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TOURISM IN KOKKOLA

A product for families

Business Economics and Tourism
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ABSTRACT

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The aim of this thesis was to examine the potential of the town of Kokkola as a tourism destination for families. The idea for the topic came from my own experiences and the desire to seek out the potential and already existing attractions in the town.

In the theoretical part of the study the focus was on explaining the basic factors in tourism, such as a tourist, the different attractions in the tourism field and also the concept of city tourism as well as the creation process of a tourism product.

At the end of the thesis writing process, a tourism product was created; weekend in Kokkola for families. This combines activities and accommodation for a family wanting to explore Kokkola over a summer weekend.

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TIIVISTELMÄ

Tekijä	Johanna Pohjonen
Nimeke	Kokkolan Turismi
Vuosi	2014
Kieli	Englanti
Sivumäärä	41
Ohjaajan nimi	Thomas Sabel

Opinnäytetyöni aiheena oli tutkia ja tutustua Kokkolan mahdollisuuksiin lapsiperheiden turistikohteena. Idea opinnäytetyöhön tuli omista kokemuksistani ja halusta paneutua Kokkolan mahdollisiin ja jo olemassaoleviin nähtävyyksiin.

Teoriaosuudessa keskityin avaamaan turismin perustäsitteitä, kuten turisti, matkailun vetovoimatekijöitä, kaupunki matkailua ja matkailutuotteen kehittämisen projektia.

Opinnäytetön kirjoittamisen lopussa kehitelin matkailutuotteen, tässä tapauksessa viikonloppu Kokkolassa- paketin lapsiperheille. Paketissa yhdistyy majoitus ja aktiviteetteja lapsiperheelle jotka haluavat tutustua Kokkolaan kesäisen viikonloppun aikana.

TABLE OF CONTENTS
TIIVISTELMÄ AND ABSTRACT

1	AIM OF THE THESIS	4
1.1	Restrictions	4
2	INTRODUCTION	6
3	THE ATTRACTIONS IN TOURISM	7
3.1	The attractions of a tourism destination.....	8
3.2	Nature based pull factors	9
3.3	Culture based pull factors	10
3.4	The attractiveness of Finland as a tourism destination	13
4	A TOURIST	15
4.1	Tourist segmenting by criteria	15
3.3	Allocentric vs. Psychocentric tourist	16
3.4	Tourist roles and typologies.....	17
5	CITY TOURISM.....	19
5.1	The concept.....	19
5.2	Commercial features	20
6	HISTORY OF KOKKOLA	21
7	THE ATTRACTIVENESS OF KOKKOLA.....	23
7.1	Museums	23
7.2	Theatre and opera.....	25
7.3	The Beaches	26
7.4	The archipelago and Tankar Island.....	26
7.5	Activities for children	28
7.6	Neristan old town.....	29
7.7	Hotels in Kokkola	30
7.8	Restaurants in Kokkola.....	30
8	A TOURSIM PRODUCT.....	32
8.1	Creating a tourism product.....	32
9	THE PRODUCT- WEEKEND IN KOKKOLA FOR FAMILIES	35
10	CONCLUSIONS	37
	REFERENCES.....	38

1 AIM OF THE THESIS

The aim of this thesis is to discover the attractions the town of Kokkola has to offer as a tourism destination. The idea comes from my own experiences so in this thesis I will focus on pointing out the attractions that families with children could find interesting and try to point out the best the town of Kokkola has to offer to this segment. As a final product I will design a travel package for families going to Kokkola for a weekend. This product could be sold and marketed by Kokkola Tourism Ltd. Also Hotel Kokkola, the accommodation in the travel package, could market and sell the product. This thesis holds information about different attractions in Kokkola that could interest families and the package is made appealing to those families who seek for a ready planned travel package in the Ostrobothnia region.

1.1 Restrictions

In this thesis I will explain the theories that relate to the topic; in general terms tourism and what kind of pull factors there are that attract tourists to a certain destination. The nature and culture based pull factors will be studied and the different attractions found in Finland will be viewed. After this the concept of a tourist and the segmenting of tourists by various criteria will be focused on. The term of city tourism will be included, as Kokkola is an average sized city in Finland. Finally the attractions found in Kokkola are focused on. The final product of the thesis is designed for families with young children and this is what the focus is on the presentation of the attractions. Also attractions that the parents might like to explore are presented, such as museums, and a museum designed for families and children of all ages. The product is designed to take place during the summertime when the attractions are open and have more to offer. The activities can be chosen according to the age of the children in the family. The price includes the entrance to two attractions, from which the family can choose and a visit to Tankar Island.

Kokkola expanded in 2009 when Lohtaja, Ullava and Kälviä were attached to Kokkola and made it into a bigger city. In this thesis attractions mainly found in the original Kokkola area are discussed, but attractions located further away within the area of Kokkola are also discussed to some extent. The actual product takes place mainly in Kokkola city centre but trips are made to Tankar Island and to Kälviä. Today Kokkola has much more to offer after the merging of these towns. In this thesis attractions outside of the city centre are included because they bring great value to the city and complete the offering of attractions.

2 INTRODUCTION

The topic of the thesis was easy to decide, although it was something totally different than what I had in mind during the years of studying hotel and restaurant management in the University of Applied sciences at Vaasa. I moved back to Kokkola, my hometown, in 2011 and after giving birth to our son I started to pay attention to Kokkola as a family orientated city. It made me think of Kokkola from another point of view and what things I appreciate in the town as a parent. I wanted to find out more about the potential of the town as a child friendly city for tourists, not only for its permanent residents.

In the theory part of the thesis the focus is on the different attraction factors in tourism, what it is that makes tourists travel to a certain destination. City tourism as a concept is explained, as well as the concept of a tourist and the way of behavior when travelling. The next step is to get to know the attractions in Kokkola that could have value when it comes to families on choosing a destination for a weekend holiday. A part explaining a tourism product and how it can be done is also examined.

Finally, is created a tourism product, in this case a weekend in Kokkola for families. This package could be sold by Kokkola tourism Ltd. or by the hotel I chosen for the case. Before beginning the writing process I contacted Kokkola tourism Ltd. inquiring if they would be willing to act as a mandatory, but they had no need for a new product, possibly due to the low season in tourism in Kokkola. The product combines activities for a family wanting to explore Kokkola over a weekend, and I have especially thought of the children in a family. Kokkola has a great potential as a city for tourism, especially during summertime.

