

MARK ELEMENTS IN TOURISM PLANNING OF THE TRADITIONAL ROMANIAN VILLAGE

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Abstract: This paper presents the means to identify the directions needed to integrate the authenticity of the Romanian village in the touristic activity. The most adequate form of touristic structure holding the accommodation function is that of agro-touristic boarding house, where besides accommodation other services such as food mainly produced locally, or typical rural activities are ensured by the staff, which is basically made up of family members. The typology of agro-touristic boarding houses is dictated by various elements, easily identifiable on location, in such a manner that the print of specificity can remain visible all throughout the touristic act. With the elements and directions identified, setting up and branding things in the rural must ensure an acceptable trajectory.

Rezumat: Elementele de marcă în planificarea turismului în satul românesc tradițional. Articolul prezintă mijloacele de identificare a direcțiilor necesare pentru integrarea autenticității satului românesc în activitatea turistică. Cea mai adecvată formă de structură turistică cu funcție de cazare este pensiunea agro-turistică, în care pe lângă cazare sunt asigurate și alte servicii, cum sunt mâncare produsă pe loc sau activități tipic rurale, sunt oferite de personal, reprezentat, în principal, de membrii familiei. Tipologia pensiunilor agro-turistice se bazează pe elemente variate, ușor de identificat la fața locului, astfel încât amprenta specificității să rămână vizibilă în întregul act turistic. Pornind de la elementele și direcțiile identificate, demararea și certificarea elementelor turistice în rural se vor înscrie pe o traiectorie acceptabilă.

Key words: traditional Romanian village, rural touristic pension, traditional rural architecture, touristic motivation, materials commonly used

Cuvinte cheie: satul românesc tradițional, pensiune turistică rurală, arhitectură rurală tradițională, motivații turistice, materiale utilizate în general

1. INTRODUCTION

The idea of capitalizing the touristic potential of the traditional Romanian village has taken various forms during the last two decades, revealing a move away from the stated objective. In such circumstances the question arises of identifying ways in which traditional elements with a high degree of specificity can be included as part of proceeding of the touristic act strictly speaking.

The phase of consumption of a valuable tourism product can be achieved by performing a series of actions as follows

1. Study of the village
2. Elaboration of the tourism development strategy
3. Human resources training
4. Touristic fitting out of the village

5. Development of the touristic services and auxiliary services
6. Deployment of a program of tourism destination branding
7. Proceeding of the touristic act

Regarding the process of touristic fitting out of a traditional village, it begins with a series of landmark elements:

- a. Major forms of relief in which it is framed
- b. Localization from the point of view of circulation and relationships with the urban
- c. Traditional economical activities
- d. Constructed landscape and natural landscape
- e. Traditional rural architecture
- f. Local constructing materials
- g. Organization system and functioning of the farms
- h. Organization of the technological flux and agronomic products and handicrafts
- i. Community mentalities

These elements represent just starting points in the study of the characteristics of the Romanian traditional villages through which quantification, essentiality, and typology will be elaborated patterns of integrated touristic systems.

1. THE COMPONENTS OF RURAL TOURISTIC DEVELOPMENT IN ROMANIA

The accomplishment of the identification of the potential “pieces” which compose the touristic system of a village gives the possibility to elaborate a viable project because through knowing the compounds, each compound can be analyzed as both individually and in relationship with others. Thus, the process of development could be supported on the following pieces:

- structures with the function of tourist accommodation and food (guesthouses, cottages, local restaurants etc.);
- coordination and tourist information center. Located in central area, easily visible, being in constant liaison with hostels, craft workshops, tourist groups and tourist market. Equipment and latest technologies are indispensable to a higher level activity;
- operational team. It is represented by a leader and his team, with the role of transforming land into a touristic functional, flexible structure and focused on market applications of interest, but also to promote conservation and authenticity of local specificity. Together with the coordination and tourist information center, the operational team creates the operative system of rural villages;
- workshops and craftsmen;
- touristic attractions both natural and anthropic, such as material and spiritual, phenomenological, of action etc);
- guidance and signaling system (identification plates of attractions and tourism service providers, and information panels with maps and information, tourist routes bookmarks, guidance plaques placed in scenic points etc.);
- tourist trails marked and officially approved;

