OPTIONS FOR RESHAPING BOCŞA’S INTER-WAR TOURISTIC BRAND

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ABSTRACT Our approach aims to provide a historical and chronological outline on the evolution, over centuries, of the three communities that form the present Bocşa. Therefore, we focused on the spa status that Bocşa Montană acquired during ante and inter-war period. Thus, there are presented the most important leisure tourist sights which were used until mid-twentieth century, well-known local tourist routes, promenade area ‘Izvor’ set up by StEG and UDR, the network of local tourist units. Given the World Bank report on West Region (2011), West Region Development Strategy between 2014-2020 and the Development Strategy of BOCŞA (2014-2020) we assume that one of the most important axis of local and regional development in the next six years is tourism. Hence, in terms of tourism Bocşa aims to become the ‘gateway’ in the mountainous tourism. To sum up, in the final part of our study we stressed the need to regain the inter-war tourist brand by reopening the local tourist niches, such as ecumenical tourism (monastery and churches within the locality) industrial tourism (“iron” road, - Bocşa – Ocna de Fier), cultural tourism (“Constantin Lucaci” and “Constantin Gruescu” museum), leisure tourism (local pensions’ system). Our comparative study proposes an update and a recall of tourist traditions within Bocşa’s communities, a summary of prewar and interwar tourism and, in this way, a projective foundation of Bocşa’s development strategy, through the tourist offer in perspective of 2020s, recognizing that it is a reliable source to increase the quality of community life. The methodology of our approach presents a synthetic and interdisciplinary perspective - history and geography - focusing on tourism comparative method on two different historical periods, focusing on the synthesis on the invoice historical and geographical data in order to grasp the essential in Bocşa’s historic becoming.

Keywords: ante and inter-war period, development strategy, cultural tourism, leisure tourism, sights, gateway, ecumenical tourism

1.1. GEOGRAPHIC AND HISTORIC MILESTONES

To approach the evolutive dimensions related to the touristic geography of the town of Bocşa means to engage in a brief initial review of the most relevant local geographic
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characteristics and of the most relevant local geographic features, as well as the most representative events in the town’s historical development. From this essentialised excursion we may remark the diversity of the town habitat’s natural frame; surely the beginnings of its urban modernisation is due to the pre- and inter-war industrialisation, and the preoccupations for the support of the local tourism development.

- Situated in a hilly area, the town of Bocșa is 20 kms long and has a surface of around 675. 9 ha representing the locality’s intra muros zone, surface preponderantly occupied by dwellings built from the citizens’ funds, as well as three districts with block of flats;

- The town is located along the middle course of Bârzava river, in its meadow and along the valleys flowing into this river (the Țirâși, Valea Mare and Moravița creeks). The annual average debit calculated for the Bârzava river is of 3.89 m³;

- The locality lies 80 kms away from Timișoara and 18 kms away from Reșița, being situated north of parallel 45°, the geographic co-ordinates of this dwelling ranging between 21°45′ east latitude and 45°22′ north longitude;

- In general, Bocșa is surrounded by massifs and sub-Carpathian hills to the north and south. Among them, the most important is Mount Areniș, situated to the north, with the Areniș peak (551 m), and the south-western side, i.e. the Biniș-Doclin area, is geographically represented by low hills (the most renowned height being Cracul de Aur / the Golden Leg); toward the west, the height lowers down into the Banat Plain;

- The annual average air temperature in Bocșa is +10.3° C, and the average annual quantities of precipitations range between 700-800 l/m²;

- The influence of the Mediterranean climate triggered the adaptation of certain species of the locality, such as: magnolias, figs, lemon trees, oleanders, cacti, and plane trees. The vegetation is diversified, and the hardwood forests are dominant (oak, linden and hornbeam trees).

- Until 1943 there were three “Bocșa” communes, i.e. Bocșa Montană (Mountainous Bocșa), Vasiova and Bocșa Română (Romanian Bocșa), and that year the first two communes united, forming Bocșa Vasiovei; as a result of the application of Law no. of 31 XII 1960, Bocșa Vasiovei was merged with Bocșa Română, forming today’s Bocșa.

