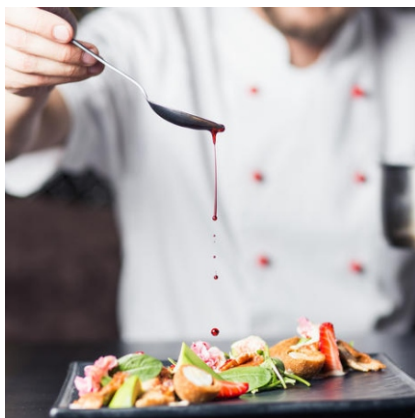




# Handbook 1

Entrepreneur in My Village



## FLAVOURS of EUROPE

Digitalization of Rural  
Gastronomic Cultural  
Heritage in Europe



Co-funded by  
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**FLAVOURS of EUROPE**

**PR2 Training course: Digitalisation of Rural Gastronomic Cultural Heritage in  
Europe**

*Handbook No.1 Entrepreneur in My Village*

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**Handbook No.1 Entrepreneur in My Village**

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## 1. WHAT IS ENTREPRENEURSHIP? ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN THE RURAL ENVIRONMENT.

Welcome to this first Handbook! Today you start a path full of challenges to become an entrepreneur in rural areas. We know that the road is not easy, so we want to offer you all kinds of resources to make everything easier.

And we want to start with a definition of an entrepreneur. There are many ways to define an entrepreneur. You are already an entrepreneur because you wanted to start down this path.

- An entrepreneur is someone who undertakes with resolution innovative actions or ventures.
- An entrepreneur is a person who is able to identify and discover some kind of business opportunity. Based on this, he or she organizes resources in order to start a business project.
- An entrepreneur locates opportunities by analyzing and studying the market and its fluctuations. In this way, he/she identifies the preferences and attitudes of the public.
- An entrepreneur gathers financial, economic and human resources to give shape to his project.
- An entrepreneur sets the idea in motion with determination, facing his position of responsibility.
- An entrepreneur pursues a dream, and does not rest until it is realized.

**Question:** Which of these definitions do you most identify with? Can you provide a definition?

Some entrepreneurs have very specific competencies. Maybe you also have some of these:

1. **Entrepreneurial creativity**, to create new business ideas.
2. **Leadership**, will help you to work with other people and set a goal.
3. Ability to adapt and manage change. This means knowing how to adapt to new circumstances (changes in product demand, changes in legislation, etc.).

4. **Perseverance and goal orientation**, since conditions may be unfavorable at the beginning and you have to know how to persevere. Michelle Obama said that there is no magic formula for success; it all comes down to hard work, making the right decisions and perseverance.
5. **Passion**. An entrepreneur like you will need to be enthusiastic and believe in your idea in order to develop it.
6. **Self-confidence**, to bring security to the project and to your team and to achieve the goals set.
7. The entrepreneur must be a realistic person and have a great capacity to analyze the environment.
8. Taking **calculated risks** is very important for the entrepreneur in order not to fall into false opportunities. Be careful! It is important not to risk more than you can.

Entrepreneurship continues to be an area where we in Europe are at a clear disadvantage compared to other countries in the world. For example, a higher proportion of American, Canadian and Australian working-age adults engaged in entrepreneurial activity than their European peers.

#### **Did you know that...?**

The European Union is encouraging the creation of businesses and the promotion of entrepreneurial culture, especially in three priorities:

1. Improving entrepreneurship education and training.
2. Removing administrative obstacles.
3. Promoting the culture of entrepreneurship.

Some experts speak of six types of entrepreneurs, depending on the type of opportunity from which the idea arises:

- **Visionary:** is one who anticipates the demands or market trends, thinking about the future and not only in business ideas that today are the most profitable. It may be, for example, a business that begins to implement, as a sales channel, a new technology that still has limited scope. However, the entrepreneur expects the use of such technology to increase progressively in the coming years.
- **Opportunistic:** As its name suggests, it identifies business opportunities, seeks to discover a need not yet satisfied by the public.
- **Social:** Is one that seeks to have a positive impact on society, not just generate profitability.
- **By accident:** Is one who by chance gets involved in a venture, for example, with a friend who proposes a business idea.
- **Investor:** The person who does not develop the business idea, but invests capital in it, becoming a partner.
- **Persuasive:** Like the investor, he/she has not generated the business idea either, but is capable of influencing a group of people to carry out a project that may have been conceived by someone else.
- **Specialist:** A specialist focuses on a specific sector and develops his activity there. He/she seeks to address a niche that, although small, can generate profitability.

Rural entrepreneurship is one of the keys to the economic and social development of the territory in which you live. It provides a livelihood, brings wealth and employment, and responds to local needs for goods and services. A very important factor is that entrepreneurship **fixes** the population in the territories.

The most important quality of rural entrepreneurship lies in the fact that people (like you) generate their employment alternative so that they do not have to leave their living environment. This lack of professional options and job offers is also linked to the maintenance of family businesses and great sensitivity to the development and growth of the population they inhabit.



**Did you know that...?**

The rural environment has always been unknown to urban entrepreneurs and has not captured their interest, but the COVID-19 crisis is changing the perception we had of the world and will probably mark a before and after in our society, in our way of working, in our values of life, in our consumption habits and, perhaps, these changes can be an opportunity for the rural world and to promote entrepreneurship in this environment.

The future is not only in the so-called *smart cities*, but also in rural areas. Currently, there is a great opportunity for development in rural areas: city professionals are looking for places in the rural environment to develop their talent and improve their quality of life.

In addition, the facilities for rural entrepreneurship mean that more and more people are deciding to make the leap from the city to the countryside. Aid programs and an environment with less competition make the rural world a real option for many people who want to change their lives and start their own business.

It seems that in rural areas it is easier to propose a new business that no one in the area has thought of and to have less competition. And not only that, but also, when it comes to setting up a new business, everything, in general, is cheaper: the cost of housing, commercial premises or a warehouse and the standard of living are more affordable than in the cities.

## 2. HOW TO START-UP A NEW BUSINESS BY ESTABLISHING A LOCAL GASTRONOMIC POINT IN THEIR FAMILY TYPE UNIT.

Similar to the famous game **Trivial Pursuit**, we invite you to reflect on six areas or stages to create a business in a rural environment starting from scratch.<sup>1</sup>

- History (**Yellow**). Your personal history. Know the competences and skills in which you have been successful in the past.
- Geography (**Blue**). Where you want to be. What is your goal in creating a company?
- Art and Literature (**Brown**). Readings, reports and documents to set up your business.
- Science and Nature (**Green**). Your reality, your environment, observing reality.
- Shows (**Pink**). Personal skills. The 'art you have'. What is your secret weapon?
- Sports (**Orange**). Practice.



### HISTORY

#### Past experiences

"There is no better predictor of the future than the past." (Luis Puchol)

Your experiences will form the basis of your business, because who would embark on a project in which they have little chance of success? Analyze which activities you have been successful in the past. Even if you have not yet been an entrepreneur, we are sure that there are experiences that you can incorporate into your new project, especially gastronomic ones:

<sup>1</sup> Trivial Pursuit is a board game. Scott Abbott, a sports editor for the Canadian Press newspaper, and Chris Haney, a photographer for the Montreal Gazette magazine, developed the idea in December 1979; their game was released two years later. In the United States, the game became popular in 1984, when some 20 million copies were sold. Parker Brothers (now part of Hasbro) bought the rights to the game in 1988. As of 2004, about 88 million copies have been sold, in 26 countries and 17 languages.

- Have you cooked for anyone other than your family?
- Have you planted, cared for or harvested produce?
- Are you interested in dealing with people?
- Did you write down your parents' or grandparents' recipes and try to replicate them on occasion?