- touristic itinerary recommended for hiking routes. They differ from marked routes as the tourist receives a material with a route through the village, which includes attractions, landmarks distances and time;
- tourist transport services (cart, sled, horse, donkey, car, etc.). It is important to have some professional services 100% dedicated to tourism, the routes and destinations clearly specified, but also depending on demand;
- leisure facilities (horseback riding, rafting, hiking, skiing, gliding, paragliding etc.). The tourist who loves cultural aspects can get bored very quickly when he doesn't dispose of "breaking pace" (threshold condition) actions too;
- space for treatment and rest. In some villages they exist, and in other villages local spas can be arranged focused on local factors of cure;
- tourism and entertainment facilities for animation (along roads, in church, in the local people's houses, the tourist hostels, craft workshops, specially arranged public places - the show room, conference room, outdoor amphitheater and stage, mushroom dance, etc.);
- scenic points and routes;

All the above are exposed into two broad categories presented as major components that can affect each component mutually: public component and private component;

2. TYPES OF TOURISTIC RURAL PENSIONS BY THE DOMINANT ELEMENT OF TOURISTIC MOTIVATION

Rural touristic pension has emerged as a tourist reception structure appropriate to the situation in rural areas, focusing particularly on the recovery of local tourism resources, with high specificity and authenticity. The point of departure, valid today, was based on the fact that the "urban man", stressed by the living environment became more automated and artificial, he wanted to escape somewhere in his past, in a space touched by the progress of science in a small amount, but providing conditions of hygiene and comfort. Thus, entering in the lifestyle of the rural family, believed to be in certain regions of Romania still unaltered, subjected to an increased conservatism, is a serious option for the tourist. Moreover, rural tourism can develop a custom tourism product, located at the opposite side of the idea of "tourism industry", corresponding to a very busy and depersonalized tourism.

In Romania, the rural touristic pension is specific to areas within the urban or rural environment, but which still keep their rural features. Inappropriate use of terminology for identifying these types of tourist reception structures creates confusion among both providers and tourists or tour operators. Thus, it circulated in parallel, the terms of rural touristic pension and agro-touristic pension, without a clear distinction between the level of promotion or services provided. Clarifying of this issue emerges from the fact that the Romanian legislation in this field, the classification criteria, refer only to rural tourist pension term. Thus, an agro-touristic pension is actually a rural tourist hostel its main tourist services are generated by agricultural activity. Because the Romanian rural environment is not based in proportion of 100% just on agriculture, and many services offered are of different origin, their typology must be created, which is absolutely essential in the business of tourism development.

The rural pension specificity should result in regional location, location in territory, outside and inside architecture, organization of space, spatial components, the dominant landscape, key services, gastronomy, events, conducted activities etc. In other words, almost everything starts or is linked with activity of tourism development.

The ideas that support the work of design and realization of projects to build rural touristic pensions will be the main types and subtypes suitable to Romanian rural, noting that a combination of them is more viable:

a. Rural touristic pension – agro-turistic

There are pensions whose main services are generated by agricultural activities, may be specialized in different directions:

Agro-cultures. Most aspects of touristic pension must be linked to those main specifically cultures of the region or locality: cuisine, construction materials, design elements, layout annexes, primary processing plants and finished production, accessories, beverages, etc. For example, the plain regions are dominated by cereal crops, however in southeastern Transylvania and Bukovina potato is the most common.

Breeding of animals. A touristic pension focused on the breeding of horses for leisure must have stables, pens, walking trails, areas for taming horses, training tracks, facilities for courses for beginners, rental equipment, sports facilities and medieval equipment etc. It is the ideal place where tourists can identify with different warriors, knights and princesses. Also, traditional sheepfold adapted to tourism can be a touristic pension, both in summer mountain stage and in the spring dominated by Christian holidays and traditional rituals.