- The Bocșa Depression is represented by traces of material civilisations dating from the Neolithic Era, as well as the Bronze and Iron Eeras (Colțan, the perimeter between Bocșa Română and Rama, Godinovei Valley etc.);

- The Roman continuity of the area may be illustrated by the exploitation of the gold ores at Cracul de Aur in the Moravița Mountains, proved by the discovery of a 119 silver coin deposit;

- At the beginning of the Middle Ages, Bocșa was part of the Cuiești district, with the administrative centre at the “Buza Turcului” Fortress;

- The first documentary attestation of Bocșa was in the year 1331, the locality being mentioned in a papal taxation document;

- The disappearance of the Cuiești district as form of Romanian administrative organisation took place at the end of the 14th century and the beginning of the 15th century. In the 16th century, the city changed its name, being mentioned as Bocșa since that moment;

- The first documentary attestation of Vasiova was recorded in the year 1437;

- Bocșa Română is documentarily attested for the first time in 1595;
Between 1552 and 1555, the city of Bocșa was under Ottoman ruling, being directly subordinated to the Timișoara “beglerbeg” (Turkish leader). After successive rulings of the city by the Turks, Austrians and Transylvanian Hungarians, in 1695 the fortress of Bocșa was definitively destroyed by the Austrians;

- The year 1719 represents the year of the metallurgy beginnings in Bocșa (the first furnace for copper and iron ore melting at Neuwerk, erected by the foreman Friedrich Freiberg);
- In 1722 – a tree-hammer forge is built at Bocșa Montană, and another two-hammer forge at Altwerk;
- In 1725 the first iron ore melting furnace and the first forge are built at Bocșa Montană;
- 1737-1739 – the anti-Habsburg uprising in the Mountainous Banat also reached the Bocșa community. At that time one destroyed the metallurgical furnaces at Altwerk and Florianwerk, and the local Romanians allied with the Ottoman troops;
- Between 1767-1770 – building of the first furnace at Bocșa Montană; 1780 – building of another two furnaces and two forges at Bocșa Montană;
- In 1772 one sets the territorial and industrial exploitation borders separating Altwerk, Neuwerk and Florianwerk;
- In 1780, Maria Teresa finalises the building works of a sanatorium for pulmonary illnesses, due to the curing properties of the air at Bocșa Montană;
- 1825 – creation of the Kohldorf colony and of the Măgura district;
- 1848-1849 – the revolutionary events found the Bocșa population allied with the Hussars of Major Ludovic Asboti against the border troops led by the Austrian general Appel. The revolution was defeated on the 25th of December 1848 at the Little Bridge and Vasiova barricade;
- 1850 – from the perspective of imperial industrial administration, Bocșa comprised five communities: Florian or Hauptwerk, Nepomuk or Neuwerk, Altwerk, Kohldorf (the coalmakers’ village), and Măgura;
- 1855 – SteG takes over the Metallurgical Works at Bocșa;
- 1865 – opening of the works at the Eruga and the Bichiștin channels;
- 1865-1869 – building of two new modern furnaces at Bocșa Montană;
- At 1870, SteG sets up a leisure area at Bründl (a restaurant, a Swiss-style shooting stand, the “Paradise” pool, and a pond for carp fishing);
- The first railroad was the section opened between Voiteg and Vasiova – 6th of September 1874. The first section was opened in 1892 between Vasiova and Reșița.
- 1880 – the architect A. Diaconovici finalises the building works of the Savings Bank at Bocșa Montană;
- 1896 – closing of the Metallurgical Works of Bocșa, especially of the high furnace at Bocșa Montană;
- 1898 – finalisation of the works at the first hydro power plant at Bocșa Montană;
- 1898 – SteG builds the Farming Tools Factory at Bocșa Română, which will extend and diversify the production to become the most important economic agent for 100 years in the Bocșa area. Along time, it will bear several names more precisely: I.C.M.M.A., U.C.M.M.A., U.C.M.B., I.C.M.B., C.M.B.-SA;
- 1910 – street public electrification of two sections at Bocșa Montană and Vasiova
● 1911 – opening of the Credit Bank and Post Office in the location of today’s Town Hall;
● On the 24th November, the Local Romanian National Council elected the delegates of the Bocșa Electoral Circle who represented Bocșa’s inhabitants at the 1st of December 1918 at the Alba-Iulia Assembly. On the occasion of the Great Union, the three Bocșa communities were represented by 19 full and suppleant delegates;
● 1927 – Michael Francisc Weber modernises the grinding technology at Bocșa Română by the installation of a Deutz engine of German manufacture;
● In 1931, by a decision of the Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Protection, Bocșa Montană is declared a climacteric resort and spa;
● 1935 – the workers at the Farming Machines Factory voluntarily erected the Workers’ House building at Bocșa Română;
● 1936 – Bocșa Montană becomes a district administrative centre, the headquarters of a Circuit Court and two deaneries (one Greek-Catholic and the other Orthodox);
● During the inter-war period, Bocșa Montană had a city-like aspect, with three restaurants (Lupu, Becker, Unirea), the “Cerbul de Aur” Hotel, several guesthouses, The Chamber of Credit and the Post Office.
● 1954 – the Bocșa Mining Enterprise is created;
● 1961 – one builds a station for washing and sorting ferrous and non-ferrous ores;
● 1968-1982 – the construction of the Nufărul dwelling complex (MFA)
● 1972 – I. C. M. B. is endowed with a modern Oxygen Factory;
● 1970-1982 – creation of the Agroindustrial Complex by building poultry farms and rabbit farms on the Biniș Road and in Groza Valley.
● If the inter-war period Bocșa was well represented in the banking system (Saving Bank, Chamber of Credit etc.), in the Communist period the banking system was reduced to only one CEC branch. At present, Bocșa is represented by the following banking institutions: the Transylvania Bank, BCR, BRD, Reiffeisen Bank, CEC Bank.