All of these experiences will now see the light of day in a magical new way. Remember what they are and write them down. They will be very valuable to you.



## GEOGRAPHY

### Goals and Strategy

"There is no good wind for one who does not know where he is going."  
(Seneca)

Everything starts with an idea, which has to be transformed into goals. Remember that your objectives must be SMART, i.e.:

- **Specific:** Not being clear about your objective is a good start... for disaster. Take some time to honestly consider this. For example, "increase sales" is far from a specific objective.
- **Measurable:** Remember to use variables that you can later measure. For example: "Grow by 3%" is a measurable objective. The measurability of a SMART objective could be quantitative or qualitative.
- **Achievable:** It has to be achievable. Therefore, you must make your idea land on the target.

- **Relevant:** Don't get halfway there. Try to make the goal a bit ambitious, so that it challenges you.
- **Time-bound:** Objectives must have a target date, or a time frame for when they should be completed - hence time-bound. This not only provides a sense of urgency but also helps when it comes to reviewing whether or not the objective has been successfully achieved.

The strategy is, quite simply, to think long-term. Where would you like to see your small business in five years? By always having the strategy in your mind, it will be easier to achieve it.



## **ART AND LITERATURE**

### **Resources for entrepreneurship**

"If your aspirations are not greater than your resources, you are not an entrepreneur." (C.K. Prahalad)

What resources do you need to carry out your project? There are many people who may have already undertaken a similar enterprise and have systematized their experiences in books or manuals. On the other hand, it is also possible that in your region there are aids, offices or support bodies for entrepreneurs and more specifically in rural areas. Make a collection of all this as soon as possible.

- a) Books and manuals on entrepreneurship
- b) Reports on clients

- c) Testimonials and experiences of other entrepreneurs in your town or surroundings, who, even if they are not in the same sector as you, can surely tell you their impressions about customers, market, schedules...
- d) Entrepreneur Support Offices are common in rural areas. Do not hesitate to contact them. Most of them are public, and they have technicians to help you make the business plan correctly.



## SCIENCE AND NATURE

### Environment

"It doesn't matter if your surroundings are dark. Light up your part."

(Anonymous)

Analyzing the market is key to our business plan. In this we will analyze, on the one hand, the market in which the product will be introduced, its size, the success factors that characterize it, what barriers to entry and exit we may encounter, what is its natural evolution and growth, its subsequent pace and current trends. And, on the other hand, we will have to make a thorough investigation of the competition we face to offer the best product and reach the largest number of consumers. But rest assured! Surely in a rural market the competition will always be 'friendly'.



## SHOWS

### Personal Skills

"When everything changes... new skills are necessary". (Marta Grañó)

What are your most outstanding skills? I'm sure you know how to do things that positively impact your business. These skills (called soft skills) are those that will improve your project, your client relationships, and, of course, your personal life. What would be some of these skills?

- Time management.
- Public speaking.
- Teamwork.
- Leadership.
- Sales skills.
- Negotiation.
- ...and so on up to more than twenty.

We encourage you to strengthen some of these skills, which will be very beneficial in your future as an entrepreneur.



## SPORTS

### Actions you are going to develop

"The idea that does not try to become a word is a bad idea, and the word that does not try to become an action is a bad word." (Chesterton)

Now we have to get to work. And you have to do it step by step, with patience, knowing that there will be many difficulties that you will have to go through.

At this stage you will have to define the business model and **financial plan**, which will detail the financial arrangements (how you will finance yourself), the core portfolio of products or services to achieve the strategic goals and objectives, an interim income statement and all those short/medium/long term financing needs.

Entrepreneurship is easy if you set your mind to it. You just have to have a good product and some self-confidence. The product may not be good at the beginning, because the important thing is to load it with value, generating a progressive value that increases the perception of the product among your potential customers.

### **3. LEGAL FRAMEWORKS AND NECESSARY STEPS.**

The first step in setting up a company, however small, is to choose its legal form. It is preferable that you do it with the help of a consultancy with which to manage the beginnings: incorporation of the company, fiscal obligations, and payment of taxes...

**To keep in mind:** Each type of company requires a minimum number of partners and investment (capital), and will determine the liability of the company and the partners for the company's debts.

There are other special types of companies, such as the Civil or the Communities of Goods, which have different characteristics from the previous ones, and are governed at the level of taxes in a different way.

It may even be that you finally choose to establish yourself as a **self-employed worker**.

Once you have chosen the legal form that suits you best, it is time to register your business in the Trademark Registry or similar in your country.

There is a register in each country or region that records the number of companies and their activities in the mercantile traffic or, what is the same, of the set of operations of the business activities.

There you must verify by means of the negative certificate that the corporate name of your company is unique, and that it does not coincide with that of any other company.

Once you have the denomination, go to the banks; to your bank of confidence but also to the rest of financial institutions.

Analyze which bank offers you the most advantageous conditions to open an account in the name of your company. In that account you must deposit the share capital, the minimum or the chosen one.

**Important:** Do not forget to request the deposit certificate, if the bank does not issue it as usual.



This certificate, where the data of the partner or partners and the contributions made appear, accredits the social capital in the constitution and you will have to provide before notary or public official.



## Legal frameworks & **necessary steps**

Choose a legal form.

Register your business in the Trademark Registry.

Choose a bank with benefits for your business.

Don't forget to request the deposit certificate.

#### 4. HOW TO PROVIDE LOCAL FOOD SATISFACTION.

The person with whom we want to establish any type of commercial relationship must receive positive inputs from our company at all times, not only just when the purchase or consumption action takes place. Before having the first physical contact, you have to attract their attention so that they get to know your product and show interest in it. Then, once the sale has been made, contact with your customer must be constant (but be careful not to become a bore) and you must be able to respond very shortly so that they continue to trust you and repeat the act of buying more times.

In other words, the actions to get a satisfied customer with your product can be the following:

- a) **Inform clearly.** You must be transparent and inform through the channels you consider convenient (those through which the target audience is informed) about what you are going to sell, what your product is for, what are the features and what need it is intended to solve. If it

is a restaurant, it is very easy. If you are going to sell food, you must specify the properties of each one.

- b) **Always tell the truth.** Many advertising campaigns tend to exaggerate the virtues and utilities of a product or service. It is an absurd strategy, because it only has short-term credit, since at the first purchase the customer will realize that what he has heard is false. In addition, due to the non-fulfillment of the expectations created, the consumer will feel distrust towards you and your product. This will be a disaster in the future for everything new you launch.
- c) **Keep your dealings friendly.** The treatment in all cases must be professional and polite, but it is clear that it is not the same to address a younger person than a more adult audience with a large purchasing power. Therefore, the treatment should always be adapted to what the consumer expects, so you should use the appropriate register in each case.
- d) **Solve any doubts or questions quickly, safely and efficiently.** You already know that after-sales service is one of the most important tools to achieve customer loyalty. Any complaint or problem must be solved quickly so that the person does not feel that they have been neglected. "How can we solve it?" should be your most used phrase.
- e) **Adapt the product to the suggestions raised.** Consumer preferences may vary over time and the company has to be able to detect these changes. Therefore, it is essential to keep in close contact with the consumer to detect them.

**Do not forget:** Customer preferences may change over time.

#### 4.1. What are the consequences of not satisfying the customer?

If the quality of your dish, your final product, or your treatment fails to satisfy the customer, the following situations may occur:

- **Customer does not repeat the purchase action.** If the customer does not receive the expected treatment or the product does not satisfy his needs, he will not buy it again and

will go to swell the list of customers of the competition. Therefore, it is one less source of revenue that can have an impact on the bottom line.