3 THE ATTRACTIONS IN TOURISM

The reason why people travel can well be described as tourist motivation and the attractions of a destination make people decide where to travel. These can also be thought of as pull factors and as the base for tourism in a destination. They can simply be categorized into nature attractions, culture based attractions and human made or organized attractions. Especially the financial benefits of tourist attractions have encouraged local and regional destinations to develop and come up with new and more attractive pull factors for potential tourists. (Aho 1994)

When looking into a new destination, the pull factors play a great role. Potential tourists get a feeling of the image of the destination and of the local businesses. The pull factors are the features that determine that attractiveness of a destination in general. Different pull factors can be, for example nature, landscaping, climate, price level or accessibility. The most appreciated feature has thought to be the beauty of nature, although different values are given to features depending on the tourist. (Aho 1994; Aho & Ilola 1995)

Destinations consist of natural and cultural surroundings, which have been productized into the use of tourism by creating necessary services, such as accommodation and restaurants. The attractiveness of an area is a combination of natural and cultural pull factors as well as the quality of service and uniqueness. (Vesterinen & Vuoristo 2009)

In many destinations around the world, it is their attractions that serve as the most important reason for traveling to a particular destination. Many of the components in a tourist's trip such, as transport and accommodation are demands coming from the tourist's desire to enjoy what a destination has to offer in terms of "things to see and do." Every region and town has at least one attraction adding to its appeal as a destination. Attractions often serve a variety of different purposes, since many of them had nothing to do with tourism. Despite having an attraction, all areas or countries cannot be thought of as appealing to tourists in general. Some basic requirements for a tourism area or country are demanded, and these are cultural and natural pull factors, a good economy, political stability and safety, at

least average health conditions and not having suffered from major natural catastrophes or having a minor chance of suffering from one. (Vuoristo & Vesterinen 2009, Fletcher, Fyall, Gilbert & Wanhill 2013)

3.1 The attractions of a tourism destination

The charm of a destination is based on tourism pull factors, also known as attractions. Basically it describes a pull factor, which is linked to a certain era or place and has been productized for the tourists. These can be, for example different sights or events. In general tourists are most interested in features related to nature or culture. Attractions can be thought of as either passive or active, depending on how much involvement of the tourist the attraction requires. An Active attraction can be for example horse riding on the mountains, where the tourist is a part of the experience. A passive attraction could be a visit to a historical church. (Vuoristo & Vesterinen 2009)

Attractions can be categorized in many ways. One of the ways is to divide them into destination and event attractions. A destination based attraction is a pull factor itself and it can be a sight or a place such as Vuokatti. An event based attraction can be, for example a festival, sports event and different types of conferences. Once these two attractions are found in one place, the place is most certainly more appealing to potential tourists. (Aho 1994)

Another way of classification is to determine since when certain attractions have been able to attract tourists. This way it is possible to categorize local or provincial attractions and national and international attractions. In most cases these attractions become mixed with one another. (Aho 1994)

3.2 Nature based pull factors

It is said, that different geographical zones make the base for all structural tourism. Often nature is the key element in pull factors, although it also draws limits to areas with not so favorable surroundings for tourism. An attraction of nature is based on the enjoyment of surroundings and landscape also known as esthetic pleasure, but often it is also based on free time activities. In most cases nature is allows for tourism even if it is not a pull factor in the destination. (Vuoristo 2002, Hemmi & Vuoristo 1993)

Almost every geographical element has an impact on tourism and its development. Most important elements are thought to be the geographical location, climate, flora and fauna, and the water surroundings. (Vuoristo 2002)

In general the climate zones are divided to six groups; the most well known ones being the temperate and cold zone. The attractiveness of the climate is dependent on the amount of rain and temperatures. It has been defined that there are two appropriate climates for tourism, which are the warm climate with little rain and the cold and snowy climate for the winter lovers. Seasonality can be seen in most tourism countries and it has to be taken into consideration when planning a tourism business. The season needs to be long and stable enough to make it profitable. (Vuoristo 2002)

The most favorable geographical zones are the subtropical coastal and island areas and the mountain ranges of some zones. Large areas of the globe lack attractive enough features for tourism that would actually bring profit into those countries. Flora and fauna play a great role as a pull factor, and as nature based tourism becomes more popular the need for new national parks becomes bigger. (Vuoristo 2002)

Water can be thought of as the basis for nature tourism. It is the base for cruise and group tourism, such as package holidays for sun lovers. Water is a large part of the esthetic beauty of the destination and it also makes water based activities

possible. The best preconditions for successful tourism are most commonly found in the archipelago and coast lines of warm sea areas. (Vuoristo 2002)

3.3 Culture based pull factors

Culture is one of the most powerful pull factors in a destination. People are willing to get to know other cultures and their achievements as well as the sights and experiences their own culture has to offer. Simply cultural pull factors are used to describe the features found in a destination that tourists seeking for cultural experiences are interested in. (Hemmi & Vuoristo 1993)

The concept of culture tourism is broad, and culture tourism shares features with other tourism sectors. When looking more closely at the concept of culture, it seems that everything that is manmade is culture. Accordingly all tourism where the reason for travel or a part of the experience involves human made creations is culture tourism. When defining culture tourism, it makes more sense to focus on the features that attract people to travel to that country, area or town. Figure 1 below demonstrates the factors which are more or less bound to culture tourism.

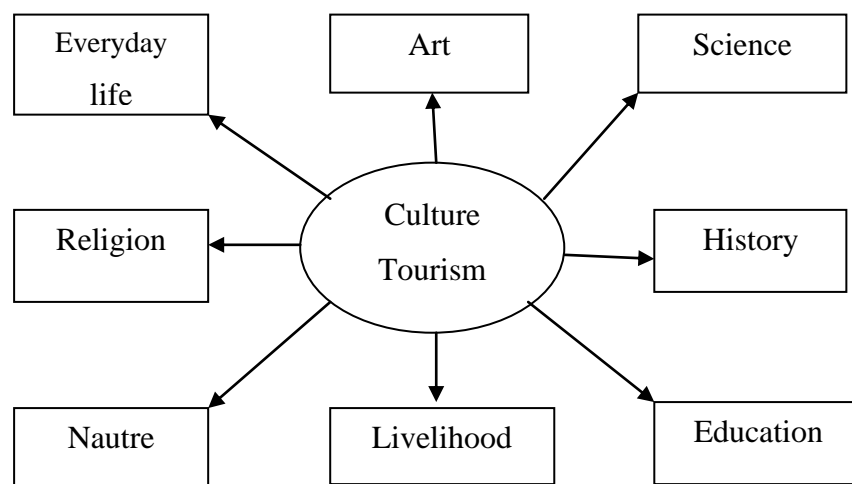


Figure1. Culture tourism (Lackman & Verhelä 2003)