1.2. BOCȘA'S PRE- AND INTER- WAR TOURISTIC HORIZONS

The attempts to shape the contemporary Bocșa’s touristic offer, as well as its development prospects make us return to the recent historic past of this locality and briefly present its defining features of cure and climate resort, acquired by the mountainous local
community both in the Austrian-Hungarian period and in the first decades of the 20th century. Even since the beginning of the 19th century, Bocșa Germană (German Bocșa) had the outline of a spa-town or resort, the urbanism note being brought about by the local industrial development, the investments made in the area by the mountainous aerarium and praetorial administration in the locality: “Bocșa Germană hosts the headquarters of the circuit court bearing its name (until 1952, when it was closed, our note.). It has a financial office, post and telegraph office, saving bank, choir society, union of voluntary firemen, casino, miners’ orchestra, hospital, social insurance. It is a small town with pleasant aspect, located on in a natural beauty scenery that makes it exceptionally attractive … Its houses are clean, two-storeyed downtown, the streets are regular and planted with rows of acacias”2. Such appreciations were made in 1805. The elements of urban civilisation are even more accentuated at Bocșa Germană, so that in 1847 the locality had the aspect of an extremely clean town, with a sort of “pharmacy” scent. Here, the mining administration arranged a promenade and leisure area, called “Izvoraș” / Little Spring (Bründl), where in 1870 the StEG built a restaurant, and near it a Swiss-style shooting ground3.

The elements of urban civilisation became more and more accentuated in the last decades of the 19th century. Thus, in 1880 one finalised the building works at the Savings Bank, building designed and executed by the engineer architect A. Diaconovici. In 1911 they finished the building works of the Credit Bank and Post Office, today’s Town Hall (patrimony asset), with the original façade inscription, and the building avant-garde was initially represented by a statue group symbolising the Hungarian revolutionaries fallen in the 1848 Revolution. In 1920 the monument was removed and replaced by the statue of the “Anonymous Soldier” (patrimony monument) executed by the sculptor Tiberiu Bottlik.

