

Development Areas of Rural Tourism in Romania

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Abstract

The popularity of rural tourism forms has increased in recent years. From the initiatives with individual character it has been reached a real alternative leisure. The reason? Authenticity of rural areas is a quality becoming more demanding in terms of current life. Synonymous with a holiday spent with little money in nature, rural tourism forms, like and are becoming increasingly popular. Folk heritage of folk architecture, folk customs and traditions, crafts, port and popular folklore, gastronomy specific is the most popular tourist attractions in rural tourism. Therefore, tourist villages and agro-tourist offer circumscribed, in particular, to Romanian folk brand areas, which fortunately, also benefits of natural attractions of great beauty.

Keywords: development areas, popularity, rural tourism forms

1. Introduction

Rural area, from the mountains and up the Danube Delta and Black Sea, except for the plain areas, offers favorable conditions for rural tourism development of also for agro tourism. However, tourism demand from rural area are concentrated in mountainous areas, where the beautiful and unspoiled natural landscapes offer many possibilities for leisure and cultural and spiritual life are mark components of the settlements "looks".

2. Materials and methods

The authors of the paper were used as methods of work: data collection, processing, analysis, observation and their interpretation.

3. Results and discussion

Following, the folk areas and relief units, we see that rural tourism offer it is concentrated in the following areas (Figure 1):

- Oas (Oas Depression and Oas Mountains) Bixad villages, Calinesti, etc.;
- Maramures (Maramures Depression and adjacent mountains: Rodna, Maramures, Tibles, Gutai): Botiza, Vadu Izei, Ieud, Sapanta, Rozavlea, Ocna Sugatag, Salistea de Sus, Bogdan Voda, Dragomiresti etc.
- Bukovina (Bukovina, Dorna-Câmpulung Moldovenesc - Humor Depressions): Ciocanesti, Darmanesti, Dorna, Arini, Iacobeni, Panaci, Sadova, Frasin, Vama, Vatra Moldovitei, Humor Monastery, Putna, etc.;
- Neamt (mountain range, Sub-Carpathian Hills, Bistrita Valley) Ceahlau, Durau, Vanatori-Neamt, Agapia, Baltatesti, Borca, Fagaras, Poiana Teiului, Pangarati, etc.;
- Bargau-Bistrita (Bargau Mountains, Bistrita-Nasaud Hills): Bistrita Bargaului, Colibita, Lunca Ilvei, Prundu Bargaului, Susenii Bargaului, Anies, Telciu, etc;

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→ Harghita (Gurghiu-Harghita Mountains, Giurgeu-Hasmasu Mare Mountains, Depression Gheorgheni-Ciuc, Praid-Corund Hilly Area, Sovata-Odorhei): Praid, Corund, Harghita Bai, Danesti, Carta, Santimbru Bai, Izvorul Muresului;

→ Barsa Country (Brasov-Covasna Depression and adjacent mountains: Bodoc, Baraolt and Persian, Ciuc, Întorsurii, Piatra Mare, Postavaru): Arcus, Baile Balvanyos, Ilieni, Sanziene, Zabala, Sugas Bai, Turia, Malnas Bai, Zagon, Persian Cristian, Poiana Marului, Ghimbav;

→ Bran-Fundata (Bran Corridor, Bucegi and Piatra Craiului Mountains): Bran, Bran-Predelut, Bran-Simon, Moeciu de Jos, Moeciu de Sus, Sohodol, Sirnea, Fundata, etc.;

→ Fagaras Country (Fagaras Depression, Fagaras Mountains): Bucium, Sambata de Jos, Avrig, Cartisoara, Sercaia;

→ Marginimea Sibiu (Sibiu Depression and Cindrel Mountains): Sibiel, Rasinari, Gura Raului, Orlat, Poplaca, Jina, Saliste, Cisdadioara, Cristian etc.;

→ Aries Valley (Bihor-Trascau-Metaliferi Mountains): Albac, Ariseni, Garda de Sus, Lupsa, Intregalde, Remetea, Scarisoara, etc.;

