreborg invests in sustainable values in the company operations.

The analysis case of this research, Tjäreborg's Hiking Tour in Madeira, was made with the guidelines of the World Wide Fund for Nature's ten commands for tour operators for creating an ecotourism product. The ten commands of the Code of Conduct, although analysed individually, related strongly with one and other. When analysing an individual guideline components from other steps of the ten commands continued to be used. This shows how the components of succeeded ecotourism product all support the integration of the concept. Based on the data collected from Natura Viva and Tjäreborg, the operations encompassed the required components of the definition of each command by WWF. The two aspects in the core of ecotourism, preserving and developing could be found in all the operations of the tour. It seems clear that all the aspects of the analysis case have been carefully considered.

The study of this thesis was made by an objective facet with a critical point of view and yet the analysis case shows very little weaknesses. Based on the guidelines by WWF and the designated aspects of the founder of ecotourism concept using the information collected from both Natura Viva and Tjäreborg, the study of this thesis shows that Tjäreborg's Hiking Tour in Madeira can be classified as an ecotourism product. Observation of the typology created by Kreg Lindberg in 1991, shows that the more precise terminology that could be used of this tourism product is *a Dedicated Ecotourism Product*.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Interview with Ilkka Lariola

Haastattelu 1.9 2014

(1/3)

Ilkka Lariola

Toimitusjohtaja

Natura Viva

Miira Peltomaa

Tampereen Ammattikorkeakoulu

Degree Programme in Tourism

Opinnäytetyö 2014

KYSYMYKSET

OHJELMAN SUUNNITTELU/TOTEUTUS

1. Kerroit, että ekologisia näkökulmia on otettu huomioon matkaa suunnitellessa. Osaatko äkkiseltään luetella muutamia pääperiaatteita ohjelman suunnittelussa ja kehittämisessä?

Ekologisuus kuuluu osana kaikkeen toimintaamme. Toiminta itsessään on ekologista ja jotta tämä toimintaympäristö voidaan säilyttää, se vaatii ekologista ajattelua. Ohjelmaa suunniteltaessa pyrimme tietenkin siihen, että ohjelma on mahdollisimman hieno ja kohteet ovat vaelluksille ovat hienoja. Kun ihmiset viedään hienoihin paikkoihin ja heille kerrotaan luonnosta ja ympäristöstä mielenkiintoisella tavalla toivomme, että saamme ihmiset ymmärtämään kuinka tärkeää on säilyttää ja suojella ympäristöämme. Eli pyrkimyksenä on vahvistaa ihmisten henkilökohtaista luontokokemusta ja sitä kautta ajatella mitä omalta osaltaan voisi tehdä, jotta samanlainen retki olisi mahdollista myös tulevaisuudessa.

2. Mainitsit tekevsi yhteistyötä paikallisten kumppaneiden kanssa. Minkälaisia ja minkälä alan toimijoita olet käyttänyt ja mihin tarkoitukseen? (Vastuulliset alihankkijat ovat osa ekomatkailua, kiinnitäköön näihin asioihin huomiota kun valitset yhteistyökumppaneita?)

Kaikissa ulkomailla toteutettavissa ohjelmissa käytetään paikallisia alihankkijoita. Ostamme kaikki palvelut yhdeltä paikalliselta alihankkijalta. Täähän sisältyy kuljetukset vaelluskohteet, oppaat, ruokailut jne. Madeiralla olemme tehneet yhteistyötäsaman yhteistyökumppanin kanssa vuosia ja tietenkin kumppania valitessamme kiinnitetään huomiota heidän toimintaan. Ja tarvittaessa toimintavoista keskustellaan.

3. Minkä kokoisesta ryhmästä matkalla on kyse?

Vaellusmatkalla ryhmän maksimikoko on 14 henkeä

4. Onko paikallispalvelut suunniteltu etukäteen ja vuosittain samat palveluntarjoajat (ravintolat/hotellit)?

Pääyhteistyökumppanimme on ollut aina sama. Pääasiassa käymme samoissa ravintoloissa yms. Hotellin järjestää Tjäreborg ja myös se on ollut sama joka vuosi.

5. Miten olette huolehtineet turvallisuudesta matkalla?

Omat ja paikalliset oppaamme ovat ammattioppaita, joilla on vuosien kokemus ja koulutus alalta. Vaellamme reiteillä jotka soveltuvat ryhmän tasolle ja ovat turvallisia. Mukana on aina kaksi opasta (meidän oma ja paikallinen), jotka ovat koulutettuja toimimaan kaikissa tilanteissa.