In 1936, Bocșa Montană had already become the district capital, the headquarters of a circuit court and two bishopries, one Orthodox and the other Greek-Catholic, being also an important economic and cultural centre. Due to its picturesque location on the banks of the Bârzava river, surrounded by sub-Carpathian hills covered in century-old hardwood forests, the commune was considered a resort or spa even since the period of the Austrian-Hungarian dualism (the first sanatorium for lung diseases treatment was built as back as during Empress Maria Teresa’s reign, more precisely in 1780; on the old location the Welicek Compound was erected in the inter-war period).

Due to the air healing properties, grace to the existence in the area of a hardwood forest area and remarkable touristic tracks, modernisations executed by StEG and UDR at a leisure compound in the Izvoras area, the functional hotel and restaurant in the locality, the Welicek Sanatorium, Bocșa Montană was declared a climate spa resort by a decision of the Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Protection, no. 46.713 of 25th of July 1931. In this respect, we should remind the inter-war “perfume” of the “Paradise” restaurant and pool, with a modern architecture for those times, comprising a terrace, a tennis court, a bowling alley, rose garden and carp fishery. The promenade place was in the same zone, with plane and linden tree alleys, a beach setup by de U.D.R.. A little higher there was the “Maere”plateau, surrounded by a forest rich in oak, beech, linden and hornbeam trees. At around 3-4 kms from “Bocșa-Izvor / Spring” one reached the place called “Vârtoape”, owned by U.D.R., with two lakes for carp breeding, after taking the road through valleys

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2 Haupt, H., 1999, p. 75
3 Breudel, G., Temeswärer Zeitung, 1870, p. 4.
and hills covered in haradwood forests producing a “strong” air, beneficial for lung illnesses. Other touristic itineraries of the period could be organised towards the “Medreșului Valley”, “Calvary Chapel”, “Smida”, “Măgura” and especially “Buza Turcului”, where we can still see the vestiges of the old Bocșa citadel.

In the locality, touristic services were relatively well represented, as there were, operating at full capacity, a hotel (“Cerbul de Aur / Golden Deer”), three restaurants („Becker”, „Cucu”, „Unirea”), as well as numerous private guesthouses at the disposal of visitors. As we have already mentioned, there was, at Bocșa Montană, a recreation and healthcare compound, “Dr. Welicsek Sanatorium”, with modern installations, setup for hydrotherapy and altitude air cure, after the model of Dr. Lahmann Sanatorium in Dresden. The Bocșa Resort benefited from a prompt information service, called the “Local Office for Cure and Tourism”.

1.3. BOCȘA'S PRESENT TOURISTIC OFFER – PROSPECTS OF EVOLUTION

The successive waves of colonisations ordered by the Vienna Chancery and then by Hungarian landowners determined the cohabitation of Orthodox cult institutions with the Reformed, Roman-Catholic, Greek-Catholic and Mosaic churches in Bocșa’s localities. The Bocșa communes, in their industrial development, were affected by three waves of colonists: 1718-1780, 1801-1850 (during these two stages most colonists came from Styria), and the third stage, predominantly Hungarian, took place between the last decades of the 19th century and the first decade of the 20th century. The autochthonous Romanians’ cohabitation with these ethnic groups generated, among others, the erection of places of worship which, at present, are listed among the touristic sights, being declared patrimony assets.

