



Med Pearls

Research study on Slow Tourism international trends and innovations





CHAPTER 2: Criteria and requirements for Slow Tourism packages

Contents

General	3
Transport	4
Food	5
Activities	5
Accommodation	6

Chapter 2 presents a technical factsheet of the most important criteria and requirements to be met to create Slow Tourism packages and experiences that are highly attractive to Incoming Travel Agencies and Tourists. The content of this chapter has been designed taking into account the pilot areas of Med Pearls project, and consequently, it can inspire them.

The technical factsheet is classified in different sections, which present the traits that would conform a perfect Slow Tourism package. These sections are transport, accommodation, activities and food. In addition, there is a section devoted to general aspects such as the ones related to the package itself or the DMC or Incoming Travel Agency offering the package.

For a tour package to be considered Slow, it must meet a minimum of compulsory requirements. It is considered that a Slow Tourism package has to be coherent and balanced, so compliance with a minimum of 40% of requirements in each category is recommended. The more requirements the package meets, the more "Slow Tourism philosophy" will be. Each category details the minimum requirements to be met.



Transport



Activities



Accommodation



Gastronomy

GENERAL

For compulsory requirements the box is ticked.

- The package consists of a small group (a maximum of about 15 people) or individual travel experience tour.
- The package can be guided (local guide) or self-guided (with permanent assistance).
- The DMC / Incoming Travel Agency that offers the package has a sustainable and responsible tourism approach /promotion / philosophy.
- The DMC / Incoming Travel Agency develops alliances with other local touristic stakeholders.
- The DMC / Incoming Travel Agency offering the package actively seeks to promote the image of the packages and destination through various media platforms and means of communication.
- The DMC / Incoming Travel Agency promotes social equality in the contracted products and services from local suppliers.
- The package aims to minimize the impact on local resources and the environment.
- The DMC / Incoming Travel Agency offering the package is preferably based on the same location where the experience takes place or otherwise close enough to ensure smooth operation on the ground and links with the local communities and value chain.
- Fair working conditions have to apply to all stakeholders and employees involved in the package.
- The experience takes place in areas with reduced tourism flows covering: rural, coastal and/or mountainous areas; and also small towns or villages.
- The package is promoted on websites and in sales channels with a sustainable perspective.
- The DMC / Incoming Travel Agency is committed to developing a long-term relationship with their touristic local stakeholders and suppliers.

- The DMC / Incoming Travel Agency encourages staff development and life-long learning as part of sustainability management system. All staff receive training in social and environmental policies.
- The DMC / Incoming Travel Agency tour operator has implemented purchasing policies which favour sustainable and local goods and services including building materials, capital goods, food, beverages and consumables.
- The DMC / Incoming Travel Agency communicates their actions concerning sustainable management, social responsibility and ethics in labour relations.
- The DMC / Incoming Travel Agency uses new technologies in its promotion and communication actions (such as online brochures, online contact channels, etc.).
- The DMC / Incoming Travel Agency has a modern and updated website in different languages (at least in English).
- The DMC / Incoming Travel Agency makes themselves available to provide information to customers through conventional means but also social networks.

TRANSPORT

For compulsory requirements the box is ticked.

- The package includes and promotes the use of sustainable means of transport.
- The package includes at least one sustainable transportation such as bicycle or electric bike, Segway, walking, electric vehicles or any other environmentally friendly means of transport.
- The package presents itineraries in less travelled routes.
- Sustainable means of transport are part of the experience and activities of the package.
- The DMC / Incoming Travel Agency takes actions to reduce or compensate CO2 emissions.
- The DMC / Incoming Travel Agency provides information and facilitates the use of the local public transportation.
- The majority of transport suppliers put processes in place to minimise negative environmental impacts.
- The DMC / Incoming Travel Agency organizes group transfers during the experience taking into account the most efficient option.
- The DMC / Incoming Travel Agency offers luggage transfer for the participants undertaking a soft-mobility route.
- The DMC / Incoming Travel Agency has options for people with special accessibility requirements.
- For self-guided tours, GPS or transport applications are provided.

FOOD

For compulsory requirements the box is ticked.