- **Customers do not make improvements or suggestions about the product.** A customer may continue to buy the product because he really meets your expectations or likes it, but if he is not treated well he may refuse to provide information that you later ask for. Consequently, you will not be aware of changes in preferences and will not be able to react to possible changes.
- **Customer acts as a negative prescriber.** Many businesses have grown thanks to recommendations from known customers who have generated chains of trust that have helped to consolidate the business. On the contrary, if the customer is not satisfied, he will advise against any relationship with you and you will lose potential customers.

#### **4.2. What are the benefits for you if a customer is satisfied?**

All your activity, from the generation of the idea to the details you add to your product, should be focused on achieving customer satisfaction, because only from this premise is it possible to reach all the other goals that may arise. Thus, if the customer feels satisfied with the attention received, the benefits for the company will be:

- a) Increased sales: the more customers, the more sales for the business and the greater the likelihood of securing higher profits.
- b) Consolidate a secure income for you in the medium and long term: if the customer is satisfied, he will repeat the purchase action in the future and, therefore, the company ensures a minimum number of sales in a significant period of time. With a view to making forecasts about the future to undertake new projects, it is a cushion that provides security.
- c) That the customer acts as a positive prescriber: the satisfied customer will advise people in his environment with the same preferences and needs to buy the product. In the same way, this one will do it with another one, and so on.

- d) Strengthening a brand image: the company manages to consolidate a brand image that can be very useful in different terms. First, to achieve a link with certain values. Second, because it will be easier to attract the consumer's attention when launching new products.
- e) Greater market predisposition to the incorporation of new products: customers will be attentive to any novelty affecting the company, especially if it plans to launch a new product on the market.

**The satisfied customer.** Keeping your customers happy is the key to ensuring their loyalty and the success of your business. When customers are satisfied with your product, they are loyal, great advocates, frequent purchasers of your products and services, and they really want you to succeed in the marketplace.

**Without satisfied customers, you won't have loyal customers. Without loyal customers, you won't have consumers who stick around for long.** They will go to the competition when they have the chance, and it is more expensive to acquire new customers than to retain current ones. Therefore, we offer you some strategies to improve your customers' satisfaction with your product in an effective way.

#### **4.3. Strategies to work on customer satisfaction.**

To ensure the loyalty of your customers, you need to work on the following strategies to improve customer satisfaction.

##### **a) *Understand customer expectations.***

You can't expect to serve and satisfy your customers if you don't understand and meet their expectations. If you fail, there is a disconnect between customer expectations and your product or service, so take steps to overcome it. Talk to them, send out customer surveys, and ask for feedback.

Act on the feedback you receive. This will increase customer loyalty and encourage them to provide feedback in the future.

**b) *Experience it yourself.***

The next of the strategies for improving customer satisfaction is for you to evaluate every point of the customer journey as if you were one of them. In other words: try the product, play with it.

There are several touch points where your customers interact before, during or after the purchase. Why not go through the experience yourself? Sign up for a demo, see how the process works, register a complaint, send it by email and evaluate the response time. It sounds silly but it's important.

Once you know all this first hand, you will know what areas need improvement. This will make your processes and operations more efficient, boosting customer experience and satisfaction.

**c) *Connect with your suppliers and, if you have one, your sales team.***

Often overlooked, but you need to interact with your sales team on a regular basis and as needed. They are the ones who are in direct contact with customers and know what the problems are. Use that data to fix any shortcomings you have in the customer journey.

It is also important that you trust and train your salespeople. Let them participate in the process and passionately solve customer problems. This will ensure employee engagement and reduce employee attrition.

**d) *Treat your customers well.***

One strategy to support customers and ensure customer satisfaction is to treat them well. You must treat them with respect, with the utmost attention and commitment. This must be reflected in all teams and processes.

You must empathize with their problems. If a customer feels the website is unhelpful or difficult to navigate, have a live chat to get that feedback. All customer-centric organizations strive to make their websites easy to use and visually appealing to keep them happy.

**e) *Reduce wait times.***

Higher wait times significantly lower customer satisfaction ratings. So it's the brand's responsibility to include among the strategies to improve satisfaction the planning and hiring of support staff. And that can be helped with a good website and a good e-sales system, if it's a product. Or a good reservation system, if it's a restaurant.

**To keep in mind:** You can't give excuses to customers for high call volume, lack of staff, vacation season, etc. You need to anticipate these situations and plan for them.

**f) *Offer multichannel help.***

There may always be some small problems that your customers may have due to lack of information. You can, if you wish, provide brochures, documents and all kinds of support material to solve their small doubts.

**Important:** Your customers will appreciate multichannel communication as it will help them to get solutions quickly (social networks, brochures, some email message...).

**g) *Listen to your customers.***

Listening to your satisfied and dissatisfied customers is another strategy to improve satisfaction. Find out what works and what gets in the way of an excellent customer experience. You can do a simple survey at the end of every purchase or every consumption.

Keep in mind: If you survey customers but don't act on their feedback, you won't make them happy and you won't be efficient.

**h) *Build online communities.***

Building online communities is a great way to manage customer service, marketing activities and address any customer concerns. For example, if you ask your customers for their email or cell phone, you can create a mailing list by mail or Whatsapp with news and some interesting announcements. You can also provide some information about healthy living, nutrition, and some components of food worth taking into account...

Communities are an excellent way to collect ideas about new foods, components, products..., that is: get the insights you need.

**i) *Ensure your team satisfaction.***

The employee experience and the customer experience are linked. Committed employees are known to help improve customer satisfaction.

Try to reward the efforts of your suppliers, of your team, of those who help you in these first moments in a disinterested way... Value them and offer them a great working environment and enrich their experience; remember that internal customer satisfaction is also important.

**Remember:** Employee motivation is just as important as self-motivation. You will be the daily example for your employees and you must understand that the image you give; how you treat customers and your attitude in the face of difficulties or daily tasks, will be the example to follow for workers and colleagues.

Business leaders must develop the ability to motivate their team so that they feel satisfied and committed to the work they carry out and perform it excellently with the greatest effort, this will make the business much more competitive and productive.

**Remember:** Benefits of being motivated with your project and your teamwork motivation is an essential element in a work team since it brings about a qualitative change in the performance of tasks, but at the same time it contributes to maintaining a healthy and collaborative work environment.



One of the most relevant benefits of work motivation is the commitment of the team and their availability to contribute more, perform better and achieve both individual and group goals.

In addition to those mentioned, there are other important benefits for your business when the whole team is motivated, such as the following:

- Greater productivity since you will perform better in your tasks and you will contribute to the achievement of the objectives.
- Lower level of absenteeism since the entire team feels comfortable with their work life.
- Improvement in the level of customer service derived from a good attitude and internal job satisfaction in the team.
- A better reputation as an employer, this will allow you to attract and retain the best talent for your company.
- More efficient company performance thanks to the collaborative environment and proactivity of the work team.

Surely, as you read these lines, you are wondering what your level of motivation is. Just ask yourself this question: how much do you want to start a small business?

## **5. HOW TO ENSURE AND MEASURE QUALITY AND VALUE.**

In your case, food quality control is the use of technological, physical, chemical, microbiological, nutritional and sensory parameters to ensure that a food is healthy and tasty in order to protect consumers, both from fraud and their health.

If you take the step to start a small business, remember that you will be part of the food industry and as such, you must adhere to basic rules to ensure the safety of your customers. You will be handling and storing fresh food that will be transformed into ready-to-eat dishes, which are expected to satisfy not only your customers' need for food, but also to ensure a memorable

experience that will motivate future visits. You have it in your hands that customers will influence other diners who will repeat the repurchase cycle again and again, and who will guarantee the profitability of your business.

