

Rural Tourism Products from the Banat Area Demanded by European Tourists

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Abstract

Due to the multiculturalism of this region, the rural tourism products most demanded by the tourists are natural and cultural resources, and the traditions and customs of the Banat's village. The history of the people living here and the crafts such as pottery or traditional agricultural produce processing constitute but part the tourism offer of the Banat's village for those in search of authenticity. Introducing these tourism products among other tourism products can help promoting both tourism products and routes because the interest in the tourism destinations is already known.

Keywords: authentic, Banat, rural area, tourism products

1. Introduction

Depending on the way tourism products are developed, researchers distinguish the following **main tourism products types demanded by European tourists** [1-4]:

Tourism products made by the tourists (the so-called eco-tourists) themselves: starting from the components of a holiday spent (accommodation on farms, activities on the farm, walks in the neighbouring locality or trips in the neighbourhood) to watch and know plant (spontaneous flora) and animal species in protected areas, reserves;

Tourism products displayed in advance in the tourism environment: this is the case of the farms that provide accommodation and the possibility of practicing fishing, horse-riding, "farm activities", or "around the farm activities" with details on the opportunities in the neighbourhood (visiting historical sites, natural parks, hunting areas);

Tourism products developed by a professional in the tourism industry for the clientele starting

from loose elements (the so-called organised stays) [5-7];

"All-inclusive" tourism products (also known as "forfeit products") developed to **provide the client with a complete product that meets his expectations and achieve the balance between components from the perspective of a proper price: quality ratio (hunting tourism). European tourists are attracted by natural assets and are sensitive to a "lower cost of life"** [8-11]. The coherence of the global programme is given by the development of the accommodation capacities with trade, services, accommodation for workers, local transportation;

Travel agencies built around an experienced leader that can enforce his own marketing approaches and have an impact on tourism products that meet the expectations of the clientele (hunting tourism, scientific tourism, ecotourism on reserves) [12-14];

Allotting enough time and confidence to the shareholders far from the fluctuations of local politics, because we can only see success in our enterprises 10-15 years later [15,16].

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2. Materials and methods

To develop tourism product that turn Romania into a country with many tourists willing to know more about our country, we have promoted for the studied area (Banat) the Banat's village, a village that has remained untouched by modernity, a village that we intend to turn into a tourism product for genealogical tourism, for authentic tourism: a place where something happens and that could attract any type of foreign tourist in search of authenticity (quiet, traditions, arts, and rural culture).

3. Results and discussion

We need to carry out concerted, long-lasting actions in which to attract **the Ministry of Tourism, the National Agency for Rural, Ecologic and Cultural Tourism, banks, parties, and State** and develop the proper legal framework. All actions should protect and support the re-launch of rural tourism, ecotourism, and agritourism for the sustainable development of the rural Banat and for the valorisation of its natural resources, avoiding negative effects on biodiversity (flora and fauna), illicit trade with vegetal and animal species, and intensification of border control.

The Banat's mountain village, in general, and the tourism one, in particular, is an authentic tourism product for both the domestic and foreign markets. On the other hand, Romanian tourism villages can contribute to the discovery of Romania as a possible tourism destination developing the interest in Romania as a place providing a wide range of experiences, of high-quality services, and even business opportunities. Below are the arguments supporting this statement:

- The wide range of natural and cultural in the Banat area;
- The diverse tourism facilities and experiences of which some are authentic;
- The good price: quality ratio of the tourism products;
- The specificity and uniqueness of this multi-ethnic and multi-cultural area:
- Culture (literature, arts, costumes, music, dance, theatre, crafts, cuisine, special skills);

- Geography and topography (mountain, hill, and plain areas) in the Banat's village area, as part of the Romanian natural heritage (both affective and common);
- History (buildings, legends of the life in this area);
- People (different groups and religions).