The diversity of culture makes it possible for tour operators and developers of tourism products to develop products related to numerous topics and themes. Culture related tourism products have been developed for example around lifestyles and social activities as well as products related to objects and arts. According to the Finnish Tourism board culture tourism can be defined as the motivation of a person wanting to travel to observe the cultural resources of destinations and learn about them, and if possible take part in them. The concept of culture is expanding to maintain in the development of humanity, and new features in tourism have been accepted as a part of cultural tourism. For tourism service providers this development has been positive when culture is being productized for the needs of expanding tourism. (Lackman &Verhelä 2003)

The pull factors in culture can be classified and divided into five different groups, which are prehistorical sites, historical sites, modern architecture, special cultures, and cultural events. According to Lackman &Verhelä those following features can be described as culture tourism:

- art and music
- science and technique
- religion
- architecture
- history
- archeology
- educational systems
- clothing and accessories
- free time activities
- language
- food and drink
- traditions, stories and myths
- Lifestyle in other words things related to the ways people live, customs, hobbies, the way of working etc.
- theme parks and casinos

(Hemmi 1993, Lackman &Verhelä 2003)

Most of the tourism related culture is situated in big cities, where a lot of cultural services are accessible. For example, different kinds of museums and art facilities which have collected artifacts and objects from different cultures, and act as a significant pull factor for tourists, mostly located in towns. (Vuoristo 2002)

Majority of culture tourists seek the local culture. However, there are tourists who enjoy amusement and theme parks and other artificial environments knowing that they are not the real surroundings of the destination. There are also those tourists who seek something that is as authentic as possible and want nothing to do with artificial or culture brought from somewhere else. These types of tourists are truly interested in the culture and its different sectors in the destination. If local people then offer something as the local specialty for the tourist which actually is not, he will get the feeling of being cheated on. Good products can be made related to the local conditions, although it might need creativity when productizing the local goods. (Lackman &Verhelä 2003)

Culture tourism and the experiences it has to offer have risen to the top with other traditional tourism attractions. The popularity of culture tourism is related to the changing motives for travelling. People seek to return to their roots and get to know their own and other nations' traditions and customs. They also want to know more about the world, and experience more relaxation in cultural surroundings such as in theatres and concerts. The popularity of culture has given opportunities for such areas which do not possess the other traditional tourism attractions and pull factors. The good level of income, high education level, the easiness of transportation and increased free time are the features which have had a great impact the increased popularity of culture tourism. (Lackman &Verhelä 2003)

During centuries cultures have become mixed with one another, but today it is possible to separate seven different culture environments, which are Western, Islamic, Indian, Southeast Asian, East Asian, Mid African and the Pacific Oceanic cultures. During the years both economical and political conditions have had an impact on how the big cultural environments highlight the field of tourism. (Vuoristo 1998, Hemmi &Vuoristo 1993)

3.4 The attractiveness of Finland as a tourism destination

The history of tourism in Finland is not simply numbers and figures, since it has been linked to Finland's political and economical development. The first influences of tourism came from Sweden, but Finland has gained a lot of tourism influences from Russia, especially during the autonomic era but also just after the declaration of independency. After the Second World War Finland became westernized since the flow of tourists from the east began to weaken. The development of industries and social security system have been said to be the reasons that led to rapid development of tourism in the 1960's. (Hemmi & Vuoristo 1993)

When thinking about the attractiveness of Finland as a tourism country, the first thing which comes to mind is the northern location. From a global point of view, Finland is located far away and it is somewhat isolated, but this can also be seen as a pull factor. The requirements for development of tourism are average and regional differences are big. (Hemmi & Vuoristo 1993)

In general Finland is a part of the snow and forest climate zone and has good preconditions for active summer and winter tourism. Some of the most affective pull factors are the "nightless" nights (midnight sun) and the days without light (polar nights), the exoticness of the Arctic Circle and the unique colors of autumn. The unique location on the Arctic Circle has always fascinated people around the world, and the crossing of the circle itself can be seen as a tourism product or event. Seasonality plays a great role as a pull factor and so makes Finland attractive for many different tourist segments. The variation of seasons keeps nature tourists interested, although Finland's nature is not as diverse as it is in the tropical zone. The archipelago is also one of the pull factors and one of the areas has made its way to the UNESCO world heritage list, namely the Kvarken Archipelago located in the Gulf of Bothnia. (Hemmi & Vuoristo 1993, Vesterinen & Vuoristo 2009)

The cultural attractiveness of Finland is focused in the south, but some cultural surroundings can be found in separate towns and cities. Some of the most important cultural sites in Finland are the village and agriculture sceneries, old towns, old castles, prehistorical bridges, roads and living areas, national sceneries, the world heritage sites and special theme and amusement parks. All of these act as a display window to Finland's culture. Theme parks have been under development lately due to advanced technology and brands, such as the Angry Birds Land in Tampere. (Vesterinen & Vuoristo 2009)

Finland has a lot of single cultural events, sights and attractions. The location of these has had a great impact on the regional structure of tourism in Finland. Local culture sites and attractions can be categorized into churches, mansions, places of combat, prehistorical sites, modern architecture and museums. The main goal is to preserve the cultural heritage of these sites as well as keep developing the cultural tourism in Finland. (Vesterinen & Vuoristo 2009)

4 A TOURIST

The concept of a tourist can be defined as a person who temporarily travels outside his hometown during his free time or for work-related reasons. This means that a person operates outside his usual living and working environment. When looking at tourists, it is useful to use tourist segmentation as a base for different strategies, for example marketing and product development strategies. (Hemmi & Vuoristo 1993, Vuoristo 2002)

According to Statistics Finland, a tourist is a visitor who stays for at least one night in a collective or a private accommodation in the place visited. An international tourist is an international traveler who stays for at least one night in the country visited. A domestic tourist refers to a domestic visitor who stays overnight in the place visited. When a tourist does not spend a night in the place visited, he is referred to as a same-day visitor. (Statistics Finland 2013)

4.1 Tourist segmenting by criteria

One way of classifying tourists can be measured objectively by “hard” indicators such as income and wealth or by “soft” indicators such customer loyalty and lifestyle. When designing and marketing a tourism product, it is important to take in consideration to which segment the product is designed for. Most commonly the following criteria are used:

- Demographic criteria. The population is divided into groups by for example age, gender or other demographic factor.
- Geographic criteria. For tourism companies located in one city, it is important to segment tourists by their geographical distance or place of residence. Customers can also be divided to people who live in the city and to those who live in the countryside.
- Socioeconomic criteria. These criteria can be defined as profession, income level, possessions, and family and education segments.
- Service usage- criteria. Customers can be divided into groups according to how they have consumed services and into new, old, occasional and poten-

tial customers. A service is always an event of transaction, so the customers can also be divided into active and passive customers.