KÄYTÄNNÖN JÄRJESTELYT

6. Miten minimoitte luonnon rasitusta retkillänne?

Kuljemme merkittyjä polkuja pitkin, emme vahingoita luontoa ja tuomme kaiken mitä otamme mukaan retkelle myös takaisin.

7. Onko matkanjärjestäjän toimesta kierrätystä ja toimivaa jätteidenlajittelua reissun aikana, myös retkien ulkopuolella?

Hotelilla on roskikset, joihin lajitellaan jätteitä Meidän vaikutusmahdollisuudet Madeiralla toteutettavaan jätteidenlajitteluun ovat kovin rajalliset. Toki lajittelemme jätteet paikallisen toimintatavan mukaan. Se kuinka jätteidenlajittelu ja kierrätys sitten käytännössä toimii, en osaa ottaa kantaa.

8. Minkäläinen lentokenttäkuljetus on lentokentältä kohteeseen?

Tjäreborgin järjestämä bussikuljetus.

9. Kuinka muu kuljetus on järjestetty matkalla? Siirrytäänkö hotellilta reiteille kulkuneuvolla/jalkaisin?

Retkikohteisiin siirrytään paikallisen yhteistyökumppanin pikkubusseilla.

ASiantuntemus, Lisäarvo

9. Matkaohjelmassa on yksi vapaapäivä jolloin asiakkaat voivat tiedustella vinkkejä teiltä oppailta. Minkälaisia nähtävyyksiä tapaatte suositella? Minkälaisia retkikohteita ehdotatte vapaapäivälle? Kuinka ohjaatte asiakkaan liikkumaan saarella? Onko kohteessa paikallisia matkanjärjestäjiä joihin ohjaatte, minkälaisia (koko/paikallisuus, jopa nimi)?

Hotellimme on lähellä Funchalia. Keskusta on kävelymatkan päässä ja sinne pääsee myös bussilla. Yleensä ihmiset eivät kaipaa vapaapäivänä sen ihmeempää ohjelmaa vaan haluavat esim. käydä tutustumassa Funchaliin yms. Tietenkin, jos meiltä kysytään muuta ohjelmaa, ohjaamme heidät yhteistyökumppanimme suosittelemiin palveluihin.

10. Mukananne on paikallinen opas, joten autenttinen asiantuntevuus on matkalla taattu. Kertooko opas henkilökohtaisesti omasta kulttuuristaan matkalla?

Oppaamme Sam on ollut vuosia meidän ryhmien oppaana. Hän on syntynyt Madeiralle ja tuntee paikallisen kulttuurin. Hänellä on saarella oma pieni maatila, jota hän hoitaa vapaa-aikana. Tietenkin hän kertoo itsestään ja omasta kulttuuristaan.

11. Matkalla mennään katsomaan, kuinka valmistetaan paikallista herkkuruokaa. Kertooko kokki prosessista/valmistuksesta samalla tai peräti ruuan alkuperästä ja sen merkityksestä paikalliseen kulttuuriin?

Oppaamme Sam ja ravintolan henkilökunta kertoo paikallisesta ruokakulttuurista ja kuinka se valmistetaan. Esimerkiksi Espetada-lihavartaat ovat hyvin perinteinen ruoka ja merkittävä paikallisessa ruokakulttuurissa. Tutustumme myös muihin paikallisiin ruokiin ja juomiin.

12. Onko oppaillanne erityislaatuista, yksityiskohtaista tietoa kohteessa sen elämistä kasvistosta, kulttuurista, yms. Esimerkkinä harvinaiset kasvilajit mitä saaren itä- ja länsipuolella kasvaa/ Unescon metsät? Kuuluuko matkantekoon luontoelämyksen

lisäksi ”koulutuksellinen” elämys – annatteko asiakkaille tietoa reiteistä ja luonnosta/historiasta kohteessa matkan ja retkien aikana?

Luonnollisesti kaikista eläimistä kasveista ja kulttuurista annetaan yksityiskohtaista tietoa. Paikallinen oppaamme on käynyt useamman vuoden koulutuksen, johon kuuluvat kaikki mainitut elementit. Myös suomalainen oppaamme tuntee saaren luonnon ja kulttuurin hyvin. Riippuu kuitenkin aina ryhmän mielenkiinnosta, kuinka syvälle asiaan menemme.