### **5.1. The concept of Quality**

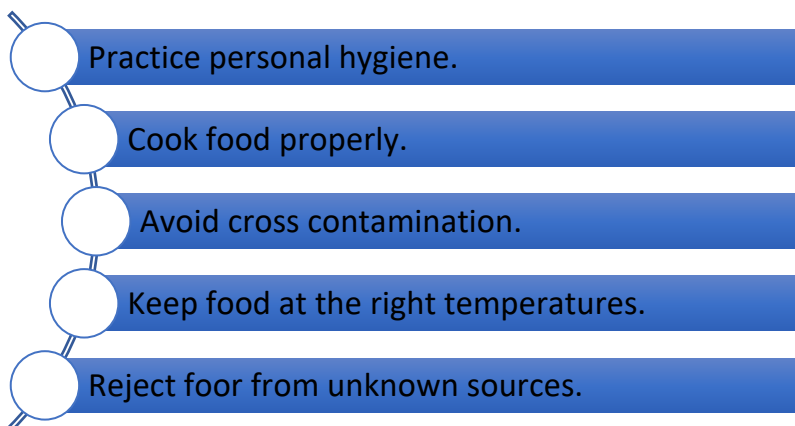
**Quality means providing value to the customer**, and this is nothing more than offering conditions of use of the product or service superior to those that the customer expects to receive and at an affordable price. Some experts define quality as: "Delivering to the customer not what he wants, but what he never imagined he wanted, and once he gets it, he realizes that it was what he always wanted".

It is clear that to reach that level of satisfaction, more than one attempt is required, and this is where quality management systems fit perfectly, whose premise is based on "putting order" so that the final result is always the same, minimizing losses and increasing profitability without sacrificing our customer's satisfaction.

There are several options for applying "quality" to restaurant businesses and the ideal one is basically the one that fits each model. As each restaurant or food service has a history that precedes it, it is necessary to understand how the value proposition has been built, and then develop a system that enhances it. This, if you will, is the greatest area of opportunity for establishing quality systems, since most establishments do not have standardized processes, and in some cases the processes are practically non-existent. If in the food industry, quality is tied to safety, it is likely that in the restaurant industry this is the criterion to consider when it comes to quality management.

A study conducted by Ohio University identified the most important control points for maintaining food safety and reducing the number of cases and outbreaks of foodborne illnesses:

## CONTROL POINTS FOR MAINTAINING FOOD SAFETY



Source: Ohio University

Among the different types of food quality are hygienic and sanitary quality, bromatological quality (including nutritional and compositional properties), sensory or organoleptic quality, technological quality, ethical quality (also known as emotional quality), quality of use (practicability) and quality related to your image as a future entrepreneur.

### 5.2. Food quality

Consumers used to consider food to be of good quality when it was free of defects and unadulterated. However, in recent years, the concept of food quality has changed. Today, we think that food is of good quality when it has certain desirable attributes. These attributes can be both extrinsic and intrinsic. Extrinsic attributes are intangible but remain part of the food product, for example environmental impact, place of origin and traditional know-how applied in its manufacture.

Currently, the notion of food quality is based on a complex concept that is influenced by a wide range of factors. Characteristics that contribute to food quality are shown in figure below.

### **CHARACTERISTICS OF FOOD QUALITY**



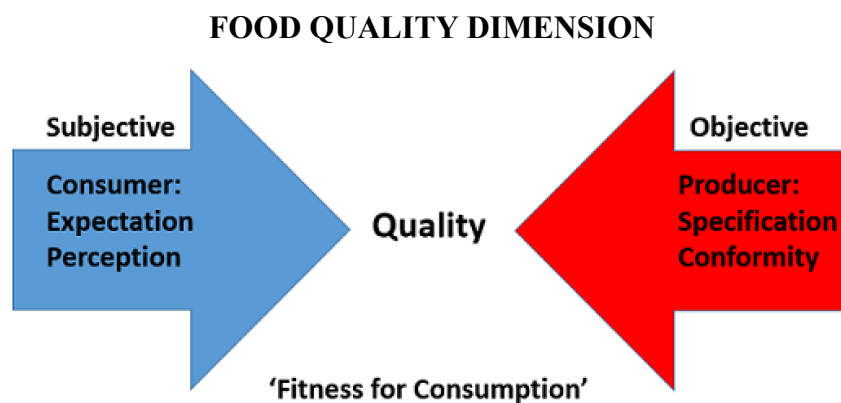
Source: European Union

The 24th Regional Conference for Europe of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) attempted to extend the general definition of quality, which can be found in the standard of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), to quality of food\*:

1. Historically, quality has been understood primarily as the absence of defect, fraud, and adulteration.

2. More recently, quality is based on expected properties, such as nutritional characteristics or resulting benefits. This introduces the need to take into account the legitimate expectations of users and ask operators to do the same.
3. Finally, quality designates the desirable characteristics that are likely to justify the added value; for example, forms of production (organic agriculture, environmental consideration and animal welfare), production areas (denomination of origin) and their associated traditions.

Food quality has an objective dimension, which is the measurable physicochemical characteristic of a food product, and a subjective dimension framed by consumer expectations, perceptions and acceptance (“fitness for consumption”).



Source: European Union

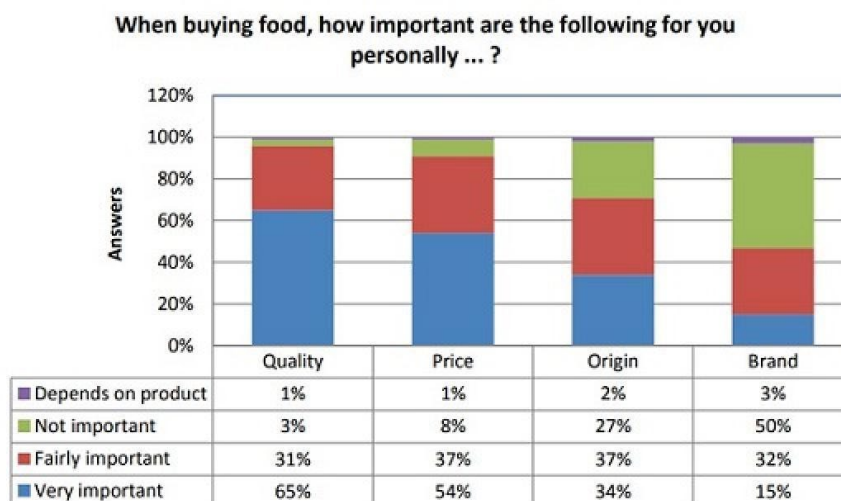
Consumer expectations are based on quality cues (information stimuli) that are intrinsic (eg, inferring fruit ripeness from its color) or extrinsic to the product (eg, advertising, product image brand). The better the match between the expectations consumers have before buying (expected quality) and the experience they get from using the products (experienced quality) the higher the level of consumer satisfaction. A positive experience with a brand has been shown to reduce the

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risk of dissatisfaction and is frequently used to **infer product quality**. As a result, consumers often trust well-known brands as **indicators of quality**.

Research has shown that consumers consider taste and other sensory characteristics of food, health, convenience and the production process (e.g. organic, animal welfare, etc.) as the most important determinants of food quality\*. In this respect, sensory properties (taste, flavour, etc.) were rated by 96% of the 30,000 respondents in a German survey as the dominant dimension of food quality, followed by 'safety' (93%); 'freshness' and 'attractive appearance' ranked third (92%) and fourth (87%) respectively\*. The 2012 'Special Eurobarometer 389' report showed that food quality, price and origin are important to the majority of EU citizens, but attitudes towards brands can vary significantly. Furthermore, the report states that 'opinions on the importance of brands vary much more between Member States than for quality, price and origin\*. The results are summarized in the figure below showing consumers' priorities when buying food (based on data taken from Special Eurobarometer 389).