- Motivation criteria. Tourists can be segmented by the reason for their travel. A reason can be for example sunbathing or education.
- Lifestyle and personality criteria. This way of segmenting has become more popular over the years because lifestyle and personality are highly related into a person's decision of destination and travelling routines.

(Hemmi& Vuoristo 1993)

2.3 Allocentric vs. Psychocentric tourist

Several models have been developed to explain tourist motivation and behavior. One of the most used models of segmentation of tourists was designed by Stanley Plog in 1947. He conducted a research for 16 different airline and travel companies focusing on the American population and the reasons why they didn't want to fly. He found out that non-flyers shared common personality tendencies, such as territory boundness and a strong feeling of insecurity in daily life. The results of this research were later expanded to be used in classification of tourists into allocentric, midcentric and psychocentric travelers. (Vuoristo 2002)

A psychocentric tourist prefers package and all inclusive holidays and is more likely to take part in passive activities such as sunbathing and relaxation. This tourist will most likely choose the tour operator's guided tours within the destination and stay in well-known areas. A psychocentric traveler also favors destinations which are easy to access as they might suffer from, for example, flight fright. (Vuoristo 2002)

An allocentric tourist is a more an independent traveler, who likes to organize his holidays and does not necessarily demand arrangements to be done beforehand. This tourist is more likely to seek new destinations instead of travelling to a mass-tourist destination. He enjoys new experiences and seeks for more active hobbies. An allocentric tourist is more likely to settle for a reasonable or moderate accom-

modation and service, as long as he can enjoy involvement with foreign cultures and people. (Vuoristo 2002)

Most of tourists belong to the midcentrics, who combine the characteristics of these two groups. These travelers form the biggest group and are also the easiest to focus marketing of tourism products to, but psychocentrics form a big cash flow to tourism companies due to their willingness of purchasing the whole tourism product or package. (Vuoristo 2002; Woodside, Martin 2007)

2.4 Tourist roles and typologies

When people travel, they are most likely to adapt a role to conduct their behavior. One of the best known tourist typologies is the Cohen classification, which describes four types of tourists. These roles are affected by curiosity and the need for new experiences, but on the other hand the need for security and feeling comfortable and safe. (Vuoristo 2002)

The organized mass tourist is the least adventurous tourist, who by buying his package holiday often stays isolated from the host community and remains in an “environmental bubble” throughout the holiday. (Vuoristo 2002)

The individual mass tourist is also a package holiday buyer and he uses the services provided by the tour operator, but he might have some control over his itinerary during the holiday. He might for example stay in the tour operators hotel and use the services there but also may hire a car and go explore the destination without a tour guide. (Vuoristo 2002)

The explorer organizes and plans his own trip and gravitates outside the mass tourism destinations. He enjoys proper and comfortable accommodation and transport, so he keeps the “environmental bubble” at reach in case he needs to take a step back. (Vuoristo 2002)

The drifter has no contact with the tourist establishments and he gets involved with the local community. He seeks for new adventures ignoring the possible risks and he does not make strict schedules or plans for his holiday. He tries to be a part of the daily life at the destination and take part in it as much as possible. (Vuoristo 2002)

5 CITY TOURISM

According to the Global Report on City tourism 2012, a city is the most sophisticated cultural product for civilized coexistence. A city is a part of humanity's culture and history and the epicenter for many traditions. The growth of the city should at its best meet the growing needs of its residents in order to improve their quality of life. Cities are in constant change, they are being transformed, built and continuously growing. Cities provide new opportunities and have great impact on the local economical growth, for instance they can become the key in reducing poverty. Most importantly cities have become the bridges between different cultures. (The Global Report on City Tourism, UNWTO 2012)

5.1 The concept

In the early 20th century, cities started to be aware of themselves as tourist attractions. The cities which reacted to the growing phenomenon of tourism and created activities for tourists enjoyed an economic boost. Urban tourism grew interest in the 1980's and low cost airlines added the interest in cities and their development in terms of tourism. During the 1970's and 1980's city tourism was marketed as experience tourism and European countries came up with a new tourism product called city breaks. Cities appeal to a broader market, they are easy to reach and most commonly have a lot to offer. (The Global Report on City Tourism, UNWTO 2012, Aho& Ilola 1995)

According to the United Nations, the world's urban population is expected to grow by 61% by the year 2030 and the number of people living in cities will be 5 billion. This will have a considerable impact on city tourism, striking on its development and economy. Tourism brings new patterns and changes to the urban landscape such as globalization which has been also seen in smaller cities. This can be well recognized on the hospitality sector where the same hotel rooms and restaurants can be found in New York as well as Paris, even in Helsinki. The constant growing and change in cities triggers investments in infrastructure, promotion and conservation which ultimately creates benefits for tourists as well as local residents. Tourism needs the diverse and flexible products a city can offer, but on

the other hand cities need tourism to achieve their social and economic goals. (The Global Report on City Tourism, UNWTO 2012)

5.2 Commercial features

Most of the commercial services in a city have been formed to meet the needs of the local residents but tourism in a city can be used to update commercial services and to upgrade the service sector to meet the needs of the growing demand. Tourism companies have formed to be a solid part of the service providers. The services must be diverse to make a functional complex to attract tourists. Some of the biggest cities in the world such as London and New York have succeeded in offering a large range of commercial services and this is the key element in their success as a tourist attraction. (Aho& Ilola 1995)

Cities must be able to attract tourists with the services and elements they seek for. Some of the common attractions in a city are a market place, culture supply and event and program services. To make a city appealing to tourists, it must be cozy, diverse, offer good quality services and maintain an impeccable image. Interesting culture and environment strengthen the attractiveness of a city. Shopping tourism is mainly focused in the town centre and that is why it is important that this area of the city is made as enjoyable as possible for the tourists. (Aho& Ilola 1995)

6 HISTORY OF KOKKOLA

Kokkola has a long history since it was founded in 1620, and in this chapter the history of Kokkola will be explained as it grew to be a significant town on the seacoast, known as a maritime and commercial city.