We shall continue by enumerating, in a chronological sequence, the erection of local religious monuments: 1726 – end of building works at the Bocșa Montană Roman-Catholic Church in its first form. The present sanctuary was built in 1756 – and is a patrimony historical asset; in 1773 the Roman-Catholic priest Iosef Ermann erected the Calvary Chapel, on a slope in the eastern part of Bocșa Montana, significantly affected by the 1848 Revolution, today it is a historical monument; 1751 – the construction of the first Orthodox church at Bocșa Română. The parish has 680 church-goers – and it is also a patrimony historical monument; in 1783 they finalised the construction works of the Roman-Catholic Church at Neuwerk dedicated to Saint Nepomuk – a patrimony historical monument; 1798 – end of the building works at the Bocșa Montană Orthodox Church. Today’s congregation has 848 active members – this is also a historical patrimony monument; 1803 – they finished the construction of the Vasiova Orthodox Church, with 994 church-goers at the moment – a historical patrimony monument; 1843 – inauguration of the Greek-Catholic Church at Bocșa Montană – also a patrimony historical monument; the Monastery St. Ilie Tesviteanul (St. Elijah of Tesvitea) was built between 1905-1907 – and is today a patrimony historical monument; the Roman Bocșa Română -Catholic Church was built between 1920-1928 – a patrimony historical monument in its turn; the Reformed Church at Bocșa Montană, a

4 Grădinaru, E., Udrea-Stoia I., 1936, op. cit, p. 64-69.
5 Ibidem, p. 42; Kakerda, F., in Fruncea, III, no. 24, from 4th July 1936; Păsărică I., 1936, p. 79-82.
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Reşiţa subsidiary, was built between 1937-1938 – and is today a patrimony historical monument⁶.

The Severinul newspaper informed the readers on the 31st of May 1908 that a limestone factory was being built at Coțan which was to use the electrical energy for the internal lighting and in the limestone burning technology. In 1910, the same newspaper announced that the Praeture of Bocşa Montană and the mayor’s office of the three Bocşa communes decided to conclude a contract of electric power assignment, after the mounting of street public lighting on the main axes of these localities.⁷ The Eruga channel served the metallurgic works at Bocşa Montană, especially the furnaces, by producing mechanical energy in the period 1865-1898, when the Francis turbine of the hydroelectric power plant in the locality was put into operation. The three Bocşa Town Halls each concluded a contract with a firm of Kikinda Mare for the setup of a street electrical network for household and public lighting. The contract was signed on the 8th of May 1910 for a 50-year period. Following the execution of works by the co-owners Arthur Revesz and Carol Molnar, Bocşa Montană became the second rural commune in the Romanian area to benefit from street public lighting⁸. The hydroelectric power plant in the proximity of Bocşa Montană Station, together with the Eruga channel, may be considered touristic monuments of national and universal interest. The same category may be completed by the loading tower, built in 1868, at that time the newest special technology construction in the Austrian-Hungarian Empire. Since 2013, the Bocşa Town Hall has proceeded to the elaboration of a feasibility survey related to the opening of declogging works of the Eruga channel, reopening of hydroelectric power plant downstream the location of the former plant, transformation of the old hydroelectric installation into a museum destined to cultural events; the same endeavours are made in relation with the loading tower in the premises of the former metallurgic works at Bocşa Montană.

Somewhere near Bocşa Română’s west extremity, close to the Bârzava river, on a surface plane like a plateau, we would encounter, at the end of the 19th century, a small mill owned by the Weber family. They were enterprising Jews, speaking German and Hungarian, with a sense for business and erection of buildings and premises able to resist time. The last descendant, Michael Weber, also with the entrepreneurship vocation, was in charge with the mill management until 1948, when it was nationalised. In 1927, on the frame of the old mill he built another one, modern for his times, giving up the grinding technology with stones driven by the force of the water flowing down a channel detached from the Bârzava river. In the first stage, he rearranged the channel, widened and deepened it and cemented its banks so that the water debit could be appreciable. He installed, for this purpose, a shaft mill driven by a huge engine, fed by gas oil, imported from Hungary, engine manufactured by the famous German company Deutz. The installation of this motor and the putting into operation of the new grinding installation was done on the 8th of June 1927, reason why that day was annually commemorated by the Webers by a rustic celebration. The flour obtained here was of high quality, the miller acquiring a true blazon in time, and thus in the mill premises one could see, in the inter-war period, a lot of cereal sacks brought in from Berzovia or Comorâşte, from Reşiţa or Caraşova etc.⁹ At present, this touristic sight is in a

⁶ Jurma Gh., Petrica V., op. cit, pp. 112-181.
⁹ Vişan, M., Crecean, D., op. cit., p. 145-146.
deplorable state of degradation, caused by the successive thefts of materials from the building strength structure beginning with 1997.