At the same time, as shown in Figure 1, the Banat's area concentrates:

- Mineral and thermal waters (Sânmihai Român, Calacea, Sacoșu Turcesc);
- Authentic flora and fauna (reserves – Mlaștinile Sat Chinez, Lunca Mureșului, Valea Nerei, Valea Pogoniciului);
- Important mountain or river picturesque places (Lunca Pogoniciului, Bazoșul Nou Reserve);
- Invaluable religious and inter-cultural heritage (the wooden church of Coșava, the monasteries of Șemlacu Mic, Partoș, Izvorul Miron);
- A wide range of high-quality attractions and entertainment facilities (Ochiul Beiului, Cascada Beușnița, Cascada Bigăr);
- Old traditions appreciated and respected worldwide: arts and crafts (theatre, music, poetry, dance, painting, sculpture).

If we look at country tourism as at a form of inter-cultural counterpoint, we can see that the people of the host country (Banat) is highly concerned with passing over cultural information on our own heritage. However, what one can take from the ethnic groups living in the mountain and plain Banat is items of clothing, folk art items specific to the area, and music and poetry in an archaic language.

Getting aware of the authenticity of the Banat's village, of the differences and similarities of this living area can help us support such tourism products as:

- **Learning crafts** (pottery, wood carving, weaving, glass painting, anthropomorphic, zoomorphic, and vegetal forms);
- Initiation into instrumental and vocal music through folk art schools ;
- Introducing into Banat's cuisine per ethnic groups ;
- Learning folk dances from the Banat area;
- Studying endemic vegetal and animal species (spotted tulip, yellow crocus, lilac, egret, red heron, and bustard).