In the oldest documents Kokkola goes by the name “Karlabi,” which later gave the base to the Swedish word Karleby. The up lifting of land has had a huge importance in the history of Kokkola, as the area used to be under water. The first habited area of Kokkola rose above sea level in 800 AD. In the 12th century Kokkola already had a harbor, a market place and a wooden church. People made their living by trading, farming, hunting and fishing. Exporting of tar became important in the 14th century and this was a very important income for the village. This was one of the leading factors in making this village into a town along with the ideal situation for trading and accessibility. (Kokkola 2014 a. history of Kokkola)

In 1620, on September 7th the king of Sweden, Gustaf II Adolf, signed a document which turned fishing and farming village into a town. Gradually Kokkola developed into a significant seafaring and shipbuilding spot. The shipyards were located in Kaustari, Mustakari and Soldatkär. A great fire took place in 1664 and afterwards a lot of rebuilding took place. Most of these buildings can still be seen in the old town called Neristan. After the sufferings of wars and the plague, Kokkola was left with only 78 inhabitants, but luckily Kokkola got back to its feet and by the year 1750, there were already around a 1000 inhabitants in the town of Kokkola. (Kokkola 2014 a. history of Kokkola; Kokkola 2014 b. history of Kokkola)

At first Kokkola was not allowed to practice foreign trade, so most of the sailing trips were made to Stockholm and Turku. In the year 1765 the town got full rights to practice foreign trade, and this was accomplished by the vicar and deputy An-

ders Chydenius. Kokkola became wealthy in the beginning of the 17th century due to the exporting of tar and ships, and the merchant fleet of Kokkola used to be one of the biggest in Finland during that time. (Kokkola 2014 a. history of Kokkola)

Over time Kokkola grew into an important industrial city, especially because of metal and the leather industry. Today, Kokkola is the biggest town in central Ostrobothnia and the 22nd biggest city in Finland, being the meeting point for people coming from villages and smaller towns in the Ostrobothnia region, seeking for events, shopping and experience. In 2011, Kokkola was the largest milk producer in Finland and it has various education possibilities such as Centria University of Applied Sciences. Kokkola offers a wide range of activities throughout the year, including exploring of the archipelago and other cultural sites. (Kokkola 2014 m. info)

7 THE ATTRACTIVENESS OF KOKKOLA

This chapter will be focused on Kokkola as a town and explaining its potential as a destination for families with children. This chapter will also examine with the different attraction factors that can be related to the city.

Kokkola is a seaside town with the population of 47000, and it has been growing rapidly for the past few years. Kokkola is easily accessible being in the crossing of two main roads and a part of the railway network. The Kruunupyy airport is located 19 kilometers from Kokkola, with a daily bus connection from the city centre to the airport. The capital city of Finland, Helsinki, is located on south coast of Finland, 491 kilometers from Kokkola. (Finavia 2014)

Kokkola is the cultural and educational centre of the province of Central Ostrobothnia with traditions that date back centuries ago. Although being a city full of historical sites and buildings, Kokkola is still a modern provincial town offering a varied range of different services. Bilingual Kokkola is the meeting point for Swedish- and Finnish speakers with multicultural diversion. The city's bilingualism has been a helpful factor in promoting the internationalization and business life in Kokkola. (Kokkola 2014 m. info)

7.1 Museums

The rich cultural heritage of Kokkola is on display in the K. H. Renlund museum. It is located in the city centre in an old complex of houses built in the early 17th century. Mr. K.H Renlund (1850-1908) donated his artwork collection to the city of Kokkola in his will, so the museum got its name from him. The actual museum was founded in 1909 and since then it has operated as the city museum. In 2008 it got the title of Central Ostrobothnia Region Museum. This day the museum holds not only Renlund's collection but also several others art and cultural collections from the history of Finland. In this museum complex it is possible to visit the

Drake house, a home which belonged to Anna and Fredrik Drake, the exhibition hall, Lassander house and Leo Torppa's camera collection. In the middle of these historical surroundings it is nice to have a break in the Waffle café, which operates during the summer time with its tasty delights. (Kokkola 2014 n. Renlund museum)

The Kaarlela museum of local history and culture presents the true rural culture from the 19th century. There is a courtyard of old buildings such as a smoke sauna, stable, workshop, drying barn and of course the cottages people lived in. These are located in Kirkonmäki, which was the first habited area in Kokkola. The museum has an exhibition space in a stone building built for Anders Chydenius in 1777, who is seen as the founder of Kokkola. The neighboring vicarage was finished in 1737, which makes it one of the oldest vicarages in Finland. Anders Chydenius was the most famous vicar who had the permission to live there until his death in 1803. The exterior walls of the building were covered with handmade wood paneling which still remains. The vicarage has a great historical meaning not only for being one of the oldest ones, but it shows the three eras in Finland's history, the time when Finland was a part of Sweden, the autonomic time when Finland was a part of Russia and also the time of Finland's indecency. (Kokkola 2014 c. Kaarlela museum)

The seal hunting museum is located on the island of Tankar, situated on the outer archipelago 15 km from the seacoast of Kokkola. The Island is 900 meters long and it withholds a lighthouse built in 1889, an old fisherman village and a small church built in 1754. It is also possible to stay overnight on the island during summertime. Today, Tankar is one of the most popular tourist attractions in Kokkola. The seal hunting museum holds an extensive collection of objects related to hunting of seals, which used to be a significant source of livelihood in the coastal regions of Finland. During summertime café Tankar is open for visitors. (Kokkola 2014 d. Seal hunting museum)

The Toivonen Animal Park and Peasants museum is situated on the main road 8 in Kälviä, a region of Kokkola 8 kilometers away from the city centre. This concept

consists of 50 different buildings and 12500 exhibits and it keeps expanding. The purpose of the park is to offer visitors a glimpse of the rustic way of life in a village in central Ostrobothnia in the beginning of the 20th century. At the animal park it is possible to see animals of 20 different species in their natural surroundings. There is also a café, handicraft shop, exhibition areas, and rooms for meetings in historical surroundings. A play area is located in the courtyard for children and it is possible to get guided tours. The museum is open during summertime. (Toivosen Eläinpuisto 2014)

There are also some other smaller museums located in the area of Kokkola such as the Öja fishing museum located in Öja, a region of Kokkola and the Hunting museum.