Fruits. What tourists expect from such a pension could be: landscape with orchards, traditional brandy boilers, fruit-based dishes, capturing the phases of the culture, soft drinks (juices, cider), and specific feasts. The plum and its derivatives could be the primary motivation for a pension from Oas Country or the peaches and apricots for the villages of Dobrogea.

Vineyard. As reference elements can be observed: the landscape of vineyard or wine storage facilities, wineries, wine tasting rooms, wine museums, specific festivals, proper cooking for wines, cuisine based on vine (duck with grapes), cellars, architecture, winemaking procedures, demonstration of quality, past events, meals, focusing on products from the vineyard etc.

b. Rural touristic pensions - crafts

Practicing a craft (traditional or not) at a touristic pension can lead to generating a full set of services to tourists. The spaces designed to run courses for tourists or for conducting demonstrations may give a note of specificity of the touristic pension and its transformation into a touristic brand. Among the traditional crafts in rural Romania areas, one must mention: the wood and stone carving, pottery, traditional blacksmithing, homemade hats, the fur industry, traditional spinning and weaving, making traditional costumes, textiles painting in vegetable and mineral colors, weaving various materials, carpentry, traditional distillery, manufacture of sackcloth, water mills or wind, painting icons on wood and glass, decorating eggs, making stoves of stone slabs, the traditional home construction, the manufacture of lime and charcoal etc.

c. Rural touristic pensions – gourmet

It represents rural pensions renowned for high quality of cuisine, traditional dishes based on regional or international cuisine. In this regard, it can be mentioned without any restraint the "Bella" pension (called "Doina" after the owners) in Maramures.

d. Rural touristic pensions – architectural

The strength is represented by the concentration of the architectural elements specific to the area where the pension is located. In addition, the organization of spaces and their functionality must complete the appearance. It is the type of pension to which can be successfully added many other facets of the subject, probably the cornerstone from which to start developing a personalized concept of rural tourism. In Maramures, Borlean Pension from Vadu Iza it is framed in the idea mentioned above.

e. Rural touristic pensions – animated

There are pensions designed particularly for the development of tourist numbers and animation for entertainment or engaging in leisure activities. The purpose of a pension of this type is to create psychological comfort for tourists by inducing positive moods and emotions. Traditional music and dance, staging of customs and traditions are just a few elements that target emerging services.

f. Rural touristic pensions – feast

Touristic destinations generated by the manifestation of an event generated by human or natural phenomenon and touristic pensions often have focused on providing touristic services or taking-over the surplus structures of high level. The "Girls Fair Festival" from Găina Mountain or religious pilgrimages can constitute motivations in this regard. The problem is related to finding alternatives for touristic reasons outside the event period.

g. Rural touristic pensions – objective pensions

Existence in a village of a touristic attraction element belonging to the category of national or international brands, almost always determines the occurrence of accommodation and dining places such as touristic pensions. The economical exploitation of touristic brands is the basic idea on which their coming into being resides. The best examples are the pensions built near the monasteries in Bucovina, the "Merry" Cemetery in Săpânța, the Barsana Monastery, and near Bran castle etc.

Capitalization of traditional architectural elements of the region in order to set up a touristic pension should consider the following aspects:

- an old traditional house is very difficult to turn into touristic pension without a restructuring, because it could not have certain facilities under the classification criteria;
- households with specific architecture of the region may belong to different periods of time, with different appearances;

In Maramures there are specific, depending on the time of their completion, several alternatives:

- unicellular wooden house covered with shingle
- bicelullar wooden house covered with shingle
- house of brick and roof covered with asbestos (very common today)