13. Onko oppaillanne alan asiantuntemus/koulutus/vankka työkokemus?

Paikallisille oppailla Samilla on vuosien työkokemus ja hän on myös käynyt paikallisen vuoristo-opas koulutuksen, jossa vaaditaan pätevyyttä kaikille vaellukseen liittyvillä osa-alueilla. Suomalaisina oppaina toimivat Matteo sekä minä itse. Matteo on koulutukseltaan erä- ja luonto-opas. Minulla on maisterintutkinto Helsingin yliopistosta metsäalalta. Meillä kaikilla on vuosien kokemus vastaavien retkien järjestämisestä ja lisäksi opiskelemme tämän lisäksi mahdollisimman paljon uusia asioita.

PAIKALLISET PALVELUT

13. Ohjelmassa on ruokailua paikallisissa ravintoloissa. Osaatko kertoa yleisesti ravintoloista? Muistatko nimiä? (Pieni/keskisuuri yritys, perheomistuksessa, paikalliset työntekijät?) Millä perusteella ruokapaikat on valittu?

Paikallinen yhteistyökumppanimme valitsee ruokapaikat ja hoitaa suhteet heidän kanssaan. Ravintolat ovat pieniä ja paikallisessa omistuksessa.

14. Osaatko kertoa jotain Ribeiro Frion kalankasvatustaloksesta? Viettökä asiakkaat vierailemaan laitoksessa ja onko laitoksen paikallinen työntekijä mukana kertomassa taimenkasvatuksesta?

Vierailemme laitoksessa ja oppaamme kertovat sen toiminnasta. Paikallista työntekijää ei ole mukana.

15. Onko jokin tietty kauppa mistä hankitte porukalla eväät/tarvikkeet retkille? Onko mahdollisesti kyseessä ketju vai yksityinen liike?

Paikallinen kumppani hoitaa eväät ja ne kuuluvat vaelluspakettiin. Ne ostetaan paikallisesta kahvilasta.

HYVINVOINTI

16. Miten otatte asiakkaan hyvinvoinnin huomioon matkalla? (Fyysinen & henkinen)

Tietenkin huolehdimme asiakkaan hyvinvoinnista parhaamme mukaan. Pyrimme rakentamaan ohjelman, joka on sopiva kaikille osallistujille. Haasteena on tietenkin se, että vaellus on fyysistä tekemistä ja ihmisillä on eri kuntotaso. Yritämme kertoa ennakkoon retken vaativuudesta, jotta ihmisillä on realistinen käsitys vaatimuksista. Matkan aikana pyritään sitten auttamaan ja kannustamaan porukkaa.

17. Miten pyritte toteuttamaan hyvän ryhmähengen retkiporukassa?

Hyväryhmähengi on tärkeä matkan onnistumiselle. Saapumispäivänä tapaamme porukalla yhdessä ja käymme läpi viikon ohjelman. Samalla tutustumme toisiimme. Hyvähenki on paljon myös kiinni oppaistamme, jotka ovat aidosti innostuneita työstään. Tämä välittyy myös asiakkaiden käytökseen.

18. Kehotatteko matkailijoita kunnioittamaan paikallisten rauhaa ja hyvinvointia mikäli se on aiheellista?

Kyllä

19. Tiedusteletteko palautetta/tyytyväisyyttä toteutuneeseen matkaan?

Matkan jälkeen annamme osallistujille palautekyselyn, jonka he täyttävät.

Vaellusmatka Madeiralla lokakuussa 2014

Madeira on vaeltajan unelmakohte. Saarelta löytyy loputtomasti vaihtelevia ja monipuolisia retkikohteita. Lähde upeisiin vaellusmaisemiin pakoon syksyn pimeyden Madeiran Laurisilva-metsät ovat olleet vuodesta 1999 lähtien Unescon maailmanperintökohde. Polkujen varsilta löytyy paljon kasveja ja puita, joita tavataan vain täällä saarella. Viikon aikana kävelemme rannikolla, valloitamme Madeiran korkeimmat huiput ja kuljemme vanhoja kastelukanavia, levadoja pitkin. Lisäksi tutustumme paikalliseen kulttuuriin ja opimme paljon uutta luonnosta ja madeiralaisesta elämäntavasta. Liikomme tavanomaista kävelyvauhtia polkuja pitkin, joten hyvä peruskunto ja halu liikkua 5-6 tuntia päivässä riittävät. Vuoristopoluilla on sekä ylämäkiä että alamäkiä, mutta vaikeimmissa paikoissa liikutaan rauhallisesti.

Ajankohta

13.-20.10.2014

Menolento: 13.10. Helsingistä klo 08.15, saapuminen Funchaliin 12.10

Paluulento: 20.10. Funchalista 13.30, saapuminen Helsinkiin klo 21.10

Lennot Thomas Cook Airlinesin tilauslentoilla.

Majoitus

Majoitumme Funchalissa, Alto Lido -hotellissa.