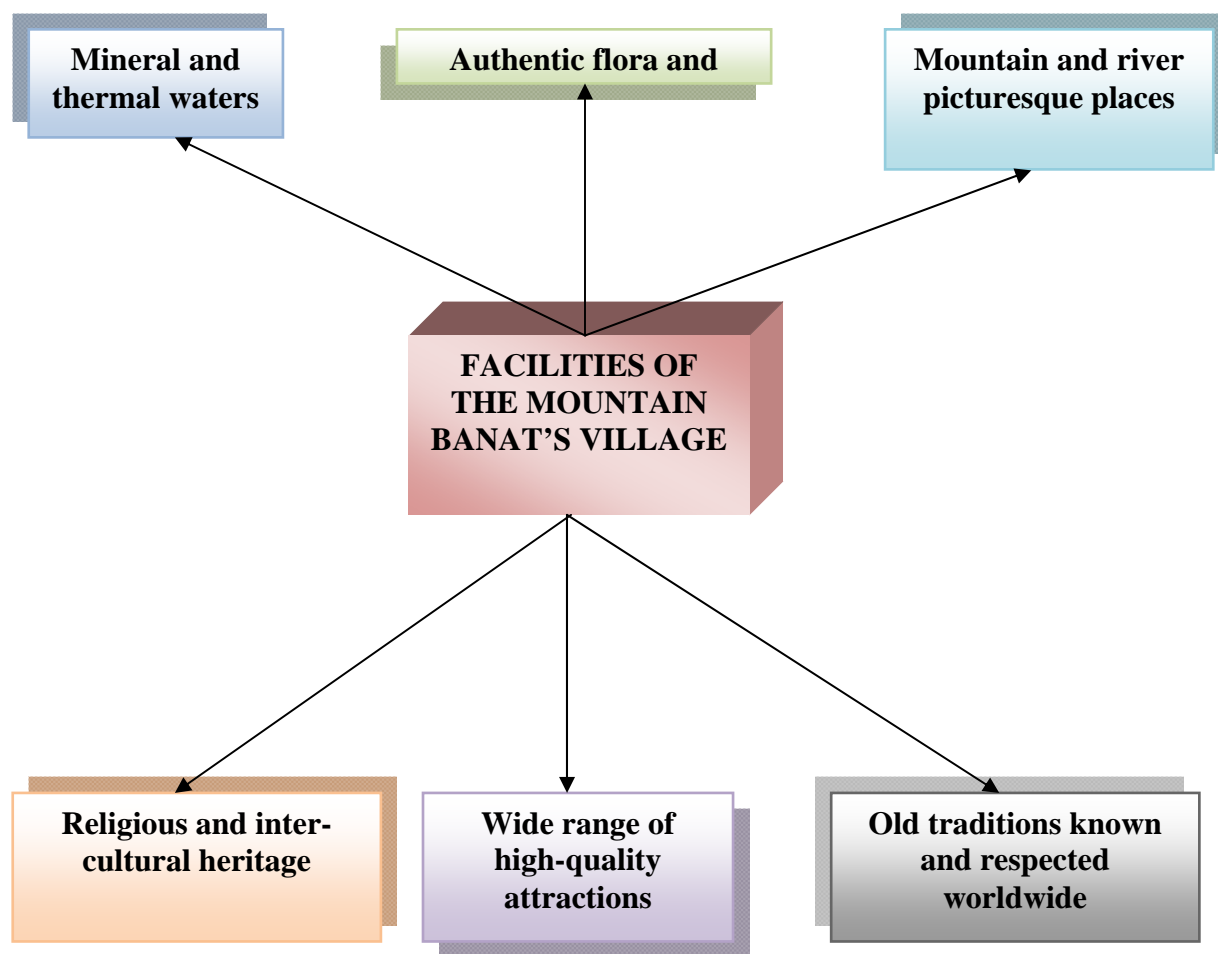


Figure 1. Facilities of the mountain Banat's village

All this could personalise the tourism offer in the rural Banat area; this is only part of the attractions that could be introduced in the tourism circuit and, hence, valorised economically. Though most of those who practice rural tourism do not see it as a business in itself but rather as a complementary activity – focusing, as it should be, on agricultural activities – meeting foreign tourists makes Romanian hosts feel the necessity of learning foreign languages. The main reason to do it is the need for communicating and then the need to advertise their own business. This is the way personal relationships between very different people and in very different ways is established. These personal relationships contribute to the knowledge and understanding of the mentality of both guests and hosts, which brings up village's authenticity. The authenticity of the Banat and Timis's village consists in the following tourist products to be implemented (Figure 2):

- Manufacturing activities (pottery at Brănești);

- Folk customs and traditions (the dowry chest);
- Manual household and farm activities (cropping and breeding animals) (Lenaheim), rope making (Becicherecul Mic), horse shoeing (Făget);
- Industrial archaic equipment (mills of different types, pottery workshops and ovens, etc.), (the Mills at Rudăria);
- Folk technical devices (the oil press at Făget);
- Preparing foods: slaughtering pigs by Banat's Swabians (Săcălaz);
- Natural monuments, national and nature parks, protected areas (Satchinez, Lunca Mureșului, Lunca Pogoniciului);
- Monastic religious services (Mănăstirea Morisena, Partoș, Bezdin, Bodrog, Șemlacu Mic);
- Landscape variety (sylvo-steppe, hill).

