



Sustainable Transport / Tourism Offers – Template for New Offers

IPA PP6: Elaboration of the regional tourism facilities and opportunities offered alongside the route

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| Title: | SPA AND GASTRONOMY BIKE TOUR BEROVO - STRUMICA |
| Partner: | <i>PROMO IDEA - STRUMICA, IPA PP6</i> |
| Overview | |
| Country: | <i>Republic of Macedonia (NUTS1)</i> |
| Region: | <i>Republic of Macedonia (NUTS2)/ East and South-East region (NUTS3)</i> |
| Short description: | <i>Cycling tourists are offered exciting bike tour for exploring SPA and gastronomy potential of Berovo and Strumica micro region alongside the ICT route in the East and South-East region of the Republic of Macedonia. This offer includes mini-bus rented by the operator, bike rental, transport of the tourists from the capital city of Skopje to the main attractions (without access by rail), their accommodation in the hotels in Berovo and Strumica including access to spa area.</i> |
| Objectives | <i>To offer the cyclists and cycling tourists exciting bike tour in the area of Berovo and Strumica micro region that integrates and facilitates the visit to the main SPA hotels and restaurants that serve traditional cuisine.</i> |
| Target groups | <i>Cycling tourists from the region of the capital city of Skopje (mainly families and recreational cyclists on weekends) with middle and high income and foreign tourists arriving in Skopje (via bus, rail or plane). Also cycling tourists from Thessaloniki, Greece and its wider region and foreign tourists arriving in Thessaloniki (via bus, rail or plane) are considered.</i> |
| Phase | <i>The offer is in a conceptual phase. Contacts have been established with SPA hotels and traditional restaurants in Berovo and Strumica as well as with tourist agency in Strumica. The future offer will contain: transportation of the tourists and their bikes by mini-bus, luggage transport, bike rental services, accommodation, food and beverages, access to spa area and local tour guide.</i> |
| Operator, contact | <i>Possible “operator” of the “offer” is the Travel Agency Laguna travel – Strumica. Further information:</i> |



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| | <p><i>Tourist Agency Laguna travel – Strumica; Mob.: +389 78 291 370; http://lagunatravel.mk</i></p> |
| Cost and benefits | <p><i>The rental services (the bus, the trailer, the bikes, the guide), the accommodation, food services and access to the spa areas will be subcontracted. If we estimate that at the beginning there will be one booked offer in March, April and October, and 2 booked offers per month in the period May - September, the profit in terms of agency provision will be cca 2.660 Euro. The initial investment is estimated at 1.000 Euro for printed materials, renting of stands at 2 events and web hosting and up-dating. This means that the initial investment can be recovered already during the first year. It is therefore worthwhile to consider the option of buying a trailer instead of renting it.</i></p> <p><i>Concerning the additional benefits, it is expected that the number of cycling tourists and leisure cyclists will increase as the infrastructure and services along the ICT improve. Besides the estimated profit of the operator, this offer will bring additional profit for the bike rental company, the tourist guides as well as for the hotels and restaurants. In terms of indirect revenue, there is a possibility to sell complementary products (e.g. local food products, souvenirs, etc.).</i></p> |



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| Marketing Analysis I. | |
| "Product" - detailed description of the services | <p><i>This package (which will be promoted on the operator's web site) offers a spa and gastronomy bike experience in the area of Berovo and Strumica micro region along the ICT sub-sections 3 and 4 in the Republic of Macedonia. The itinerary will last 3 days and will cover 105 km. The operator will offer an itinerary to groups of tourists (minimum 8 persons (e.g. 2 families)) which will include:</i></p> <p><i>Day 1: Skopje – Berovo Lake - Berovo (5,3 km)</i> <i>Arrival at Skopje airport (optional from the main bus or the central railway station). The operator will organize transfer with mini-bus from Skopje Airport to Strumica. Arrival in Berovo and accommodation in the five star hotel "Aurora Resort & Spa" (http://auroraresort.mk). Tourists will have time to enjoy in the spa center of the hotel. They will get their rented bikes in the hotel. Accompanied by a local guide they will have a short downhill drive of 5,3 km from the hotel to the ethno hotel "Manastir" where the dinner of typical local dishes will be served (http://www.hotelmanastir.com.mk). After the dinner the tourist will be transferred back to the hotel "Aurora Resort & Spa" with the mini-bus. Overnight in Berovo.</i></p> <p><i>Day 2: Berovo – Strumica (63,7 km)</i> <i>Breakfast at hotel. Afterwards the tourist will start the bicycle drive along the regional asphalt road Berovo – Strumica (56,2 km). The route contains several uphill and downhill parts, but the tourists will definitely enjoy the beautiful landscapes of Maleshevo mountains. If tired, some of them (especially the children) can use the option to travel with the mini-bus. Arrival in Strumica. Accommodation in the hotel "Sirius" (http://hotel-sirius.com.mk). Lunch will be served in the hotel restaurant. After the lunch the tourist will have time to enjoy the biggest spa center in Macedonia. In the evening, the tourists will be transferred with the mini-bus to the national restaurant "Complex Carevi kuli" where traditional dinner will be served. Overnight in the hotel "Sirius" in Strumica.</i></p> <p><i>Day 3: Strumica – border Novo Selo – Skopje (36,1 km)</i> <i>Breakfast at hotel. Bicycle drive along the local asphalt road Kuklish - Svidovica – Bansko (13,5 km). Afterwards the route continues along</i></p> |