→ Cluj Hills-Vladeasa Mountains-Muntele Mare: Baisoara, Belis, Bologa, Ciucea, Margau, Gilau, Sâncraiu, Valea Draganului, Calatele, Vanatori, etc.;

→ Vrancea (Vrancea Depression, Vrancea Mountains): Campeni, Gresu, Vidra, Soveja, Lepsa, Tulnici, Mera, Vulcaneasa, Negrilesti, Vizantea, Naruja, Tifesti;

→ Teleajen-Prahova (Ciucas-Baiului Mountains, Prahova Hills): Slon, Drajna, Cerasu, Maneciu, Cheia, Valea Doftanei Traistenii, Telega, Cornu, Breaza;

→ Rucar-Muscelele Argesului (Rucar-Dragslavele Corridor, Piatra Craiului-Iezer-Leaota Mountains, Arges Hills): Bradet, Leresti, Rucar, Dragslavele, Bughea de Sus, Bughea de Jos, Corbeni;

→ Olt Valley-Valcea Hills (Olt Gorge, Lotru Valley, Cozia Mountains, Jiblea-Lovistei Depressions, Valcea Hills): Costesti, Vaideeni, Voineasa, Vladesi, Saliste;

→ Tismana-Polovragi (Gorj Hills, Parang-Valcan Mountains): Polovragi, Staneti, Sacelu, Tismana, Pestisani, Runcu;

→ Mehedinti (Mehedinti Plateau): Balta, Ciresu, Nadanova, Closani, Ponoarele;