Another historical monument representative for the town of Bocşa is the Cuiești citadel, whose beginnings may be found in the early feudalism, fortress that proves the documentary first record of today’s town. The Cuiești fortress, an important medieval royal defensive city in southern Banat, is located in the northern section of the town, to the right of the present Vasiova district, fortress erected on a 125 m height over the Bârzava river. Situated on a promontory of the "Buza Turcului" hill, the Cuiești city was the headquarteres of a polygonal plan castle of a Romanian noble family. However the proper beginning of the construction still remain unknown. It is absolutely certain that this citadel, like others with defensive role in the proximity of the Bârzava river, were erected in the period of the Roman rule, being later on rebuilt by the autochthonous Romanians to serve as headquarters for the local rulers. The Cuiești royal citadel has the administrative and political headquarters of the district, being built according to a plan adapted to the terrain on which it was located. Thus, the walls of the city had the shape of an irregular polygonal, with interior diameters measured on the main axes of 29 and 32 meters. Behind the northern side, the polygonal was endowed with a square-plane interior tower, with 4.30-4.50 m interior dimensions, with the role of gate tower. The inner wall was better kept on the northern side, the rest being destroyed almost in totality. The 1.70 m thickness of the inner wall was thicker to the corners, where it reached 3 m. To the north east, in the vicinity of the gate tower, there was a second interior tower, of which we can see now only part of the two-level access stairs, tower which had the role of a dungeon. In the north-east corner we find now a 5/4 hole, resulted from the fortress destruction in 1595. Located on a promontory, the north and north-east sides were fortified by a defence ditch, 15-20 m wide and around 4 m deep. In the middle of the defence ditch one can still see a building pillar which used to support the access bridge to the city. All these specific elements at Buza Turcului confer it the typological and structural characteristics of the walling fortifications dating from the 13th – 14th century.

Among the touristic service-providing facilities, the post-December Bocșa, grace to its attractive natural scenery, are well represented by a series of older economic agents, but modernised to the EU standards, and by another series of hotel facilities erected in the last period. The facilities for tourists in the Bocșa area are: the “Stejarul” guesthouse, “Alyin” guesthouse, “Izvor” motel, the “Nufărul” and the “Insomnia” guesthouse. The “Alyn” guesthouse, the most recent construction with touristic specificity in the locality, is located at 10, Dacia street, in the vicinity of the Reșița-Timișoara national road. Situated in a villa district, in former Bichiștin, having the low end of Dognecea Mountains in the background, the 3-star guesthouse provides accommodation and meals to tourists or locals, and can host conference and cultural or business symposiums. The construction started in August 2007, and the official opening was in May 2011. The guesthouse, a svelte construction erected on a total surface of 960 m², has a restaurant with 80-100 places, a conference hall with around 50-60 places, 12 accommodation rooms (a mini apartment, two

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matrimonial double rooms and two double rooms, all with TV, fax, Internet etc.) and a terrace with 50-60 places.