### ASSESSMENT OF THE QUALITY, PRICE, ORIGIN AND BRAND OF FOODSTUFFS.



Source: European Union

Food quality was rated as the most important reason for purchase (96%), followed by price (91%). Interestingly, brand information is clearly less important for food shoppers; 50% of EU citizens consider this information to be unimportant.

### **a) Dual food quality**

Quality is one of the most valued characteristics when choosing which food to buy; however, its objective description is a very challenging task. The quantity and type of ingredients influence the quality of food. Concerns have been expressed in several EU countries about foods that are marketed with the same packaging and branding in their domestic market but differ from products sold in neighboring markets. Such differentiation may constitute an unfair commercial practice when the difference (dual quality) is not adequately communicated to the consumer, even if the provisions of EU food consumer information legislation are respected.

Quality is an important issue for consumers when buying food. It is equally important for producers when negotiating the price of their products. This is why the European Commission protects food products with distinctive quality characteristics through food quality schemes.

### **b) EU food quality schemes**

European consumers value certain food products for their special qualities, both intrinsic and extrinsic. In order to differentiate these products more easily, the European Commission protects them through food quality schemes. To this end, it lays down certain rules on which foods should be protected, what producers must do to have their products recognised and how to communicate their distinctive quality to consumers. European and non-European producers who wish to have their products protected by a quality scheme can send an application to their national authority, which then forwards it to the European Commission, which verifies that the product qualifies for

inclusion in the scheme. For all quality schemes, the competent national authorities in each EU country are responsible for preventing and avoiding misuse of products using that name.

### **c) Types of quality schemes**

There are currently four food quality schemes in the EU. There are also national and regional quality seals that apply in the different Member States. Products protected by quality schemes, whether national or EU, can be identified by the logos of the respective schemes, which appear on the packaging.

### **d) Geographical indications**

A geographical indication is a way of marking products that have certain qualities or a good reputation due to their geographical origin and the traditional know-how applied. Within the EU, two food quality schemes deal with geographical indications.

### **e) Protected Designation of Origin (PDO)**



For a food product to be considered a PDO product, production, processing and preparation must take place in a specific geographical area. This condition also includes the raw material used in its production, which must also come from that area. The traditional know-how of the people of the region also plays an important role.

An example of a PDO product is the "Brabantse Wal asperges", a variety of white asparagus from the Brabant region in the Netherlands. The salty groundwater, the sandy soil and the know-how of the local farmers make the asparagus special. The geography of the Brabant region also plays an important role in shaping the product's attributes.



**f) Protected Geographical Indication (PGI)**

The PGI designation is less restrictive. At least one of the stages of production, processing or preparation must take place in a specific geographical area. The raw material used in production may come from another region. An example of such a product is "Düsseldorfer Mostert", a ready-to-use mustard paste from the city of Düsseldorf in Germany. It is prepared by mixing brown and yellow mustard seeds with lime and mineral-rich water from Düsseldorf and unfiltered alcohol vinegar produced in Düsseldorf. The vinegar, water and production technique link the product to Düsseldorf, but the mustard seeds can be sourced elsewhere.

**g) Traditional Speciality Guaranteed (TSG)**

Some traditional food products with special qualities are not linked to a specific region. The traditional speciality guaranteed scheme protects such products from counterfeiting and misuse. An example of a TSG is Serrano ham. As it is protected by the TSG scheme, European producers must respect the traditional production method if they wish to produce it. There are no restrictions on the region of production or the breed of pig that can be used.



The registration of food and agricultural products, wines, spirit drinks and aromatised wines under the PDO, PGI and TSG schemes is available on the European Commission's e-Ambrosia portal.

**h) Organic food**

Organic food is food that has been certified as having been grown using organic farming techniques. Organic farming involves the creation of a sustainable agricultural system. It does not use synthetic pesticides or genetically modified organisms. Organic farmers strive to maintain biodiversity, use natural resources responsibly and ensure that farm animals are well cared for. Various types of food such as fruits, vegetables, grains and meats can be organic. Organic" is a quality attribute related to the production process. Therefore, the organic scheme is a food quality scheme.



## 6. HOW TO MEET THE EXPECTATION OF THE TOURIST.

As you have seen in previous sections, we call customer expectation what our customers expect from us as a brand. The expectation is intimately related to the experiences they have previously had with our proposal, with respect to the quality of our product and with the customer service we provide.

In every interaction we have with customers, we as a company will have the task (and the opportunity) to meet the expectations of a product and satisfy the customer's needs, but also to exceed them. If we are a small business, our challenge is greater, since 76% of users expect better service from smaller companies.

### 6.1. Categories for organizing customer experience and expectations.

To help us reflect on the degree of customer expectation, we can name three categories into which it is possible to organize them according to how they feel after their purchase experience:

- **Dissatisfied customer:** the customer is dissatisfied when there is a difference between his expectations and the experience he had buying. In other words, when they feel they did not

get what they expected. According to a study by the White House Office of Consumer Affairs, almost all dissatisfied customers do not complain directly to the company. Not only that, but 91% express that they will never buy again from the brand that caused them a bad experience.

- **Indifferent customer:** If we manage to meet customer expectations and we do not offer added value or our service was just enough, our customers may be indifferent to our brand. Although there is a possibility that they will buy from us again, it is likely that they will not recommend us.
- **Satisfied customer:** If we exceed their expectations, then the customer will be happy. Not only because they got the product and service they were looking for, but also because they received something they did not expect and that was valuable to their experience. 72% of users tell more than 6 people about a positive experience with a brand (ThinkJar). This means they are very likely to do business with us again and become a brand ambassador.

That said, our goal as a brand is to provide added value and an excellent customer experience so that they will choose us again to do business with.

## **6.2. What factors influence customer expectations?**

There are many factors that influence customer expectations since each one brings with it a unique subjectivity; however, we can list some of the main qualities that we should look at in depth:

1. The appearance of our facilities, people with whom they interact, social networks, signage, signage, the presentation of our products, etc., are concrete elements that the customer will use to make a preconception of our business.
2. Our accuracy in providing the required service and our reliability are important points. We must seek to comply with the proposed guidelines in the best way, in time and form.

3. Our responsiveness: the faster we answer users' concerns, the more comfortable they will feel, the more they will be listened to, and the more they will see that they are important to the company.

For consumers, the experiences they have had with other suppliers and their state of mind are very influential factors when it comes to having expectations. It is not possible to control the emotions and previous experiences that users bring with them, but we can channel them into a good experience. One of the tools that can help us, is active listening.

On the other hand, the exercise of empathy is becoming increasingly important. According to New Voice Media, the main reason why customers change product and service providers is because they feel unappreciated by the brand.

### **6.3. How to improve our sales.**

In order to meet and exceed customer expectations, it can help to understand that these also vary according to the moment of the sale in which we find ourselves. The beginning of a sale is not the same as what happens in the post-sale.

There are three main moments:

1. **Before the sale:** when a customer communicates with your business, he must feel welcomed, feel that he is important to it. You can provide quick, concise answers, and have an empathetic conversation. Do not offer magical solutions or exaggerate the properties of your product. Tell him how you work and what solution you can offer and in what time frame. Communicate and plan together with him.
2. **During the sale:** Fulfill the promises you made, offer additional information, and remember that at this moment the price/quality ratio is very important. An empathetic customer service

increases the quality of your products. In addition, users are willing to spend 17% more if they get a good customer service, according to American Express data.

3. **After the sale:** Offer additional information to help customers get the most out of their purchase. Communicate after the purchase to find out what their interaction with the product is like, ask about how they feel, etc. Feedback is a way to grow and build customer loyalty at the same time. 84% of the companies that worked to improve the customer experience obtained more revenue, according to a Dimension Data report.