7.2 Theatre and opera

Kokkola has a long tradition of theatre and other performances by both professionals and amateurs. The Kokkola Municipal Theatre was founded in 1905, when it first operated as the workers' community theatre. The actual Kokkola municipality theatre got its name in 1961. Since 1927 it has been operating in the Vartiolinna house, which has a rich atmosphere and its biggest hall can take up to 209 customers. While enjoying the shows it is possible to enjoy refreshments and snacks in the Theatre café and various theatre packages can be bought to combine culture, accommodation and food. The Vartiolinna house is a brilliant example of the architecture in 1920 at its best. The schedule for the plays can be found on the website <http://teatteri.kokkola.fi/esityskalenteri/> and the theatre operates all year round with professional actors. (Kokkola 2014 f. Theatres)

There are three amateur theatres in Kokkola with a regular program. Two of them are over one hundred years old, the Swedish youth club of Kokkola founded in 1984 and the Ykspihlaja workers theatre founded in 1907. The evening actors of Kokkola at the Iltätähti Theatre present several premiers every year. All of these

theatres organize activities and acting groups for children and the youth around the year. (Kokkola 2014 e. Opera)

Every summer the local theatres hold performances related to the maritime nature of the city or its historical environment. The Kokkola opera organizes the Kokkola Music and Theatre week, which gives visitors a chance to experience high level opera during the summertime. The Kokkola opera was founded in 2004 by established artists. The production focuses on adventurous programming, creative risk-taking and on showing the heritage and roots of Kokkola and the central Ostrobothnia region. The production often features both languages spoken in Kokkola, Finnish and Swedish. (Kokkola Opera 2014)

7.3 The Beaches

During hot summer days Kokkola offers many beaches to relax on. Vanhansatamanlahti is right next to the housing fair area, and it includes a beach, skating park, camping area and a café. There is also the Meripuisto terminal which is the takeoff port for M/s Jenny during summertime. This is the newest beach and it is very well equipped with play parks and areas for children. Vattajanniemi & Ohtakari beach is said to be the largest beach in the Nordic countries and it is located in Lohtaja, around 40 km away from Kokkola city centre. Laajalahti beach offers a bird observing deck, hut for barbeques and a nature trail. Lahdenperä beach is also popular and has been popular among the inhabitants for decades. (Visit Kokkola 2014 b. Sea and archipelago)

7.4 The archipelago and Tankar Island

Being an old seaport, the sea and archipelago have always been a vital part of Kokkola. Kokkola is also a part of the seven bridges archipelago road, which goes through Pedersöre, Pietarsaari, Larsmo, Kruunupyy and Kokkola. This archipelago route is growing its popularity every year and it is a great way to experience

the balance between town and countryside. On www.7siltaa.com it is possible to book accommodations and package trips for the route and enjoy different activities on the way, all in one region. (Seven bridges; Visit Kokkola 2014 b. Sea and archipelago.)

The most popular destination when heading out to the sea is the Tankar Island, which attracts people with its unique nature appeal. In the old days this trip was done by rowing, but luckily today it is a lot easier and a more comfortable ride. Tankar has risen from the sea by the effect of upthrusting and it was already known in the 14th century. During centuries it has served as a living and resting place for fishermen and their families. Today those old fishing huts are primarily used as summer cottages. The lighthouse of Tankar was lit for the first time in October 1889. The lighthouse is still in function and it is one of the most powerful lighthouses in Finland. The small church is one of the oldest ones in Finland built in 1750 and is open for tourists as well as for events such as wedding ceremonies. (Kokkola 2014 j. Tankar Island: history)

Among the lighthouse Tankar island offers many attractions for visitors. Due to its location on the edge of the archipelago region, its nature is unique and the vegetation keeps changing as the island expands from the sea. Around 180 different species of plants can be found on the island and most common mammals are bats, rabbits and voles. Birds favor the island as a nesting place, and around 260 different species of birds have been seen there. The bird station of Tankar was founded in 1972 and it mostly operates as a tourist attraction but also studies the birds and the routes they use. The nature trail is a great way to get to know the nature and learn about the history of the Island. (Kokkola 2014 k. Tankar Island: nature)

Accommodation is also provided on the island. Guesthouse Tankar Inn has 11 double rooms and shared bathrooms and kitchen facilities. Two other guest houses offer accommodation, although the interior is somewhat basic. No running water is provided, so visitors are advised to bring it with them or buy it from café Tankar. Most of the tourists make a day trip on to the Island. Café Tankar is open during summertime and offers daily a generous fish soup meal with bread and

dessert. Coffees, pastries, ice cream and alcoholic beverages can also be bought and the café operates as a base for visitors as there can be booked all trips and tickets related to the island. (Kokkola 2014 i. Tankar Island: dining; Kokkola 2014 h. Tankar Island: accommodation)

Being one of the most popular tourist attractions in Kokkola, there is regular access to Tankar Island during summertime. M/s Jenny is a boat cruising back and forth to the island and it leaves from Meripuisto port. The boat can carry 177 passengers and it has a bar and a restaurant to make the most of the cruise. Timetables vary every year but day trips are possible to make every day of the week. The boat is rentable for charter trips and events. The island is also accessible by a private boat or canoe. (Kokkola 2014 l. Tankar Island)

7.5 Activities for children

Kokkola is a very child friendly city. The city centre is easy to explore with strollers and most of the shops are easy to access. There are 88 playgrounds in Kokkola, many of them located near the city centre. Some of them offer babysitters for few hours during the day for children over 3 years of age. The most popular ones are the Meripuisto which was finished in 2007 located on the coast and Englannipuisto, which was founded already in the 17th century. It is located by Suntti, the city river, which stretches out through Kokkola. Englannipuisto holds many statues and an English boat, which was left in Kokkola in the 17th century and is being kept on display as a spoil of war. During summer people like to enjoy a day out in one of the parks enjoying the weather and snacks. Länsipuisto is located in the city centre and has a good playground. It is a popular park for picnics and some events are held there every summer. Most parks are well cared for and offer visual enjoyment for tourists seeking to spend a summer day outdoors. (Kokkola 2014 o. parks)

Touhutalo and Vesiveijari swimming hall offer indoor activities for families with children. Touhutalo is an activity and adventure house, now operating in two cit-

ies, Kokkola and Seinäjoki. Touhutalo has lifted family-free time to a new level and offers fun activities for children. There can be found adventure labyrinths, slides, tunnels, obstacle courses, slides, ball pools, bouncy castle, pedal cars- and bikes, climbing wall and skill- and education games. A play area is separated for smaller children aged 0-4, meaning babies and toddlers. There is a café where to enjoy snacks and beverages whilst playing and adults can sit down for a cup of coffee and watch their children enjoying themselves. Birthdays and other venues are possible to be held at Touhutalo premises and they also offer babysitting services while adults go next door the Actilife gym. (Touhutalo)

