

DEVELOPMENT TRENDS OF THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY IN RURAL TOURISTIC AREAS OF SHARR MOUNTAIN

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Abstract

Tourism as a profitable industry every day needs to review new and functional methods for development. In this paper, we will present the trends that help the development of the hospitality industry in rural tourist areas, and the great opportunities for improving some types of tourism that are part of rural tourism.

To have a professional operation, we must develop the hospitality industry, which includes accommodation, restaurants, recreation, etc. The tourist infrastructure as a key element has the accommodation, representing the tourist offered by rural tourism development. In addition, the strategic plan of several subtypes of rural tourism in the tourist area of Sharr Mountain will be presented.

The main purpose of this scientific paper is to analyze all the trends in the development of the hospitality industry and the development of rural tourism, where based on them plans, strategies, and measures will be drawn up for the further development of rural tourism in Sharr Mountain.

Keywords: hospitality industry, development trends, rural tourism, infrastructure.

Introduction

Tourism as a profitable industry every day needs to review new and functional methods for development. In this paper, we will present the trends that help the development of the hospitality industry in rural tourist areas, and the great opportunities for improving some types of tourism that are part of rural tourism.

Hospitality also plays an important role in the tourism industry. The main task of hospitality is providing accommodation, food, and beverage services. Hospitality implies a business unit, which within a construction unit has a separate space with the necessary functionality for carrying out the activity. The classification of hospitality facilities is according to the appropriate way, namely: accommodation facilities such as: hotels, motels, hostels, tourist settlements, inns, resorts, holiday homes, etc., and food facilities such as: restaurants, cafes, etc.

The main tasks of rural development

‘Hospitality is an economic activity which organizes, provides and meets the needs of guests for overnight stays, food and beverages’¹

- To analyze the research basis of the issue of conditions and problems related to the hospitality industry and domestic tourism in rural territories;
- To consider rural territories of the Sharr Mountain in light of the development of the hospitality industry and domestic tourism;
- To define perspective newsworthy events, which can become a driver for rural tourism.

¹ Cerović, Z.: *Hotelski management*, Opatija; Fakultet za hotelski i turistički management, 2003.

The services that are the subject of hospitality activity have their specificities. The following are considered the most important of them²:

- In the hospitality industry, service distribution channels are much shorter than traditional, often direct ones. For example, consumers on the spot in restaurants, discos, pastry shops, and other establishments are waiting for the service to be delivered to them at that place;
- Consumers are part of the hospitality service offered. Employees in separate positions in tourism enterprises should always start from the fact that when offering the service, there is mutual interaction with consumers. That interaction between different groups of consumers should be in a way that will provide them with maximum satisfaction, for example, the person responsible for hotel accommodation should not the same time make reservations for high school students coming for a graduation celebration with a group of pensioners from abroad who are coming on vacation. For business guests, the restaurant manager should provide quieter and more discreet areas and they should be separated from other guests, etc.;
- In the process of creating and providing hospitality services, consumers are more involved, in many cases they are directly involved in the creation of the service. For example, when using the services in fast food restaurants;

One of the most important factors for business success in the tourism industry is the ability of hospitality management to research which services are most important to the consumer before purchasing them. We will highlight some of the services in the following table.

Table 1

Business entity	List of characteristics
Hotel	Price, room quality, restaurant quality, location, number and types of restaurants, other facilities (swimming pool, fitness center, solarium), hygiene conditions, staff friendliness, check-in and check-out speed, service quality, additional services (parking, room service)
Restaurant	Price, quality of service, quality of food, variety of menu, friendliness of staff, location, atmosphere, speed of service, hygiene

Observing the hospitality industry as part of the global tourism industry, several trends can be determined that today and are considered to have a strong impact on the development of this activity in the future³:

- A larger and more transparent offer on the global tourist market, which will lead to a decrease in the loyalty of buyers of these services;
- Consumers will become more sophisticated and will understand very well the value of hospitality services for the prices at which they are offered in the specific market and
- In hospitality, where the mass market is a thing of the past, the individual needs of the individual or a group of consumers will have an emphasized place.

In today's tourist market, hospitality facilities face a lot of competition, because we have a large number of accommodation facilities and restaurants that offer the same offer and are part of the same tourist market. Therefore, the role of the managers is that they should know the tourist

² Петкпва. А. Т., Метпдијски. Д., Цуцулески. Н., “Истражување на туристичкиот пазар”, 2016, Штип, стр.121

³ Петкпва. А. Т., Метпдијски. Д., Цуцулески. Н., “Истражување на туристичкиот пазар”, 2016, Штип, стр.123

market well and know where to place the offers. They should also know the potentials of individual market segments and the market legalities that should appear in the market. The services offered to tourists or guests include various guests such as: business guests, stationed tourists, newlyweds, and retirees. All these tourists have different wishes or needs, which the service providers should know and fulfill all their requirements.

In the tourist offer, hotels and other accommodation facilities represent an important element for a tourist destination. In hotels or accommodation facilities, tourists who stay, apart from accommodation, want to use other services in addition to food and drinks.