### KEY MOMENTS IN A SALE



Source: Own production

Imagine that the customer complains about a product that is ours, but has been packaged by other suppliers. How can we exceed the customer's expectations if there are variables that we do not control? Through active communication and planning.

Establishing work objectives, being specific and detailed about the way we work to avoid any misunderstanding and providing the best attention from the beginning of the relationship, will position us in a better place as far as the customer is concerned.

In this sense, here is a list of practical tips to keep in mind in the following chart:

## PRACTICAL TIPS TO IMPROVE OUR SALES

### 1. Make a plan.

Visualize how the sales process will unfold and what you offer.

### 2. Keep an honest attitude.

Face the difficulties that may arise.

### 3. Set Goals.

Remind them at every opportunity so both parties know where they are going.

### 4. Show him how the company works.

That they visualize how this can affect their expectations.

### 5. Be direct.

Offer him how you can help him and how.

Source: Blog Zendesk MX

Customer expectations and needs are related to their past experiences and previous judgments about your brand. Frequent, transparent and empathetic communication will ensure that your customer is satisfied with the service you provide.

On the other hand, quick responses are useful, but if you have a very high inbound message flow, you will not be able to provide them. According to a report by Lithium, when customers contact a brand on Twitter, 53% expect a response within an hour. If they are making a complaint, that percentage rises to 78%.

There are **ten fundamental and universal principles** of customer service that you should put into practice, as the degree of satisfaction of your customers will be determined by your performance in these ten areas:

### CUSTOMER SERVICE PRINCIPLES

<p><b>1. Be accessible</b></p>	<p>A slow response with long waiting times denotes an attitude of indifference towards customers. On the other hand, a quick response with a short wait time denotes concern for them.</p> <p>This means always making sure that your representatives are doing what they are supposed to do and when they are supposed to do it.</p>
<p><b>2. Treat customers with courtesy</b></p>	<p>When working with customers, always focus on the situation or problem, not the person. Be courteous, because the problems customers are trying to solve may not seem like a big deal to you, but to the customer they mean a lot.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Courtesy is the most visible way to convey respect.</b> Excellent customer service cannot take place without a friendly atmosphere. Each person who serves a customer understands that courtesy starts with each customer.</li> <li>● <b>Every day we decide how we feel.</b> This translates into what attitude we bring to work. If your attitude is unfriendly or unhelpful, you will have a negative impact on every customer who comes in contact with you. If your attitude is helpful and friendly, you will make a positive impact.</li> </ul>

<b>3. Respond to customer needs and wants</b>	<p>All customers want is for you to care about them and understand their problems. They want to be the centre of your attention at that moment and they want the interaction they have with you to be problem-free.</p> <p>You must always be sensitive in how you approach customers and solve their problems. Customers expect you to satisfy them. Give them every reason to trust you.</p> <p>Thank them sincerely for choosing to do business with you. And finally, respect customers' needs and desires and rectify mistakes. Learn to anticipate your customers' needs.</p>
<b>4. Do what the customer asks for, on time</b>	<p>Make sure you perform the tasks necessary to respond to customer needs quickly and efficiently. Resolving inquiries quickly will impress them.</p> <p>Customers just need to know that you value them. If you forget to do something you're supposed to do, you won't keep your customers for long.</p>
<b>5. Have well-trained and knowledgeable employees</b>	<p>Proper employee training is the foundation for success. Any successful training program consists of curriculum-based classes that teach the fundamentals, such as the products and services you offer and basic customer service skills. How these classes are delivered makes all the difference.</p> <p>To make sure employees are well-trained and informed, create a plug-and-play training program. But go beyond the basics by also explaining the company's mission and values.</p>



	<p>In addition, make sure customer service competency training includes topics such as building long-term customer relationships and understanding the need for a customer-centric approach. These topics will provide each employee with a better sense of purpose when it comes to customer satisfaction.</p>
<p><b>6. Tell customers what they can expect from you</b></p>	<p>Setting expectations well will determine the success or failure of your relationship with each customer. If customers don't have a clear understanding of what they are getting, you will fail. If you provide something clients don't want or weren't expecting, no matter how fantastic or fast your work is, you will most likely fail.</p> <p>Setting expectations is not difficult, but it takes time. You can't make any assumptions, and you need to be transparent with clients about what they are going to get.</p> <p>Setting expectations is a process of constant communication. The resolution may change slightly, or you may find a better way to do something. If the change is significant enough, be sure to inform customers. Keep them informed at all times.</p>
<p><b>7. Keep your commitments</b></p>	<p>For whatever reason, customers expect you to do what you say you are going to do and when you say you are going to do it. Become known for keeping your word.</p>

<b>8. Do things right the first time</b>	<p>This involves making sure that all activities are performed correctly the first time and each successive time. Completing all services correctly the first time is not easy, but doing so can be an effective way to attract and keep your customers.</p>
<b>9. Follow up</b>	<p>Contact your customer after a purchase, after delivering a meal, or after the problem has been resolved to ask them what they thought and if they were satisfied. If they were satisfied with the whole process you can take the opportunity to ask them for a rating on your social networks, website, etc. If not, try to make things right. With good customer service, you are laying the foundations of a successful business.</p>
<b>10. Be an ethical person</b>	<p>Customer expectations depend on many factors, and their process for selecting a product can be very complex. One of the main factors is credibility. They want to know how reliable and honest you are as a service provider.</p> <p>To meet this critical factor, you have to make an effort to get to know customers and their needs; listen to and keep customers informed in a language they understand; possess (or develop) the necessary skills and knowledge to deliver the promised service reliably and accurately; be willing to help customers and provide prompt service; and be polite, respectful and friendly.</p>

These principles can be useful in various aspects of your life as an entrepreneur. It is not necessary to learn them by heart, because they will always appear at any time.

## **7. FOOD, THE BASIS OF GASTRONOMY.**

In the food industry, hygiene is one of the fundamental weapons to ensure food quality. The consumer has the right to safe food that is not a vehicle for illness or food poisoning....

**Remember:** Food during its production, transport, processing and handling is an important vehicle for agents capable of causing human illness. Good practices begin with proper training that allows the acquisition of knowledge that changes the vision towards the proper hygienic mentality to produce food without risk.

Currently, the legal framework of application in relation to food handlers is based on two regulations. On the one hand, Regulation (EC) 852/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on the hygiene of foodstuffs (specifically, Chapter VIII of Annex II establishes the personal hygiene conditions for workers, and in Chapter XII of the same Annex II it refers to the training that food handlers must receive) and on the other hand, Regulation (EC) 882/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council, of 29 April 2004, on official controls performed to ensure the verification of compliance with feed and food law, animal health and animal welfare regulations.

Other official controls include the inspection of food businesses and food products, being necessary to verify the hygiene conditions and to evaluate the procedures of good manufacturing and handling practices, in order to guarantee the objective of this regulation ("to prevent, eliminate or reduce to acceptable levels any risk to food safety").