Hinta

Jaetussa kahden hengen huoneessa **1394,-/henkilö**

Huone yhdelle **1519,-/henkilö**

Hintaan sisältyy

- Edestakaiset lennot Helsingistä Funchaliin sisältäen lentoateriat
- Lentokenttäkuljetukset
- Majoitus ja aamiainen hotelli Alto Lidossa
- Natura Vivan opastettu vaellusohjelma
- Suosittelemme matkavakuutusta!

Ohjelma

1. päivä Ponta de Sao Lourenco.

Ensimmäisen päivän retkemme suuntautuu Madeiran itäisimpään kärkeen, joka on 9 kilometriä pitkä niemi. Tämä alue suojeltiin vuonna 1982 ja alueelta löytyy useita kasvilajeja, joita ei löydy mistään muualta maailmasta. Kirkkaalla säällä näemme sekä saaren etelä- että pohjoisrannan. Pohjoisrannikko on vaikuttava pystysuorine kallioineen. Usein tuuli on kovempi pohjoispuolella ja suuret mainingit lyövät kallioita vasten. Kävelyn jälkeen nautimme yhteisen lounaan paikallisessa ravintolassa.

Reitin pituus: 9 kilometriä

Kesto: 3,5 tuntia.

2. päivä Pico do Areeiro – Pico Ruivo

Seuraavaksi siirrymme meren rannasta saaren korkeimmille huipuille. Aloitamme kävelyn Pico do Areeiroilta, joka on noin 1810 metrin korkeudessa merenpinnasta. Polku kulkee vuoren rinteitä ja harjanteita pitkin väliillä ylös ja välillä alaspäin. Tähtäimenä on Pico Ruivon huippu 1862 metrin korkeudessa. Kirkkaana päivänä näkymä joka suuntaan ovat mahtavat.

Reitin pituus: 11 kilometriä

Kesto: 5 tuntia.

3. päivä Levada do Rei ja Espetada.

Kuninkaan Levadalla saamme käsityksen siitä, miltä saaren luonto on näyttänyt, kun ensimmäiset portugalilaiset vuonna 1419 tulivat saarelle. Tämä levada on varmasti yksi saaren hienoimmista. Luonto levadan varrella on monipuolinen ja vaihteleva. Noin puolen tunnin kävelyn jälkeen sukellamme Laurisilva-metsään, joka on yksi parhaiten säilyneistä metsäalueista koko saarella. Kävelyn jälkeen siirrymme ravintolaan, jossa näemme kuinka valmistetaan paikallista herkkuruokaa, Espetadaa. Aterian jälkeen suuntaamme takaisin hotellille.

Reitin pituus: 10 kilometriä

Kesto: 4 tuntia.

4. päivä Lombo do Mouro

Nyt siirrymme jälleen vuoristoon, mutta tämä kävely on todella erilainen ja monipuolinen. Polku kulkee läpi kauniiden maisemien ja kasvivyöhykkeiden. Korkeammalla polkuja reunustavat kanervapuut ja alempana Laurisilva-metsät. Polku kulkee ylös ja alas, lounastauon jälkeen aloitamme nousun Paul da Serran tasangolle. Siellä kipuamme Pico Ruivo do Paul da Serran huipulle, joka on 1639 metrin korkeudessa. Hyvällä säällä näkymä pohjoisrannikolle ja tasangolle ovat upeat.

Reitin pituus: 14 kilometriä

Kesto: 5 tuntia.

5. päivä Vapaa päivä

Mahdollisuus rentoutua kävelyn lomassa ja tutustua Funchalin kaupunkiin. Annamme myös mielellään vinkkejä nähtävyyksistä ja retkikohteista.

6. Päivä Ribeiro Frio ja paikalliset markkinat

Kävely alkaa Ribeiro Friosta, jossa on pieni kalankasvatuslaitos. Taimenet uivat täällä jääkylmässä vedessä. Kävelemme äskettäin kunnostettua levadaa pitkin. Matkan varrella on upeita näkymiä ja jyrkkiä rinteitä alas laaksoon. Onneksi jyrkimmissä kohdissa on kaiteet turvanamme. Matkalla on myös lyhyitä osuuksia, joissa levada menee kallion läpi tunneliin. Lopuksi saavumme Santo da Serraan, jossa on aina sunnuntaisin maalaismarkkinat. Tutustumme paikallisiin tuotteisiin ja elämään.

Markkinoiden jälkeen nautimme yhteisen aterian paikallisessa ravintolassa.

Reitin pituus: 13 kilometriä

Kesto: 4 tuntia