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| | <p><i>the slopes of Belasica mountain. The tourists will drive 4,2 km to the ethno restaurant “Podgorski an” (http://podgorskian.com) where during the lunch they will taste traditional drinks and dishes. After the lunch break the tourists will continue their bike tour to Smolare (9,5 km), where famous waterfall will be visited. Part of this road between the villages of Mokrino and Smolare (2,6 km) is a gravel road. After the relaxing visit the tourists will be transferred to Skopje with the mini-bus.</i></p> |
| “Place” – market analysis | <p><i>This offer will be bookable from March to October when the weather conditions are more favorable. In order for this offer to be profitable for the operator, it is necessary to gather a group of at least 8 cyclists. If the group is eventually bigger, the price will be cheaper. At present the ICT has not been included in any offers of the Macedonian tour-operators. So, this offer/package can be considered as first of this kind.</i></p> |



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| Marketing Analysis II. | |
| Price | <i>We estimate that the price of all services included in the offer is 290 Euro per person, valid for groups of minimum 8 tourists. Two visits to the spa area in the hotels in Berovo and Strumica are included in the itinerary.</i> |
| Sales | <i>After analyzing the on-line offer, the tourists can get in touch with the operator by e-mail or phone, in order to express their agreement to purchase the services. The payment can be done via bank transfer after issuing an invoice.</i> |
| Promotion | <i>It is essential that the offer to be well promoted on-line, in a very attractive manner, both on the operator's website (with updated information and prices), but also at travel fairs (at national and international level) and with printed materials (distributed in the hotels in the East and South-east region in Macedonia and in the capital city of Skopje, in the bike shops, in the tourist info centres, etc.). First, priority should be given to materials available on-line, because they are more quickly accessible and can be more easily updated.</i> |



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| Implementation plan I. | |
| Detailed description of the technical solution | <i>The mini-bus must have at least 8 seats + driver, must be equipped with air conditioning, luggage compartment, audio station with microphone, reclining chairs and GPS monitoring system. The trailer must be lightweight (750 kg) and must be equipped with professional bike carriers in order to transport at least 8 bikes. Also, the trailer should offer the possibility to lock the bikes individually and to be able to carry them without touching to avoid damage.</i> |
| Actions to take | <p><i>The operator will have to sign collaboration agreements for renting the mini-bus, the bicycle trailer and the bicycles, for the travel guide as well as for the accommodation, food and spa services. The promotional activities are specified as follows:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>- Design, printing and dissemination of printed materials;</i> <i>- Placing and promoting the offer on the web site of the operator;</i> <i>- Participation of the operator at the fairs and events in the country and abroad (identifying fairs and events, renting stands, preparing promotional materials, etc.).</i> <i>- Dissemination of printed materials to the national tourist agency for presentation at international tourism fairs.</i> |



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| Implementation plan II. | |
| Costs of development and operation | <p><i>For a tour that lasts 3 days and includes 8 people, the costs are: the mini-bus rental cost is 300 Euro (3 days x 100 Euro), the trailer rental cost is 100 Euro (for 3 days), rental cost of 8 bicycles is 360 euro (8 bikes x 3 days x 15 Euro/day), travel guide cost is 150 euro (3 days x 50 Euro/day), the accommodation on Bed and Breakfast (BB) basis is 720 euro (8 persons x 2 HB x 45 Euro), 2 dinners in restaurants outside hotels cost 240 Euro (8 persons x 2 dinners x 15 Euro). Additional lunch costs 96 Euro and access to 2 spa areas is 80 Euro. The travel agency commission will be 10%.</i></p> <p><i>The total cost for the promotion activities is 1.000 Euro for 13 tours in the 1st year (or cca 77 Euro/ offer): Printed materials = 500 Euro; Placing of the tour on the website of the operator is for free, but the web hosting of the web site is 100 Euro/ year and Renting stands at the fairs costs 400 Euro (2 events x 200 Euro/event).</i></p> |
| Time plan for the realization | <p><i>Signing of cooperation agreements will be in the first two weeks. After that the operator will place the offer on its website. Printed materials will be designed, printed and disseminated after one month. Afterwards they will be distributed to National Agency for tourism which participates at international tourism fairs. In the first 3 months the operator will promote the offer on at least 2 events.</i></p> |
| Stakeholders and organisation | <p><i>Main stakeholder will be the Travel Agency Laguna travel - Strumica. Hotels, restaurants and local tour guides will also play an important role.</i></p> |