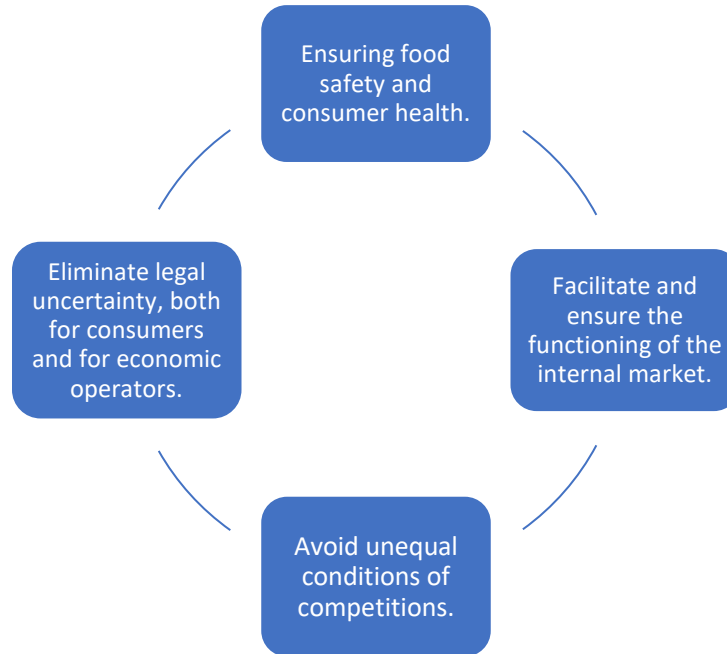
Some definitions of interest:

- **Prepared food:** culinary preparation resulting from the raw or cooked or precooked preparation of one or more foodstuffs of animal or vegetable origin, with or without the addition of other authorized substances and, where appropriate, seasoned. It may be presented packaged or not and ready for consumption, either directly or after additional heating or culinary treatment.
- **Heat-treated ready-to-eat food:** ready-to-eat food which, during its preparation, has been subjected as a whole to a heat process (increase in temperature) such that it can be consumed directly or with a slight heating.
- **Establishment:** industry, premises or permanent or temporary installation where prepared foods are prepared, handled, packaged, stored, supplied, served or sold, with or without service therein, for consumption.
- **Community:** group of consumers with similar characteristics who demand a prepared food service, such as schools, companies, hospitals, residences and means of transport.

### **7.1. Necessary hygiene conditions.**

Since February 1, 2002, the member countries of the European Union have had a common legal concept for the designation of foodstuffs, with the publication of Regulation EC No. 178/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council of January 28, 2002. This regulation established the principles and requirements of food legislation and created the European Food Authority.

It is this body, the European Food Authority, which gives a common definition of food for all member states, with the following objectives:

**OBJECTIVES OF THE EUROPEAN FOOD AUTHORITY**

Source: adapted from the European Union

**Food:** Any substance or product intended or likely to be ingested by humans, whether or not processed in whole or in part.

The Regulation therefore extends the concept of food to all substances, ingredients, raw materials, additives and nutrients ingested by humans through the gastrointestinal tract. The new common definition adopted includes beverages, chewing gum and water, as well as any substance voluntarily incorporated into the food during its manufacture, preparation or treatment, e.g. additives, fats and vitamins, and residues derived from food production and processing, such as residues of veterinary drugs and pesticides.

However, the following shall NOT be considered as such: animal feed, pre-harvest plants, medicines, cosmetics, tobacco and tobacco products, narcotic or psychotropic substances and live animals (except those prepared, packaged and/or served for human consumption in that state, as in the case of oysters).

### **7.1.1. Types of food**

Foods are divided into three main types:

#### **a) That may or may not cause a detrimental effect on the health of the consumer:**

- **Harmful:** All foods that consumed can acutely or chronically cause harmful effects on the consumer.
- **Harmless:** Set of conditions that a food or process meets that guarantees the absence of factors capable of producing harmful effects for the consumer.

#### **b) By their storage conditions:**

- **Perishable foods** (according to Spanish Food Code). Those which, due to their characteristics, require special conservation conditions in their storage and transport periods. They alter rapidly and should be consumed within a short period of time. Among them, as long as they are unprocessed, we should highlight eggs, milk, meat or fish.
- **Semi-perishable foods** (according to the Spanish Food Code). Those that have been preserved or processed by different procedures that allow them to last longer under appropriate conditions. Freezing, dehydration, salting, smoking, canning or uperisation (in the case of milk) are some examples of the methods or processes used.
- **Non-perishable food** is that which does not require special storage conditions, for example: legumes, cereals, nuts. Although they do not require cold storage, these foods must be preserved from humidity and dirt.

**c) Due to the presence of alterations or contaminations that make it unsuitable for consumption:**

Food alteration may be due to physical environmental factors, such as temperature, light or air, which modify the characteristics of the products. Another possibility is that, under certain conditions and due to the food components themselves or their contact with others in their environment, chemical reactions are triggered that contribute to the alteration of the product.

**Altered food:** Food that, due to natural, physical, chemical, biological or inadequate treatment causes, has suffered a deterioration in its organoleptic characteristics and nutritional value, making it unfit for human consumption. They are easily detectable by their color, odor, flavor and/or appearance.

The most common alterations that can appear in food are due to different factors such as:

- Cold: it can cause for example solidification of oil or honey.
- Wind: can cause food to dry out.
- Heat: can cause the loss of vitamins.
- Formation of gases: which can cause bulging of cans or containers.
- Oxidation of fats which causes rancidity of products.
- Time: can cause softening or putrefaction of foodstuffs.
- Acidification of certain foods such as dairy products.

**Deteriorated food:** It is in which there was aging, color change, dent, breakage, poorly closed containers and external injuries to the packaging of the packaged product. These deteriorations may cause subsequent contamination.

**Contaminated food:** It is that which contains pathogenic germs, chemical or radioactive substances, toxins, parasites or any foreign body to the composition of the food, which allows the transmission of diseases to man or animals. Also if they contain natural toxic components in concentrations higher than those allowed.

### **7.1.2. Food contamination: How can it be prevented?**

Food contamination occurs when food comes into contact with certain elements or substances that make it dangerous for consumption.

According to their nature, contaminating agents are classified into physical, chemical and biological agents.

- **Contamination by physical agents:** they are constituted by particles and foreign bodies that reach the food, generally during handling or transport, (particles of glass, wood, plastic, pieces of bone, feathers, intestinal contents, organic remains, (hair, nails, food remains), or articles of personal use (watches, rings...).
- **Contamination by chemical agents:** some toxicants of chemical origin may be naturally present in food; this is the case of some plant and animal toxins or toxins present in certain fungi. Other chemical agents can be accidentally incorporated into food: food additives, herbicides, pesticides, traces of medicines, products used for cleaning and disinfection, products used during the operation or maintenance of machinery and equipment (oils, lubricants, etc.).

There are four measures that can help prevent the proliferation of microorganisms in food:

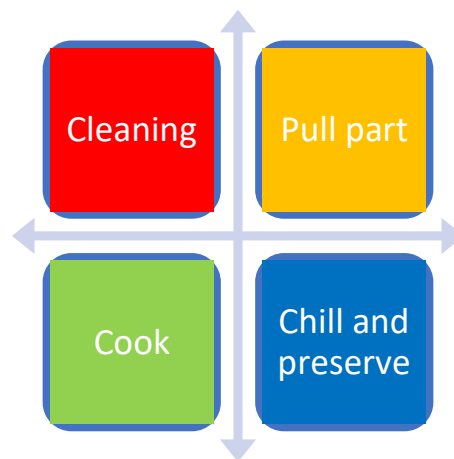


**MEASURES TO PREVENT FOOD CONTAMINATION**

<b>CLEANING</b>	<b>PULL PART</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wash hands thoroughly with soap and hot water whenever necessary (before preparing food, after using toilets, after touching raw food, animals, garbage or other contaminated objects).</li> <li>• Thoroughly wash all work surfaces and utensils (knives, pots, pans, blenders,...) with hot water and soap after each use and before moving on to the next step.</li> <li>• Use cutting boards made of non-porous material and wash them in the dishwasher, or with hot water and soap, after each use.</li> <li>• Use single-use cloths to wash and dry kitchen surfaces that will come in contact with food.</li> </ul>	<p>It is vitally important to properly separate ready-to-eat foods from those raw materials or work surfaces or utensils that may be contaminated with the presence of microorganisms. For this purpose, it is recommended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• During all stages of handling and storage of raw foods it is necessary to keep them separate from other prepared products by placing them in the lower part of the refrigerator to prevent the juices they give off from contaminating other foods.</li> <li>• Use different cutting boards, knives and utensils for handling raw food and ready-to-eat products and never place cooked food on a container that has been in contact with raw food without first washing it.</li> <li>• Always wash hands, cutting boards, knives and other utensils with hot soapy water after they have been in contact with raw food.</li> </ul>
<b>COOK</b>	<b>CHILL AND PRESERVE</b>