Development trends

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- To consider rural territories of the Sharr Mountain in the light of the development of the hospitality industry and domestic tourism;
- To define perspective newsworthy events, which are able to become a driver for rural tourism.

Rural tourism

One of the basic characteristics of rural tourism is related to the use of the original opportunities for local economic development and employment of family members by taking advantage of the advantages offered by rural areas.

Staying in fresh air in untouched nature, in small villages, the possibility to consume ecologically clean food, and direct contact with the host and local people, are advantages and at the same time differences compared to the mass tourism supply. Accommodated in tourist village farms, tourists can participate in the farm works (taking care of animals, fieldwork, etc.), preparation of traditional gourmet (meat, vegetable, fruit, and dairy) products, and oenological products (different types of wine, brandy, juice, etc.) which are typical for the tourist destination. The educative part of this kind of tourism is manifested in the opportunity for tourists to take part in different cultural workshops (learning folk dances and folk songs, making national dress, wooden products, etc.)

Sharr Mountain

In addition to other types of tourism on Sharr Mountain, there is the possibility of developing rural tourism. There is one definition for the term rural tourism that primarily refers to the rural area and the activities that the rural area enables.

In that sense, rural tourism means the temporary stay of tourists in a rural environment, which, in addition to the clean air and natural environment, allows tourists to actively participate in rural work (harvesting fruits, gathering hay, grazing cattle, etc.), but also participation in some festivities, religious customs and other manifestations⁴.

Other terms are used for rural tourism, such as: rural tourism, agritourism, tourism in rural families, etc. According to the World Tourism Organization (WTO), the basis for the development of rural tourism is natural resources (springs, rivers, mountains, forests), rural heritage (traditional architecture, mosques, churches), rural lifestyle (cuisine, local manifestations, way of living) and the activities that tourists can do in the rural area (fishing, hiking).

⁴ B., Vukonid, N., Čavlek, Rječnik turizma, Masmedia, Zagreb, 2001, str. 348.

In order for this type of tourism to develop, it is necessary for the locality to provide tourists with real premises in order to closely monitor how village life unfolds in rural areas. All over the world, this type of tourism is very developed, and in the part of the rural areas of the Tetovo Municipality there are opportunities for the development of this type of tourism, but the same should be organized by the Municipality through various tribunes and workshops. Tourists who like rural tourism adapt to the way of living in villages. Conditions for rural tourism are clean air, glacial lakes, rivers, cold springs, waterfalls, flora and fauna. This type of tourism offers relaxation and a walk-through beautiful meadow, getting to know a variety of plants, hunting, and many other fun activities in nature. We can say that in our country rural tourism is still not well-developed. The number of rural villages is 137, but all of them have different opportunities for the development of rural tourism, according to statistics, at an altitude above 1,000m in Sharr Mountain, 12,847 inhabitants live, and the total area located at this altitude is 795.0 km². This number shows us that tourism in this region, especially rural tourism, can be developed very well, but it is necessary for a part of the residents to engage, in fact, initially someone who is an expert in this area to inform the population, give them lectures-trainings, how they could profit from rural tourism and what will be their tasks for the realization of this type of tourism⁵. This type of tourism envisages tourists staying in village houses, eating home-cooked food, and engaging in the daily activities of the residents of this region. Based on this, we know that all Sharr Mountain villages have the opportunity to develop rural tourism because this type of tourism does not need modern infrastructure but the infrastructure built a long time ago, it is only necessary to improve the elementary living conditions, improve the educational structure of residents because we know that tourism requires adequate staff who must in some way be an animator to attract a larger number of tourists.

The goal of rural tourism is to adjust demand and supply, it is understood always without damaging the environment. Apart from the old infrastructure and homemade dishes, tourists also want to get to know folklore and various events.

We divide all these features or elements that we mentioned into two categories: internal and external. The internal ones include: household, agricultural land, the attractiveness of the location, the infrastructure, etc., and the external ones include the traffic connection, natural resources, nature conservation, and cultural heritage.

Plans and strategies

If we want to have a successful tourist destination we must put some strategies and plans during the development.

Plans

- To diversify and modernize rural tourism products to generate business opportunities suited to local environments and communities and to develop a year-round visitor offer.
- To increase consumer awareness, understanding and enjoyment of the products and experiences available in rural areas.
- To encourage rural communities and economies to benefit from the value of rural tourism by taking ownership of the development, management, protection and conservation of rural assets and locations.

⁵ Arta Kadriu, "Алтернативен туризам", 2020

Strategies

- Increase domestic tourism expenditure (revenue);
- Increase domestic tourism volume;
- Enhance measures and efforts aimed at addressing seasonality and equitable geographical spread; and
- Enhance the level of the culture of tourism/travel among Sharr Mountain

Conclusions

Rural communities in large part exist and will exist, regardless of the many different forms of their existence. Will they become more unified in the future - in which direction globalization could influence more in this respect - or so the need for diversity in social life and rural areas grow, depends on numerous and various factors, of course, and circumstances. In the field of agriculture and the activities related to it and in our country the technical and technological basis and social organization of agriculture are changing.

R. of North Macedonia needs to follow the positive examples of the countries and regional units that, through the development of rural tourism, encourage the development of overall economic and social relations.

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