

**CASE STUDY CONCERNING THE TOURISTIC AND AGRO-TOURISTIC  
SERVICE CONSUMPTION AND QUALITY TO THE AGRO-TOURISTIC  
PENSION VALEA IZVORULUI (SPRING VALLEY), BIHOR COUNTY**

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***Abstract***

*This paper represents a case study, meaning the analysis of an agronomic pension situated in Bihor, Spring Valley Pension.*

*The paper is meant to attract the attention of the possible tourist, a complex from the mountain area of Valley of Hell, presenting precise details about the geographic surroundings, the quality of the environment, the quality of the services, the touristic value of the area and presents the synthetic signs about the economic activity of the pension.*

**Key words:** accessibility, touristic value, environment quality, service quality, return rate.

**INTRODUCTION**

**Geographic position**

The pension is framed in the eastern district of Bihor county on the upper stream of the Valley of Hell, at the crossing of the Padurea Craiului Mountains and the Vladeasa Mountains, at the foot of the Remeti Gorges, a beautiful mountain region, in the village Remeti.

**Accessibility**

It is located at substantially equal distances from the two municipalities, residences of two counties in the west of the country, that is 90 km from Oradea (on DJ764 at only 20 km from DN1, E60) and at 100 km distance from Cluj-Napoca, also 30 km from the climatic resort Stana de Vale.

**MATERIAL AND METHODS**

**Touristic value**

Located in the neighborhood of the accumulation lakes, Dragan and Lesu, being framed in the mountain area in all its beauty, the pension offers "nature lovers" an adequate landscape for recreational activities and to spend free time, far away from the urban noise and stress.

The main tourist attraction is represented by Valley of Hell itself, starting from the spring located in the Stana de Vale area, splitting the two mountain groups, all the way to its fall in Crisu Repede River.

The two mountain groups are characterized by combining features specific to the limestone area in The Padurea Craiului Mountains and those of the Vladeasa Mountains, predominantly volcanic. These relief forms present an unexploited touristic potential at its true value, potential given by the beautiful combinations of the ridges, steep slopes, gorges and caves that invite you to visit. The rich flora characteristic of this area includes many species protected by law such as: the *Carpathian lilac*, the *Iorgovan*, the *yew*, the *Turkish hazelnut tree*, the *peony*, the *wild daffodil*, the *motley tulip*, the *forest lily* and so on. Also a wild life that includes law protected animals such as: the *eagle*, the *capercaillie*, the *raven*, the *drop*, the *white heron*, the *black stork*, the *lynx*, the *Carpathian deer*, the *hawk*, the *bear* and so on. The quality of the environment is an ecological attribute.

As far as the natural factors are concerned, the region is characterized by: a tonic bio-climate, an air rich in ultraviolet rays, with intense ionization, offering tourists, through the existing conditions, the possibility of keeping an adequate diet. The quality of the agro-touristic pension

Being a relatively new construction, the pension was designed to satisfy the customer's desires (from the "modest" ones to the special ones) offering much more accommodations, meal serving or recreational possibilities

The accommodation can be made in:

Rooms with two or three beds with their own sanitary group

Rooms with two beds equipped with a sink and a common bathroom for 3 rooms

Meal serving/ recreation:

4 terraces, one of which has a targeted view to the pool of trout

2 table rooms furnished rustic, one placed over the pool of trout (8 places) and one with a capacity of 24 places

The pension offers the possibility to serve traditional cuisine and classic cuisine (clear soups, belly soup, chicken soup, etc) prepared mostly from fresh foods from the private household

A pool with about 1000 trout

Specific Transylvanian household

A "customer's kitchen" that offers the possibility of cooking and serving meals prepared from the customer's own goods. The kitchen is equipped with a refrigerator, a cooker, a wood stove and other necessary household appliances (coffee makers, toasters, etc.)

The possibility to make a bonfire, sitting at tables and benches placed beside the river that flows in front of the pension.

Touristic value

It is one of the important criteria considered when choosing a holiday destination or when returning to an agro-touristic destination.