Vesiveijari swimming hall is located near the city centre and is a complex of indoor and outdoor pools, gym and bowling alley. The swimming hall went through renovation a couple of years ago and is a great place for indoor water activities. During summertime the outdoor pool and slide is also available for visitors. In Vesiveijari it is possible to enjoy different kind of saunas and solarium. Children of all ages have been thought of, as they also offer baby swimming classes and have a pool for small toddlers. There is also a café which offers simple meals as well as ice cream and sweets. (Vesiveijari)

7.6 Neristan old town

Neristan, the old town of Kokkola is one of the best preserved wooden towns in the whole country. Luckily this area in the city centre was preserved from turning it into block buildings and its historical value was recognized. Historical diggings have taken place in the area when a building has been renovated and it has been shown that the area dates back centuries, for example the remains of a shipyard have been found. The city plan origins from the 15th century. Some museums and art galleries are located in the area, such as the K. H. Renlund's museum. Neristan offers the unique feeling of life during the old days and is a great attraction for walks during summertime. Some decoration and arts shops are located there and a restaurant and cafeteria add a culinary experience to the old town of Kokkola. (Kokkola 2014 p. Neristan)

7.7 Hotels in Kokkola

There are three bigger scale hotels in Kokkola and they are all located in the city centre. Hotel Kokkola is a part of the Best Western hotel chain and it has 73 hotel rooms, which all of them have air conditioning and a variety of facilities. Hotel Kokkola offers packages for sports clubs and families, for example a package which includes the stay of two adults and two children, extra beds, buffet breakfast and entrance to the swimming centre Vesiveijari. Finlandia Hotel Seurahuone is one of the oldest hotels in Finland as it has been operating as a hotel as well as a restaurant since 1894. When completed, the building with its six floors was the biggest building in Kokkola and had three restaurants, one for the working class in the basement. During the past decades the hotel has undergone several transformations and today most of the rooms have been renovated to meet the needs of business and holiday travelers. Hotel Seurahuone offers sauna and meeting facilities, restaurant services by bar Soolo and nightclub services by the lively nightclub Socis. Hotel Seurahuone offers packages during the biggest events in Kokkola, such as the Venetian festival in August. Original Sokos Hotel Kaarle is a homely hotel by the marketplace in Kokkola, just across from Hotel Seurahuone, and offers meeting facilities, saunas, restaurant services by restaurant Kaarle and Amarillo, nightclub services by Calle nightclub, which often plays live music by different artists. Hotel Kaarle sells party packages which include breakfast, entrance to Calle nightclub, guest sauna and accommodation in double rooms. (hotel Kokkola; hotel Seurahuone; hotel Kaarle)

7.8 Restaurants in Kokkola

Kokkola has plenty of dining choices from budget pizza and burger joints to the ala carte options available in restaurants and hotels. Also some food markets are organized where tourists can taste the freshness of local products produced nearby, such as fish products. Restaurants such as Rosso and pizzabuffet Rax can be found right among the shopping centre Chydenia. Amarillo and Pedrinás offer ala carte Mexican food with a children's menu possibility. These restaurants are

also child friendly, including Rosso, as they have a play area for children. For fine dining restaurant Wanha lyhty & Kellari and the Old town restaurant are the best choices. Tables are good to be booked in advance, especially during the weekends. During summertime Restaurant Mustakari is definitely worth visiting. It is located on a harbor and the scenery is a lovely experience accompanied with the high quality ala carte food. Most of the restaurants have a summer terrace where to enjoy a cold beverage while exploring the attractions of Kokkola. Amarillo terrace is very popular during the summer as it is located just by the marketplace which holds an evening market every Wednesday during the summer. (Kokkola 2014 q. restaurants)

8 A TOURSIM PRODUCT

According to Komppula and Boxberg, a tourism product consists of services provided by companies and other service providers. From a single service provider's point of view a tourism product is always based on the business idea of the company. The actual tourism product is combined from the basic products offered by companies which the tourist has agreed on and is ready to pay a certain price for the whole package. (Komppula & Boxberg 2002)

For the tourist the product is formed as a subjective experience, so the actual tourism company cannot produce tourism products on its own. The company is the one to create the preconditions for a tourism product to be formed. These preconditions can be described by a model formed of three components: the service concept, the service process and the service system. The service concept is the core idea, coming from the needs of the customer, whereas the service process defines the actions that must function perfectly that the service can be produced. The service system is formed of the resources which are needed that the service process is able to produce the service. The whole experience is created from the interaction of these components while the customer takes part on the creation process. A tourism product formed from these elements can be also called a tourism package. (Komppula & Boxberg 2002)

As a service provider it is important to see the tourism product as one concept which the tourist consumes, but on the other hand the provider must also be able to separate the part of the concept which he is in charge of. All parts must function accordingly as the tourist needs and desires them to. (Lackman & Verhelä 2003)

8.1 Creating a tourism product

A tourism product consists of several elements and all of them must be carefully designed and thought of. The process starts off by developing ideas. There are two basic features that need to be kept in mind during this process; the needs of the customer create the demand for a product and the ideas must be based on the

business idea of the companies. Best ideas often occur from the strengths of a certain city or an entrepreneur. Figure 2 demonstrates the features that have an impact on a tourism product.