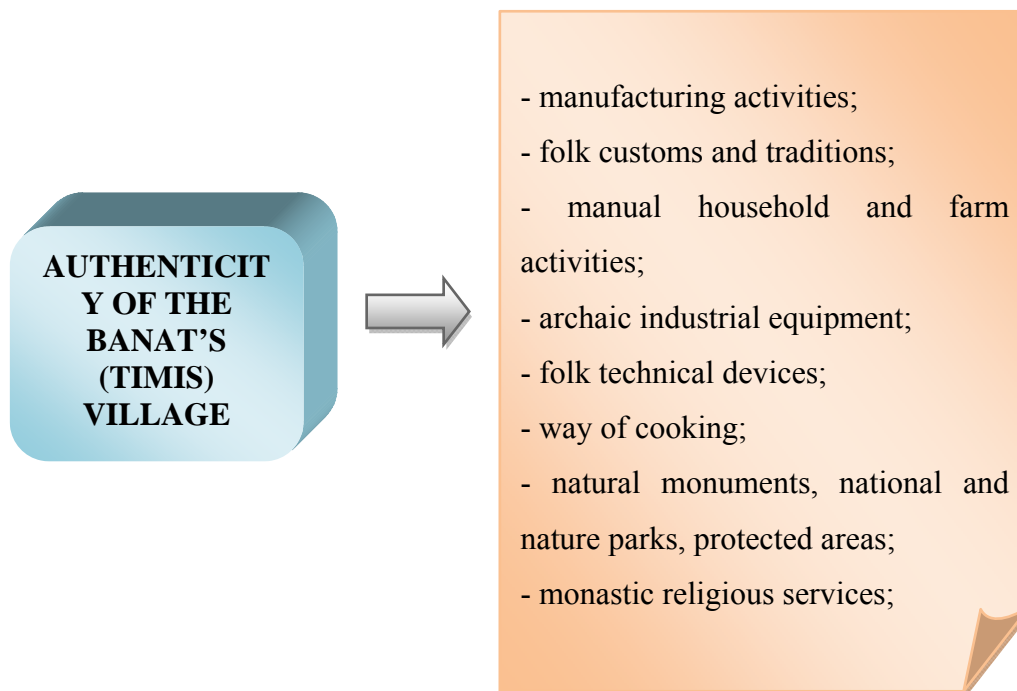


Figure 2. Authenticity of the Banat's (Timis) village

Possible tourist tours in Banat in search of different tourism products

1. Start from Dudeștii Noi (accommodation at the RaFa B&B) to Biled, where visitors can see the hillock at Kalvarienberg (Germ. *Der Grabatzer Kalvarienberg*) – a collective tomb from the pest epidemics in 1834 to Șandra, visiting the Church of Șandra (1836) and the monument downtown (1933) erected to commemorate 62 citizens fallen on the battlefield in the First World War, to Lenauheim, a commune where they can visit religious and cultural sites such as the Sf. Terezia Roman-Catholic Church (1778), a post inn from the 18th century, the Nikolaus Lenau Memorial (a German poet, 1802-1850) and his statue, to Sânnicolau Mare, where they can visit the Nakó Castle (1864) built by Count Nacu, the Vergin's Assumption Serbian Church (1783-1787) and the School of Agriculture, and back to Dudeștii Noi (RaFa B&B);

2. Start from Dudeștii Noi (RaFa B&B) to Satchinez (about 25 km N-W from Timișoara), to visit the interesting and picturesque "Delta Banatului" bird sanctuary where they can watch bird colonies nesting in the area, some of which are rare or threatened (red heron, yellow heron, small egret), to Cărpiniș Fishery where they can angle, to Jimbolia, a town in the Banat's Plain (Torontal) / Jimbolia (lake) where they can visit the Ștefan Jager Memorial (1877-1962), the

Firemen's House, a neoclassical palace (1800), the statue of St Florian (1866), to Comloș, where they can visit the "Iulian Grozescu" National House (the ex-"Grand Inn" on the road from Timișoara to Vienna), the San Marco Manor (mayor's house), to Lovrin, to visit the geo-thermal spa and the Country Fair.

3. Start from Bazoș (accommodation at the Zopas B&B), where they can visit the Bazoș Dendrologic Park, unique in Romania, and containing one of the most valuable collections of trees and shrubs (the Banat Black Pine, the yew), to Recaș, to visit the Recaș Winery, to Lugoj, to visit the church and the ex-Franciscan Monastery (1733), the Vergin's Assumption Orthodox Church (1759-1766) built in the Baroque style by the ruler Gavril Gurean, the Tower of the St Nicholas Church (1402), the old theatre (1902), the house of the writer Ion Popovici Bănățeanul, the House of the tenor Traian Grozăvescu, the house of the composer Ion Vidu, to the Cave of Românești (13 km from Făget), where they can visit the Izvorul Miron Monastery, to the Blue Cave near Pietroasa (12 km from Făget), the Stâncă lui Florian Cave near Tomești (17 km from Făget), and back to Bazoș (the Zopas B&B).

4. Conclusions

The world of tourism products is a large one and extremely difficult to present. Thus, what we generally call rural tourism product or tourism village as a tourism product is but a forced, abstract reduction to unit.

Given the great diversity of components in a tourism product, in general, and of rural tourism, in particular, we can see that reducing a part to a whole can only be used to ease exposure.

Assembling, harmonising, concerting, and assimilating some of the perennial values of the village in some tourism facilities result in genuine Banat's rural tourism products of high value and difficult to mistake. The modern marketing presents a product from the perspective of expectations of a consumer and of the measure in which it can meet such expectations. Hence, the importance of balancing product and consumer's universe. In general, changes occur at symbolic level. Among Banat's rural tourism symbols, we could include folk music and costumes, crafts, cuisine, dances, folk musical instruments, handmade items, flora and fauna.

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