The “Izvor” motel on the same street is located in the proximity of the Bârzava river dam, in a hilly area where the hardwood and softwood forests perfectly coexist, and here the agreeable sub-Mediterranean climate favours the development of a rich fauna and flora. The building was erected in 1973 and was in the property of Federal Coop. Reduced to an advanced stage of physical deterioriation, it was purchased by the Szilagyi family, and since then the building has undergone successive investments and renovations in the past 20 years, and thus the 2-star motel-guest house offers now excellent conditions for leisure spending and recreation to foreign and Romanian tourists. The touristic compound comprises: a restaurant with the capacity of 90 places, a wing with accommodation rooms, where on the ground floor we find 3 double rooms and two apartment, and the attic has triple rooms and a room with four beds, all with cable TV, TV set, Internet etc. The entire building is heated in cold season by a thermal central with pellets. Moreover, the guesthouse also has a dance floor terrace and a multifunctional sports ground. One can organise here events such as coming of age, birthday parties, wedding and baptism receptions, school banquets etc. In general, the tourists are locals, employees of firms from the locality, but also Serbians, Dutch and Austrians. The location of this touristic facility offers the possibility of taking hikes toward Lake Vârtoape and the Colțan Neolithic site.

The “Nufărul” guesthouse is located at the foot of the peri-mountainous hills Medreșul Mare (372 m), on a creek like a narrow depression, in the vicinity of Lake Medreș. It is a modern and elegant construction open to local and international tourism. Its owner, Emanuel Dănilă, succeeded in earning a good name in the sector of services providing with this 3-star guesthouse located in a space he owned, in surface of 8,000 m². Officially, the guesthouse was opened at the end of 2007 under the form of a touristic compound made of a central wing, a terrace with numerous promenade ways in the entire facility, an inner pool, a lake with lilies for leisure and fishing. The central wing has a restaurant with 80-90 places, where, beside festivities, banquets, wedding and baptism receptions etc., one can organise conferences and symposiums by rearranging the modules of the hall perimeter. In the central wing, on the first floor, there are five rooms, four double rooms and one triple room, all equipped with cable TV and Internet. The terrace, grace to the panorama it overviews, offers real modalities of recreation and meditation, and has a capacity of around 100 places.

On a slope near Lake Medreș, in the northern area of the Bocșa Montană district, we can stop at “Stejarul / The Oak” guesthouse, a modern and air-lined construction offering the entire panorama over the Bârzava meadows and the whole neighbourhood. The old building, previously owned by UJCOOP Caraș-Severin, was purchased by the brothers Dorel-Petrică and Florentin Bocșan in 1994 by public auction at the price of 17 million lei. At present, the guesthouse was included into the touristic circuit, being assessed as a 3-star facility following some successive works of modernisation and extensions of the former building erected in the Communist era. Today, the guesthouse provides accommodation and recreation services, hosts different local or regional events (banquets, wedding and baptism receptions, anniversaries, conferences, symposiums etc), and proposes hiking to the hilly area in the surroundings of historic Bocșa. The financial efforts of this guesthouse shareholders by far exceed ten billion lei, investments especially in the extension of the accommodation spaces, restaurant, modern kitchen equipment, terrace and mini-pool setup. The guesthouse has 12 double rooms, three single rooms and two complete apartments, being heated with methane gas in the cold season; it has cable TV and Internet facilities.
The restaurant can hold 100 people, with the possibility of seating guests on the exterior terrace, from where they have a bird’s eye view over the entire neighbourhood panorama.

SC “Insomnia” SRL has functioned as a guesthouse even since May 2005, being classified as a 3-star leisure facility. The administrative offices and accommodation areas of this guesthouse are located in the former administrative headquarters of Avicola Bocșa, as the building was purchased from the Mayor’s Office of the Berzovia commune. A lot of modernisation works were executed here in the summer of 2005. The guesthouse offers accommodation to the tourists visiting the area and especially for the labour force employed by local economic agents. Beside the seven rooms (15 places, two triple rooms, four double rooms and a single room, all with bathroom, telephone, TV, cable, fridge), the guesthouse has a bar-restaurant organising diverse events for 75 persons. The preoccupation of the shareholder for providing excellent touristic services aims at increasing the comfort and quality of services, a predictable goal for 2012 grace to the implementation of a European project. It was finalised by realising a catering service with a capacity of 400 places, by installing a heated tent, with lighting, air conditioned, parquet floor and kitchen equipment with last-generation devices. What is new for this type of services in the local and regional context resides in the fact that the new “construction” is mobile, it can be hired for satisfying the requirements of customers for special important events in their lives: wedding and baptism ceremonies, birthday parties, banquets etc.