- Culinary products provided during the tour are local and/or come from local producers.
- The package promotes gastronomy as part of the culture and tradition of the destination.
- Information about origin, producers, typical dishes and quality of the food is provided.
- The package includes culinary tastings and/or visiting local producers.
- Products provided during the tour are seasonal, organic and fair-trade.
- Preferably restaurants or facilities related to gastronomy included in the package have recognitions and accreditations such as fair-trade and organic labels or Designation of Origin recognition.
- The package includes an activity of harvesting and/or buying at a local market.
- Service personnel and chefs are trained in the importance of communicating the origin and quality of the products used.
- All suppliers involved are committed to minimizing a negative environmental impact and avoiding food waste.
- Menus provided are appropriate to the type of activity (i.e. hiking or cycling route) and the time of day required for the activity (e.g. early breakfast for birdwatchers).
- Refuse single-use plastic for reusable items (e.g. for picnic packages).
- Including a QR code in each menu or food in the menu list to check more information about the area of its origin, nutritional facts and any relevant information.

ACTIVITIES

For compulsory requirements the box is ticked.

- The activities of the package aim to protect and promote natural and cultural heritage (tangible and intangible).
- The activities of the package allow for a better understanding of the local identity.
- The package includes a mix of activities from several of these fields: nature, culture, wellness and wellbeing or gastronomy.
- Guides and activity providers are reputable local experts that treat the environment and local communities with respect.
- Responsible Tourism behaviour and values are encouraged throughout the activities.
- The activities of the package allow visitors to connect with the local history and traditions of the destination in many forms: local festivals and traditions, gastronomy, craftsmanship, etc.
- The activities of the package include a learning component.
- The activities of the package involve the participation of local groups such as ethnic communities, representatives of NGOs, opinion leaders, local institutions, etc.
- The activities of the package allow time and space for participants for introspection and self-reflection.
- The package avoids contrived and controversial cultural experiences that are not respectful with the local culture.
- The package includes a range of activity levels for all types of tourists.

- Activities of the package are experiences that suit the season when they take place.
- Itineraries and packages taking into consideration the needs of tourists with specific accessibility requirements are included in the offer of activities.
- Activities build local pride and confidence and foster respect between tourists and hosts.
- The DMC / Incoming Travel Agency shall explain to the clients which are the rules of protected areas or any information considered relevant in order to protect / respect the locals, the place and the environment.
- The DMC / Incoming Travel Agency avoids the use of single use plastic items and makes clients aware of not leaving waste in nature.
- Technology innovations are present through the use of Apps, Virtual Reality or other innovative solutions.

ACCOMMODATION

For compulsory requirements the box is ticked.

- The properties are local and/or family-run businesses.
- The types of accommodations are farmhouses, country homes, cottages, campings, small hotels, etc.
- Properties work with local providers.
- Properties are in contact with local producers, and buy and incorporate their local products into their daily menu planning.
- Properties offer a close and personalized service, taking the time to welcome customers and inform them about the surroundings and the possibilities for activities in the area.
- Properties take actions about stimulating a change process, and encourage management and staff members to innovate.
- The reduced number of rooms of the properties allows a close and customised treatment.
- Properties are surrounded by a natural/rural landscape.
- Properties are accessible to customers with specific accessibility requirements.
- Properties are prepared and / or certified to host specialized customers with specific technical requirements: cyclists, hikers, birdwatchers.
- Properties communicate their actions concerning sustainability and recognitions in that sense.
- The property possesses recognitions or awards regarding sustainability and responsible behaviour.
- The property has a defined policy of sustainability.
- Properties offered in the package carry-out training sessions to their employees in terms of Sustainability and Slow Tourism.
- Properties apply policies that encourage to hire local staff, both permanent and temporary employees.
- The property has energy-saving policies, which are implemented and monitored.
- The property has an active policy to reduce water consumption which is implemented and monitored.
- The property has developed and implemented a solid waste reduction and recycling policy, with quantitative goals to reduce non reusable or recyclable waste.
- The common areas have LED screens to provide information about the area, the weather forecast or any other useful information for the visitor.



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