In addition to hiking trails that can be practiced in the close vicinity of the pension, there is the possibility of seeing four marked routes, of unique beauty. The four artificial lakes can be an objective for spending the time, besides other activities: fishing, tanning, bathing, boat rides, long walks, making bonfires, open air games, hunting, visiting the sheep shelters and the cow herds on the mountain and getting to know the traditions well preserved regarding milking, making cheese, cutting sheep's fur, etc. You have the possibility of visiting the bottomless lake without any restrictions and finding out the legend of the lake. At the same time, because of its position, the pension offers the possibility of visiting some natural tourist or anthropic attractions: 1 km away there is the diversion dam Valea Izvorului, 4 km away the Lesu dam, 7 km away the Munteni dam, 14 km away is the Bulz dam, at 16 km is the Dragan dam and at 3 km away is the Bottomless natural lake. In the direction to Stana de Vale, at about 15 km there is the Iadolina Falls and the Little Goat Waterfall. At about 38km the memorial house of Octavian Goga can be visited and also at 20 km from there on is the "Crisul Repede Gorge" which represents a relief of caves, sinkholes, belvedere points and so on. On an area of 20-70 km there are several possibilities to spend the leisure time in order to enrich one's knowledge, to relax and to come into connection to certain traditions and cultural elements. For example Stana de Vale Resort, Vadul Crisului, Suncuius, Vladeasa, Valea Draganului, Padis, Scarisoara, Bears' Cave and Meziad Cave can offer a rare variety, each of them offering a particular element.

The abundance of the caves from the area can be reasoned by a few examples: The Cave with water at Bulz is situated on the left mountain of the Valley of Hell, at the foot of an imposing slope near Bulz. Genetically speaking it is represented a large part of an endocarstic system, which at the extreme opposite has the Ponor – Sancuta cave. In total length it has 1177 meters and the part that can be visited has 548 meters. The cave was introduced in the touristic circuit by summary equipment given by the local authorities. The Cave with water at Remeti situated in the first sector of the Valley of Hell Gorge, on the left slope. It has a length of 350m with a raised potential and because of its position, placed near the main road that passes the valley. The concretion is represented by modest parietal leakage, and as microforms the erosion forms prevail: shelves, dioxies, niches, erosion chimneys, etc.

- The cave with water from Valea Lesului opens on the right slope of the Lesu Valley. The entrance in the cave has a distinct element because of the forming of a small natural dam by collapsing a part of the slope in the place called "Ruins", continuing with mosaic morphology, with various chimneys and fallings. The principal gallery is splitting towards right in the "Bears Corridor" that has traces of *Ursus Spaeleus*.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

There is a strong dependence between productivity, quality and profitability. With the help of the synthetic factors we can express the results of the entire activity of a pension (gross/net profit, profit ratio, profitability ratio, absolute/ relative level of the costs, etc, are just a few indicators used for measuring the touristic and agro-touristic activity)

The indicators achieved at Valea Izvorului Pension in 2008

Indicators	Value (RON)
Business Mark	65 000
Total Assets	500 000
Costs	35 000
Gross Profit	30 000
Number of overnight stays	3 120
Theoretical maximum capacity	24
Number of functional days	360

The Gross Profit calculated as a difference between income and outcome was 30.000 RON on the year 2008.

The profit rate can take many forms:

The economic profit rate that results as a percentage between profit (P) and the value of total actives (AT):

$$R_{pe} = \frac{P}{AT} \times 100 = \frac{30000}{500000} \times 100 = 6\%$$

Due to the specific of the tourist activity referring to recovering the investments (a long period of recovering the values invested in the necessary assets) as well as the “beginner” state of rural tourism and agro-tourism in our country generally, and especially in the areas of Valley of Hell in Bihor county (only after 1990 we can talk about organized rural tourism and agro-tourism, with a great development after 2002), the economic rate of profit at Valea Izvorului Pension is 6%. This level allows the investor to recover the invested value in the total assets from the obtained profit (if the present situation doesn't change significantly) in a period of about 16 years. The commercial rate of profit calculated as a percentage between the profit (P) and the total value of the income, or the business mark (CA), although the most used method of efficiency does not compare resources and the results being an indicator of effect/ effect type:

$$R_{pc} = \frac{P}{CA} \times 100 = \frac{30000}{65000} \times 100 = 46,15\%$$

The value of this indicator being 46,15% demonstrates that the touristic activity of the pension, at the level it was registered in 2008, is efficient allowing the obtaining of good results at a certain level of the efforts made by them. The rentability rate expresses the relation between profit and costs (for obtaining the profit):

$$R_r = \frac{P}{Ch} \times 100 = \frac{30000}{35000} \times 100 = 85,72\%$$

The report is good, allowing the obtaining of some results which can be directional to investments for developing the business or improving the quality increase of the offered services. The total level of the costs calculated as a sum of all costs (efforts) with various structures has reached the level of 35.000 RON. The relative level of the costs reports the total consumption of resources(Ch) to results obtained - business mark (CA):

$$N_{Ch} = \frac{Ch}{CA} \times 100 = \frac{35000}{65000} \times 100 = 53,85\%$$

The two level indicators, the total level of expenses, respectively the relative level of them, sum up the efforts (financially) for obtaining a result reflected of the business mark level (the income). It must be mentioned that the main percentage in the total of costs is the accommodation activity; unfortunately the public alimentation is very limited, most tourists preferring to use only the table rooms or the dishes providing their own meals. The meals required to be cooked by the host family are traditional foods and fish from their own pool. The partial indicators can highlight both the individual usage of the production factors and the results obtained in a field of touristic activity:

The Work productivity (W) expresses the efficiency of human resources usage through the business mark (CA) or through the profit (P) to the number of employees (L):

$$W = CA/L = 30000/10 = 3000 \text{ RON/employee}$$

The productivity of work is 3.000RON for each employee in the touristic activity, representing the absolute value of the generated profit throughout the year 2008. The degree of occupation or the coefficient of using the capacity of accommodation is calculated by reporting the capacity filled in certain period of time expressed by the number of overnight stays of a tourist and the theoretical/maximum capacity possible (nominal capacity x nr of functioning days):

$$C_{ucc} = \frac{N_{yt}}{C_n \times n_z} = \frac{3120}{24 \times 360} = \frac{3120}{8640} = 36,11\%$$

One of the indicators that show the degree of usage the available capacities refers to the capacity of accommodation. The level of this indicator fulfilled by the mentioned pension is 36.11%, resulting a considerable reserve especially during spring and autumn.

One of the objectives of rural tourism and of agro-tourism, both at a national level and at a local level, is the reduction of seasonality from tourism combined with the increase of occupying the available capacities. Unfortunately, from this analysis it comes out the poor valued natural heritage but mostly of the anthropic heritage.

Beside all these, the effects of the rural tourism and agro-tourism on the economy, respectively on the local society can be regarded as being benefic, offering working places both direct (workers employed by their family members) and indirect (from the local commerce and the leisure activities, facilities, etc.)

The tourism and the agro-tourism offer supplementary sources of income for the local householders (besides that from agriculture).

Under a social aspect the rural tourism and the agro-tourism can be viewed through the light of the contribution to the maintenance the tourist's state of health and their role to their leisure time (passive or active rest, by involving the tourists in the house holding duties, crafts or local traditions).

## **CONCLUSION**

Paradoxically to the situation of tourist attractions, the accommodation units which serve to the agro-tourism activity are poorly developed. So until the year 1990 we could not talk of touristic or agro-touristic services offered in an organized manner by the rural population of Bihor county, these being present only occasionally, in the population's households, resuming many times at offering accommodation and meal serving without much investment granted preparing the space or any minimal requests. The situation started to change hardly at the middle of the ninth decade of the passed century. In present in Remeti, Bulz there are two pensions, both classified as being members of the ANTRG network, Spring Valley being one of them. Employment in the present is 36.111, situating itself at a relatively low level, resulting a considerable reserve, mostly in spring and autumn. The development of a road infrastructure, as well as the diversification of recreational activities of tourists, will contribute to the increase of tourists in all year periods.

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