

TOURISM IN THE APUSENI MOUNTAINS

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Abstract

One of the most attractive tourist destinations in Romania mountains is represented by the Apuseni Mountains. We choose a vacation in Apuseni Mountains for various reasons consisted of relief, mild climate, rich hydrography, flora, fauna but also the customs and traditions of the inhabitants of Țara Moșilor.

For an efficient capitalization of tourism potential in the Apuseni Mountains is necessary to establish measures concerning the development of existing resorts and attracting a large number of foreign tourists, collaboration and cooperation with alpine countries for accomplishment of joint projects.

Key words: mountain tourism, tourist resorts, tourist product.

INTRODUCTION

By the presence of the Carpathian Mountains on the Romanian territory we meet favorable conditions for mountain tourism, respectively we can spend leisure time in various forms among which we can mention: the mountaineering, winter sports, mountain backpacking, paragliding.

In Romania mountain tourism is served by mountain resorts of which only some correspond for satisfying the relaxation and recreation needs of tourists (Poiana Brasov, Sinaia, Predeal, for example), most part the resorts being confronted with severe problems related to the lack of corresponding tourism infrastructure, lack of tourists, promotion etc.

Mountain tourism is practiced by tourists especially in winter season when winter sports have a high demand; of these sports tourists prefer skiing and what is a positive element is that its practice is required by tourists with older age but also children whose age may decrease even to 5 years.

With all the large requirement the ski area in Romania is much smaller than in the standard alpine countries (ie is almost 500 times lower than that of France).

The mountain area in Romania is a competitive tourism product not only for domestic tourism market but also internationally.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Apuseni Mountains is noted in tourism primarily by the uniqueness of the landscape where are found ecosystems with a special value from the perspective of biodiversity, through the variety of karst phenomena but also through the traditional activities of the inhabitants which determined the existence of a region that can not be avoided by tourists.

There are numerous sights of the Apuseni Mountains of which by far are noted:

Scărișoara Glacier or Ice Giant, located near Gârda de Sus. Cave attractions are the Great Hall, the church and a hall with ice stalagmites.

Ionele Gate Cave sculptured in white limestone having at the entrance a creek gushing from the rock.

Glacier Vârtop of Arieșeni. The cave holds diverse and well preserved formations. The cave became famous in the 70s when there were found footprints belonging to the Neanderthal.

The cave Pojarul Poliței from Gârda de Sus. The cave is surrounded by lots of firs and tall trees and the alley that leads you to it crosses a fairy glade.

Waterfall from Vidra or Waterfall Pisoaia with a chute of water of 18 meters high.

Waterfall Răchițele or Vălul Miresei with a chute of water more than 30 m; in winter when rocky wall freezes, waterfall area is a great place for ice climbing.

Râmețului Gorges the largest natural objective of the central part of the mountains Trascău being declared a nature reserve which stretches over an area of 150 hectares.

Bear Cave famous because of traces and fossils of cave bear, animal disappeared 15,000 years ago.

Lake Tarnița on which can be practiced water skiing, boating and jetski.

In addition to the above must be mentioned: Fortress of Ponor, Farcu Mine - the only crystal cave landscaped for tourism, Rădeasa Fortress, Cave Meziad, Galbenei Gorges, Aries Gorges etc.

Diversified tourism potential offers a wide range of leisure travel forms namely:

- adventure tourism (rafting, kayaking, climbing)
- cultural and heritage tourism
- scientific tourism
- youth tourism
- ecotourism

To protect the natural environment, considering that the Apuseni Mountains forms mostly the Apuseni National Park, a series of ways to

relax or travel arrangements must be eliminated or avoided: hunting, rides motorcycles and off-road vehicles, tents settlement in inadequately spaces, realization of construction which don't integrate in the landscape as architecture or materials used.

Apuseni Mountains are visited mainly by Romanian tourists who come here every year but also by foreign tourists from Hungary, France, Slovakia, Belgium. Weak development of the transport system in the mountains determines that most tourists come by personal car which means the existence of small groups up to 5 people.

Practicing tourism in the Apuseni Mountains is influenced by the local communities, whose influence knows a limitation process due to the changes the residents of the Apuseni conform. Thus, in the last years through penetration of elements of civilization in the mountain area were abandoned a number of traditions.

Local communities are facing major problems of existence of which we can mention:

- low standard of living
- aging population
- low level of education and training
- lack of specialists in various fields
- the nonentity of strategies for community development
- lack of funds
- poor infrastructure development

To preserve the identity of local communities a special emphasis should be placed on maintaining local culture respectively on keeping habits, lifestyles, values and ancestral faith. For achieving this goal, an important role has the sustained and permanent promotion of cultural values (dances, folklore, holidays).

The local community has in its front a great challenge because maintaining cultural heritage should be done concomitantly with taking over some elements of modern civilization.

Practicing tourism assume the existence of a tourist infrastructure which in the Apuseni Mountains is composed mainly of tourism accommodation, that due to the large number of tourists who annually visit the Apuseni Mountains are varied (cottages, guesthouses, tourist stops) and in large numbers.

Tourist infrastructure is present mainly in the Apuseni resorts: Băișoara, Arieseni Vârtope, Stana de Vale, Boga holiday village.

The Apuseni Mountains presents some negative aspects, created by man, which by keeping them begin to harm practicing tourism. It is noted massive deforestation of forest, inappropriate animals grazing, excessive and uncontrolled use of natural resources, pollution etc.

CONCLUSION

The reasons of tourists are very diverse: some tourists seek rest and relaxation, some adventure, some tourists prefer nature, while other tourists want to discover new places or are interested in cultural - historical objectives or cultural events.

Starting from the premise that regional thematic tourism products are underdeveloped or non-existent, promotion of tourism is insufficient and tourist facilities unmodernised with technical equipment and inappropriate tourism marketing, but taking into account the huge potential, tourism can constitute a factor through the development of which can be reached the improvement of economic performance of the area.

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