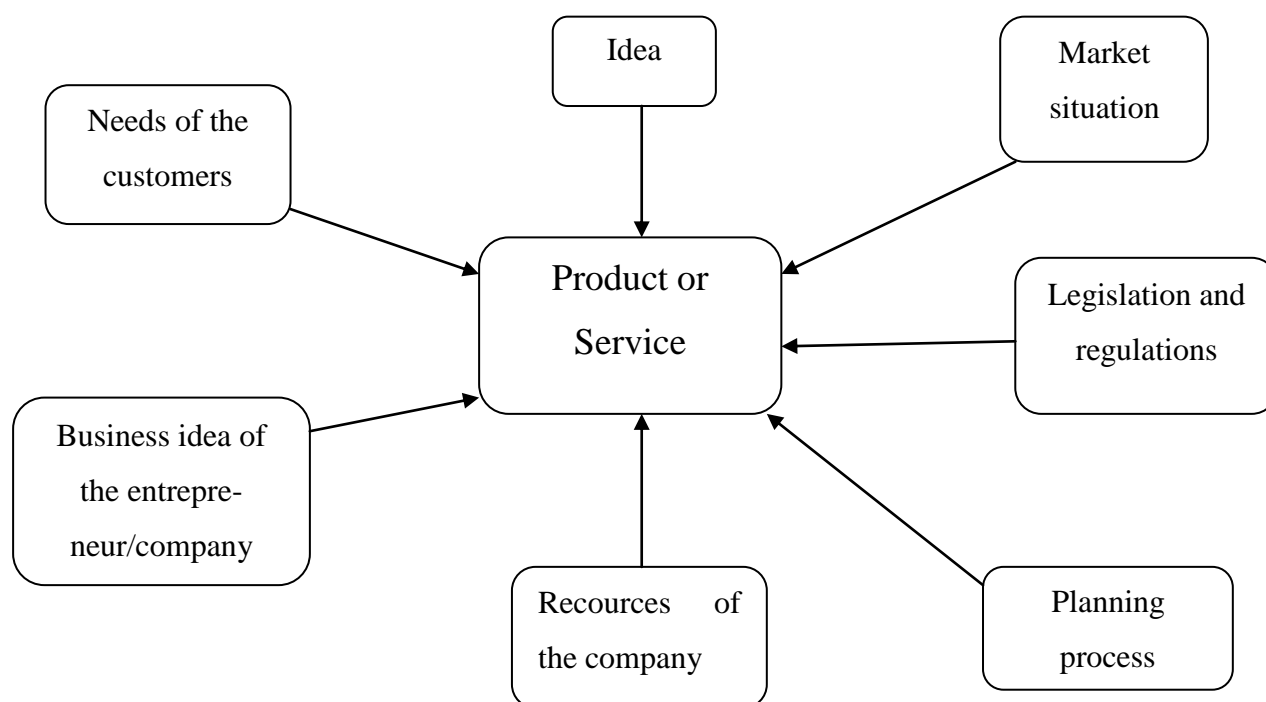


Figure2. The features that have an impact on a tourism product. (Lackman & Verhelä 2003)

After the idea has been developed it is time to think about the practical implementation of the product. Here the developers must consider what it is they want the customer to experience, see, do, and understand. The goals of the product must be thought of beforehand. At this stage the time features, seasonality and practical arrangements are taken into consideration. Some products work better during summertime and local regulations or safety measures might restrict some activities. Especially weather has an effect on nature related tourism products and their succeeding. Before marketing or implementing a new product, it must be tested with the customers so that all the possible flaws can be fixed. Once the testing and designing are completed, a description of the product can be formed. Documenta-

tion of all stages and parts of the product is important so that the most vulnerable stages can be pointed out to prevent flaws. This becomes even more important when the product is formed from services of several companies or entrepreneurs. At the end an informative label or card is made for the retailers and the staff of the companies. Here the details of the product are explained and all the information is easily accessible. This makes it easier for the staff to sell the product to potential customers. An informative card or brochure should include at least the following information:

- the name of the product and a description
- benefits to the customer and what it is for
- who it is for, what type of customers
- what is included in the product and its services
- distribution and accessibility
- price
- extra services
- customer feedback

(Lackman & Verhelä 2003)

9 THE PRODUCT- WEEKEND IN KOKKOLA FOR FAMILIES

Name of the product: Weekend in Kokkola

Who it is designed for: This package is designed for families with children wanting to explore the city of Kokkola over a weekend.

When: During the summer months, from June to August.

Price: 220e (2 adults + 2 children)

About the package: This package includes accommodation and buffet breakfast in a child friendly hotel in the city centre of Kokkola. It includes entrance to Vesiveijari Swimming centre or Toivosen Animal Park and the Peasant museum. It also includes tickets as well as a guided tour on the lighthouse island of Tankar. The hotel sauna is available for the use of the tourists both evenings and the hotel offers strawberries and champagne on the evening of arrival.

Where it is sold: This package is designed for Hotel Kokkola and Kokkola tourism Ltd. The package could be sold in both and recommended for families booking in to Hotel Kokkola.

Below is a plan for a weekend in Kokkola, which the customers can follow or take tips from it, as wanted. Most of the restaurants mentioned have a children's menu and a play area.

Day1. Friday

Arriving to Kokkola	by train or airplane (bus connections to Hotel Kokkola), by own car
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Hotel offers champagne for parents and sodas for children accompanied with fresh strawberries.	
Dinner at restaurant Rosso	Hotel Kokkola residents get a discount.
Walk around the surroundings of Suntti, city river.	Beautifully lit torches on the paths around the river.

Day2. Saturday

12:00 Departure of M/s Jenny to Tankar Island from Meripuisto Harbor	13:00 Arrival at Tankar Island
Short guided tour, coffee and lunch break at Café Tankar	
15:30 Departure of M/s Jenny to Meripuisto Harbor	17:00 Arrival at Meripuisto Harbor
Dinner at Pedrinas's tex mex restaurant	

Day3. Sunday

Play time in a nearby park	
Visit to Toivosen Animal Park or Vesiveijari	Depending on the age of the children/interests/weather.
Lunch at Mustakari Sea Restaurant or Waffle cafe.	Both have the possibility to dine outdoors.

10 CONCLUSIONS

During the writing process I was glad to realize that the topic was right for me. The theory was interesting and my previous studies turned out to be very helpful, although I remember that during some lectures I could not help wondering when I am ever going to need to know this kind of things. This was when, I was happy to work with something that I had already come across with during my studies.

I was anxious about how to combine all the areas of the work together, especially without a mandator, but in the end it all turned out well. Once I got into the routine of writing, it was easy to find time for it although I have a part time job and a one year-old son. At least I have some personal experience of being in Kokkola city centre during summertime with a child in a buggy.

I focused on the factors and attractions that would interest me if I was to travel to another town with my family. I tried to point out the best of Kokkola and made a product that would appeal to families on a summer vacation. The most challenging part in the process was the beginning, when to start and how. When coming closer to the end, I started to come up with new interesting topics I would like to write about. At some point I realized that I cannot write about everything as completing would become impossible. In the end I am satisfied with my work, I think I managed to point out the positive atmosphere in Kokkola and the many possibilities of the town. As a family it might be challenging to choose a domestic destination which is not that well known. This package is designed to combine all the goods of the city, features for a family to enjoy over a weekend. In my point of view Kokkola should promote itself as a family orientated city and all the attractions which make it unique and definitely a place worth visiting when looking for a get away with the family.

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