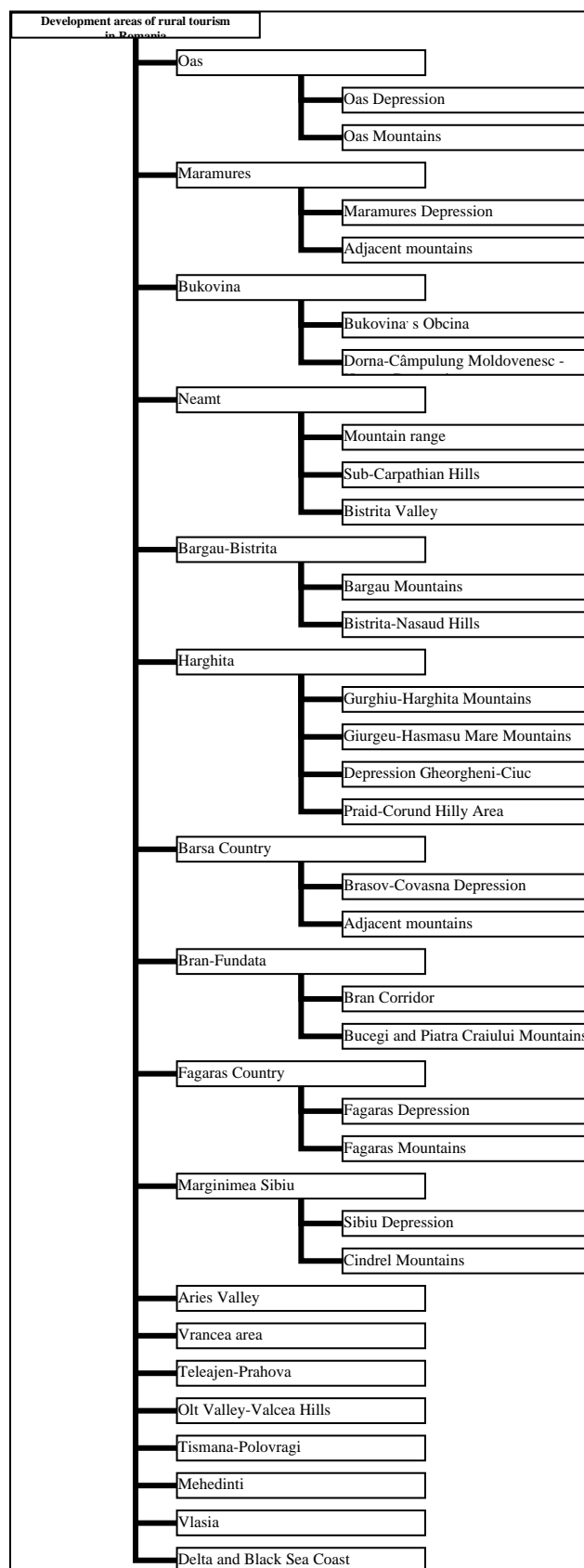


Figure 1. Development areas of rural tourism in Romania

→ Vlasia (Vlasia Plain): Snagov, Gruiu, Gradistea, Silistea Snagovului, Ciolpani;
 → Delta: Crisan, Uzlina, Murighiol, Mile 23, CA Rosetti, Periprava, Mahmudia Caraorman etc.;
 → Black Sea Coast: Agigea, Limanu.

Of course that, in the prospect, will enter in agro tourism circuit also other areas, settlement areas and rural folk, as tourism offer from rural area will develop.

Among special items/uniqueness that builds the image of Romanian rural tourism brand, are mentioned (Figure 2):

1. Wonderful landscape;
2. Unique attractions;
3. Specific rural life, ancient, well preserved;
4. Blending traditional and modern.

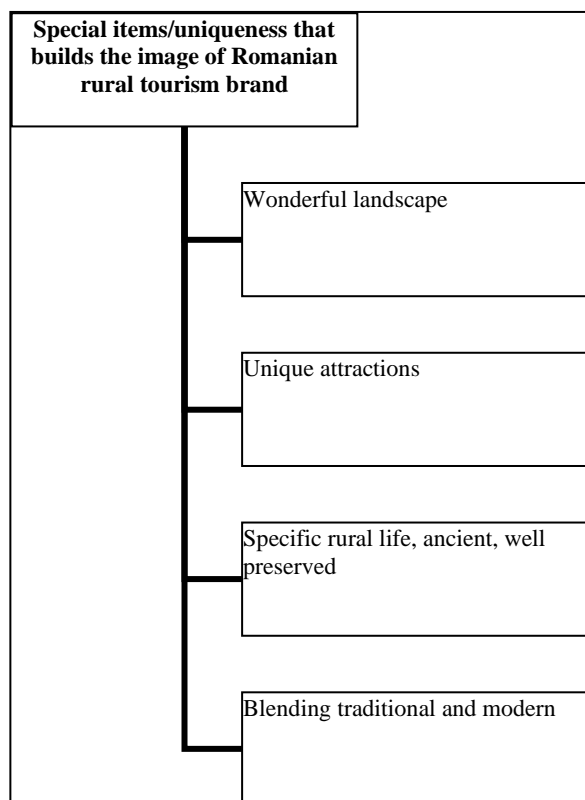


Figure 2. Special items/uniqueness that builds the image of Romanian rural tourism brand

The main needs/desires underlying tourists motivation for choosing Romanian rural tourism could be: [2]

1. Rest, relaxation, sports, maintaining/restoring health (physical);
2. Knowledge of art and history, contact with new forms of folklore, some unique attractions;

3. Meeting new people-here can be included both socializing and for business travel, escape from routine (interpersonal).

Among the regular events in the village may be mentioned: [3]

- participation to the life village ritual (work in farms or agricultural works in the field);
- participation to the spiritual life of the village (religious ceremonies, performances, evenings, weddings, baptisms, etc.).
- participation to the celebrations of all kinds of rural communities.

For a better understanding of the present level of rural tourism development and potential of rural areas, we decided to present a comparative analysis of the main Romanian rural destinations, performed by the Alba County Council, serving to provide a well defined perspective over the specificity and Romanian rural tourism development potential (Figure 3) [5].