The year 2010 was the start year for the Programme “Europe 2020” as new strategy of economic growth along three major directions: “smart growth”, “sustainable growth” and “inclusive growth”. The regional development in Romania has as logistic and financial support a Report of the World Bank elaborated between 2011-2013. This document underlined the adoption of the Development Strategy of the West Region. Among the regional policies with impact in the West Region economy we may list the component of the smart policies focused on tourism, more precisely urban and MICE tourism, ecotourism and active tourism, spa and wellbeing tourism. The development strategy for the town of Bocșa (2014-2020) comprises six general directions of local development, concretised in 46 objectives, and the latter are materialised in annual and multi-annual action plans. The purpose of this local development document is to match the local development co-ordinates with the regional and county plans and to find the right way for a sustainable development, with a local imprint.

The sixth direction written down in the Bocșa strategy, called “Transformation of the town of Bocșa into a touristic entry gate to the Mountainous Banat” aims at bringing forth some touristic zonal opportunities by the reiteration of the historical status of resort locality, cure and recreation spa, which it was until the middle of the 20th century, the highlighting of all patrimony monuments, especially the Cuiesti fortress, the reassessment of the “iron way” and the beginning of metallurgy, the emphasis on the exceptional qualities of the ecosystem and local touristic tracks. In this case, such a direction is envisaged for the next six years in a series of specific objectives such as: “a. creation of a cultural centre comprising a mineralogy and iron aesthetics museum, a museum of contemporary sculpture, an ethnographic museum, a dendrology park; b. establishment of an information and documentation tourists’ point for the Bocșa and Mountainous Banat area; c. conservation, refurbishment and highlighting of the town patrimony, especially of the cultural and historical assets (putting into operation and conservation, in a museum form, of the former power plant, the Eruga channel, the loading tower and the Calvary Chapel); d. elaboration of an area touristic map, and repair of the old touristic tracks in the urban and peri-
urban area; e. identification of the local tourism niches and formulation of an aggregate touristic offer.12

The edification of a Cultural Compound in the present facility of the Boča Culture Home, objective to be finalised in 2015, which will host a local and county info-tourism centres, two universal circulation museums (the “Constantin Lucaci” and the “Constantin Gruescu” museums, a park in the interior of this complex called the “Welicsek” Park, to comprise the fossil exhibits of Quaternary swamp cypress. The local info-tourism centre will revive the inter-war touristic itineraries, as follows: 1. Culture Home – Calvary Chapel – Chapel and sculptures in the Boča Montană Catholic cemetery – Hydro Power Plant and furnace in the perimeter of the Boča Montană railroad station - Lake Medreş - Erua channel – Lake Virtoape; 2. Culture Home – churches of the local patrimony – Cuiuşti fortress – Monastery “St. Elijah of Tesvitea “ – Ocna de Fier Mineralogy museum – Dognecea lily lakes.

The comparative approach of two local travel - tourism offers - a prewar and interwar travel offer and the idea of tourist offer made by the current government from Boča - highlights the need to revive local tourism and resort spas, all around Boča’s area, considering it as the only source of economic recovery of the local community. In this sense, we can draw some conclusions on this investigation:

- even if for almost three centuries iron metallurgy and metal constructions were ferment overall economic development of the locality, the chance of contemporary economic revival of the city lies in the tertiary sector, namely regenerated services and tourism, one that should mean „ gate tourism "input from Timisoara into Mountainious Banat;
- revaluation of touristic traditions through a revival of the old trails and through a revival of tourism niche - revitalizing of Welicek spa hospitalization, all through a consistent European funding and the support from the local budget;
- economic revival of the city from the middle Bârzava and improving the quality of community life can be achieved in the medium term, until the end of 2020, implying a range of tourist specialized services units that would cover the need for cultural, industrial, ecumenical and gourmet tourism due to the local diversity.

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