3. ELEMENTS OF SPECIFICITY DICTATED BY TRADITIONAL RURAL ARCHITECTURE

The enhancing of the specific Romanian traditional village at the architecture level emerges from the analyze of the following aspects:

a. Materials commonly used

Since the first view of the roofs and fences made of reeds and cane, almost anyone can say that it is a delta area, the flood plain of a river, the shore of a lake or a swamp. In such circumstances non-use of these materials in the construction of tourist pensions in the Danube Delta, would be the evidence of lack of professionalism. The presence of cereal straw, hay and ferns covering the ethnographic houses corresponds to clearly identified areas in Romania (Apuseni Mountains, Land of Oas, etc.). Instead, in the villages of Maramureş Land, traditional houses are made of 100% of oak or pine, and the foundation is from stone. In Oltenia, the walls of traditional houses are from stone, as well as the Transylvanian Saxon households. In Bukovina, but also in the East Maramures (Borsa, Moisei localities, extending even to Ieud), traditional wooden houses on the exterior walls are clad with shingles. The combination of wood and stone gives the rustic look, even when they do not reflect a specific region.

To meet the conditions required for business travel comfort, using certain types of building materials is more important in terms of visibility. Thus, a wall thermally insulated on the outside with expanded polystyrene or extruded, can be easily painted to resemble the traditional houses painted with clay. Also, a roof clad with shingles (shingle in Maramureş) may be insulated underneath with polyethylene foil and wool.

The appropriate choice of building materials for the visible part of the traditional tourist pension are a required condition.

b. The frequency of color

It is well known that at the area level and sometimes at the village level, people have a predisposition to use certain colors, some from far away and others more recent. Earlier in the Maramureş and Oaş "lands", wooden houses which were coated on the outside were painted blue ("clear") and white. In Bucovina, traditional houses are painted yellow and green, but there are also areas in brown and white. In Putna, wooden portals are painted gray. In Săpânţa, the specific color is blue, called by some inhabitants of Maramureş even the "blue of Săpânţa," presented on old houses, on the crosses in the "Happy" Cemetery and a few pieces of clothing (the traditional male vest). Nowadays, Maramureş can also be easily identified by the colors red and black, due to the disposing in horizontal alternating stripes from the traditional female apron folk costume.

c. Ornamentation

Although there are wooden portals in several regions of Romania, ornaments carved on some portals of Maramures are unique (especially the twisted rope and the sun). Also, the rhomboid patterns on the Bucovina house facades give a note of specificity. There are areas in the Western Plain where the houses have decorations on the exterior walls with models applied by the rollers.

d. Silhouette/ proportions of buildings

There are the outline elements of human structure that succeed, without other supporting aspects to identify a particular location or architectural style. For example, houses and traditional wooden churches of Maramureş are easy to identify by their

silhouettes. For a house, the height ratio between the walls and the roof is 1 to 3 or 1 to 4. It is well known that from north to south, from Maramureș to the Mediterranean region, but also from mountain to the plain, the roofs are becoming flatter because of the reduction in the amount of precipitations. The silhouette of the facades of Saxon villages, of traditional houses from Oltenia, of the „brâncovenesc” style houses from Mușcel areas or of the houses in the Apuseni Mountains betrays their identity.

e. Organization and use of space

The layout of the house and annexes in a traditional household is another aspect that can give the note of specificity to a rural tourist pension. The modality of use of agricultural land along the time has created landscapes that overlap with the region where they are. This is the case of agro-terraces on the steep slopes of the hills of the upper basin of Iza (Săcel, Salistea de Sus, Ieud etc.). The issues presented, alongside many other elements of rural areas can be studied and exploited in the building of rural touristic pensions with a specific tradition. It can be mentioned as well: the architectural style, specific crops, configuration of the villages, basic household occupations, folk music and dances, crafts, etc.

CONCLUSION

The traditional village as location for tourism activities is often seen as a universal panacea for the local development projects. Valorizing the elements that mark a certain identity is not a new idea. The important issue is to bring in a planning strategy that does not interfere with the cultural heritage of Romanian villages, by giving some practical solutions to local actors.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This paper/presentation is based on the research conducted in the PNCDII Partnership 4 project SISAT 91-032/2007.

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