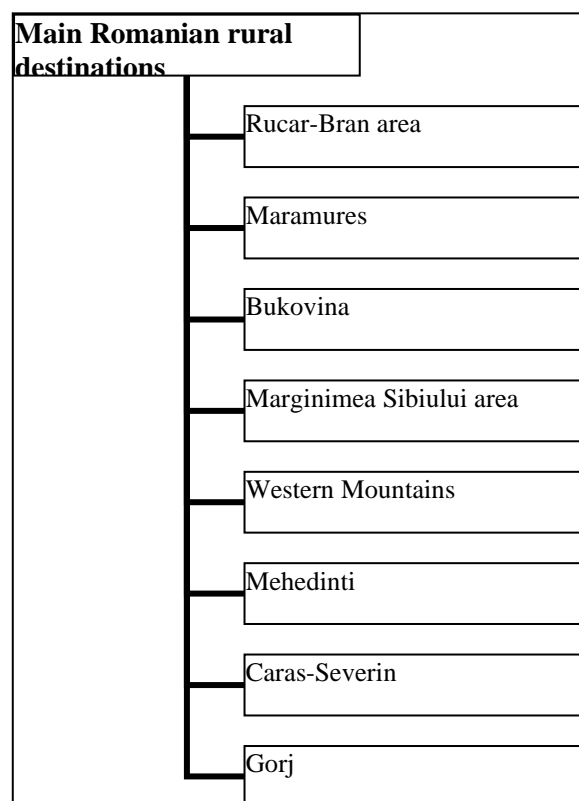


Figure 3. Main Romanian rural destinations

Rural tourism offer is dispersed in 31 counties, covering generally mountainous and hilly areas. In ANTREC catalogs are promoted rural guesthouses in over 3000 locations recorded. Most are found in counties with tradition in rural tourism (Brasov -

over 140, Cluj - 73, Sibiu – 68, Alba - 63, In table 1 Alba County Council has realized a comparative analyze on rural tourist destinations from Romania, [5] from which we can conclude that all

Maramures – 37, Gorj - 36, Suceava - 35 etc.). destinations have many tourist attraction but underdeveloped infrastructure.

Table 1. Comparative analysis between the major competing rural tourist destinations

Competing tourist destinations	Comparative analysis
Western Mountains	- Tourist objectives of Western Mountains can be a competitor or a partner depending on how the current/future development degree of existing stations (such as Stana de Vale or Baisoara). - The existence of some of the most important tourist objectives.
Rucar-Bran area	- Tourist area with better developed tourist infrastructure. - Attract a large market. - Very good presence in the commercial circuit. - The national symbol as agro-tourism area.
Maramures	- Special conservation of Ethnographic space. - The national symbol, internationally renowned. - Tourist infrastructure perceived as relatively well developed, but problems of road infrastructure.
Bukovina	- Well developed tourist infrastructure. - Many famous UNESCO monuments and nature reserves. - The national symbol, internationally renowned. - More efficient promotion.
Marginimea Sibiului area	- Better developed tourist infrastructure. - The higher price level. - Good presence in the commercial circuit. - Benefits of image conferred of the "Sibiu-European Cultural Capital" programm.
Gorj	- Rural tourism in the area is developed; there are a large number of guesthouses. - Ranca experienced significant tourism development in recent years.
Mehedinti	- Tourist infrastructure are increasingly focused on rural areas as pensions.
Caras-Severin	- Area targeted by resorts development projects. - Benefits from many unique natural attractions.

Source: processing after Alba County Council, *Market research in tourism in Alba County*, Final Report May 2008 [5]

4. Conclusions

1. We must note that in our country, rural tourism has long practice, informally, to locals.
2. Rural tourism is one of the forms of tourism that we can compete with any tourism European developed country, in terms of existing tourism resources.
3. The most developed areas of rural tourism are the counties of Brasov, Suceava, Maramures, Alba, Tulcea, Buzau and Vrancea, Cluj, Neamt and Gorj. Over time, ANTREC focused on different regions for promoting them, such as Carpathian foothills of Buzau, Northern Oltenia Western Mountains.
4. Destinations and attractions are generally simple tourist products based on basic services (accommodation, meals) and less on leisure services.

5. Over time, foreign experts in rural tourism have noted the diversification of rural tourism and agro tourism products from Romania ("Live natural ", "Health and pampering", "Bird watching in Danube Delta", "Road cellars", "Journey in cheese Country", "On traces of Brancusi", "Nature and Culture ", etc.).

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