<p>In order to achieve the elimination of bacteria present in food, it is necessary to cook it for an adequate time and at a temperature that achieves this. This requires:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reach a cooking temperature of at least 65°C in the center of the product.</li> <li>• If the product is heated in the microwave it must be ensured that no cold areas remain, the heat must be uniform.</li> <li>• If food is reheated it is necessary to reach 65°.</li> </ul>	<p>Refrigeration temperatures prevent or slow down the growth of microorganisms so once the food is cooked it must be cooled as quickly as possible so:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ready-to-eat foods should be refrigerated within two hours after cooking.</li> <li>• Do not thaw food at room temperature, always refrigerate it.</li> <li>• Place food in the chamber or refrigerator in such a way as to achieve cold air flow between them.</li> <li>• Check refrigeration equipment for proper operation periodically.</li> </ul>
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### MEASURES TO PREVENT FOOD CONTAMINATION

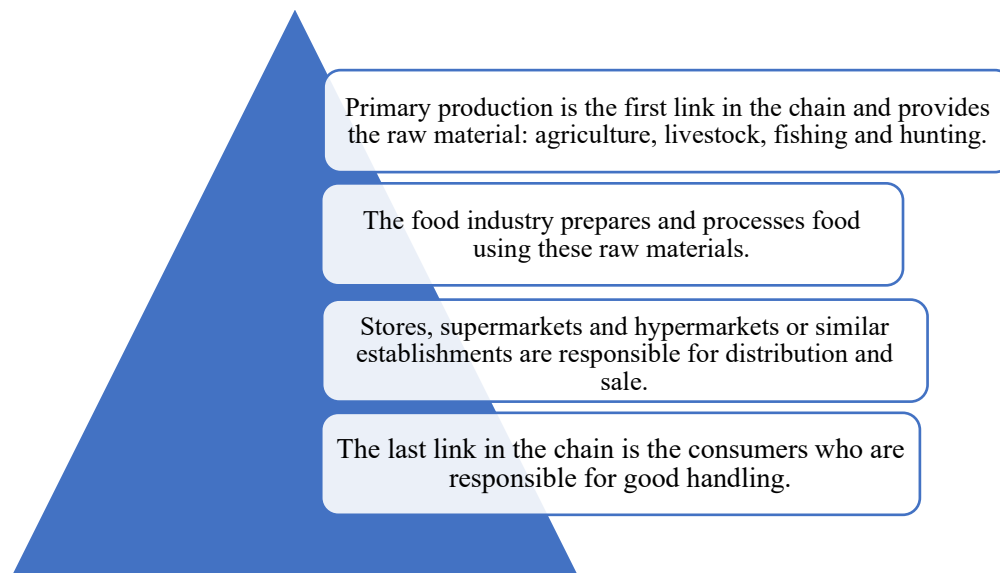


Source: Own production.

## 7.2. Food Handling

Food safety is the set of measures that ensure that the food we consume is safe and retains its nutritional properties. To ensure food safety and avoid foodborne diseases, you must know and comply with hygiene regulations throughout the food chain, with special emphasis on those stages or processes that require food handling.

### FOOD HANDLING PROCESSES



Source: adapted from Food handler's handbook.

Therefore, following all the stages of the food chain, it can be stated that "food handlers are all those persons who, because of their work activity, have direct contact with food during its preparation, manufacture, processing, preparation, packaging, storage, transport, distribution, sale, supply and service".

In addition, higher risk handlers are considered to be those whose handling practices can be decisive in relation to food safety; this group includes handlers engaged in the preparation and handling of prepared foods for sale, supply and/or direct service to the consumer or collectivities.

The food handler is a worker who must have stricter hygienic habits than other workers, due to the great responsibility of creating safe food. Therefore, they must adopt a system of hygienic self-control in their work and know the process of preparation and preservation of food respecting the culinary, sanitary and nutritional requirements that allow the food to reach the consumer in the best quality conditions, avoiding that in many cases it is the handler who intervenes as a vehicle of transmission in the contamination of food, by incorrect actions and bad hygienic practices.

### 7.2.1. Stages in food handling process

**There are several stages in the food handling process from the arrival of the goods at your facility.**

<b>1. Reception of raw material:</b>	<p>A stage of great importance in the food manufacturing and handling process that includes the period of time between the unloading of the ingredients or raw material and its correct storage in the warehouses or chambers of the industry.</p> <p>In the case of raw materials consisting of refrigerated or frozen raw materials, it should be verified that the cold chain has not been broken during transport and they should be stored quickly without resting directly on the floor or on surfaces that may be contaminated. If these materials arrive in poor condition or if the cold chain has been broken, they should be returned to the supplier.</p> <p>A record of incoming products should be filled in, noting at least the day of arrival, supplier, batch, and quantity. In the</p>
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	<p>case of cold products, the temperature at which they arrive should also be noted.</p>
<p><b>2. Conservation:</b></p>	<p>Shelf life is the maximum time in which a food retains all its organoleptic, nutritional and sanitary properties. Preservation together with proper storage aims to increase the shelf life of food. The application of cold and heat on the food are two of the main methods of preservation, although there are many others that decrease the amount of microorganisms present in the food:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Application of cold.             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Refrigeration: As we have already mentioned, refrigeration consists of subjecting food to temperatures between 0° and 5°C, which will cause microorganisms to multiply more slowly, thus achieving a longer shelf life.</li> <li>b. Freezing: In freezing, we subject the food to temperatures below -18°C. Thus the microorganisms die but their activity is totally paralyzed, allowing the product to be preserved for months.</li> </ol> </li> </ul> <p>At this point it is very important to define the cold chain and its importance in food. It is necessary to maintain the cold (refrigeration or freezing) at an adequate temperature throughout the food chain, i.e. at all stages through which the food passes until it reaches the consumer. If this temperature is not maintained, the food may undergo changes that will reduce the shelf life and may endanger the consumer.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Application of heat</li> </ul> <p>High temperatures are the only ones that destroy microorganisms. There are different ways to apply heat to products:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Pasteurization: This consists of subjecting the food to temperatures close to 80°C. This destroys quite a few microorganisms, but not all of them, so it is important that after pasteurization these foods are kept refrigerated so that any microorganisms that have survived do not proliferate. The shelf life of food subjected to this heat treatment is low. Ex: pasteurized milk.</li> <li>b. Cooking: The food is subjected to temperatures of about 100°C. With this method we eliminate most of the microorganisms but not their spores. The food subjected to this treatment modifies its organoleptic properties.</li> <li>c. Sterilization: The food is subjected to temperatures close to 120°C, thus destroying all microorganisms in the food, including their spores.</li> <li>d. UHT (UHT) It is a system where we apply a high temperature very little time, but enough to eliminate all microorganisms and their spores, and make the food suffers as little as possible by this heat treatment. Ex: UHT milk (we can store it outside the refrigerator).</li> </ol>
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<p><b>3. Storage:</b></p>	<p>Raw materials or finished products must be stored correctly to avoid contamination. To this end, a number of essential requirements must be met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not leave food in direct contact with the floor or walls.</li> <li>• Do not store food products together with products that can contaminate them such as cleaning products, etc. or store fresh product with finished product to avoid cross-contamination.</li> <li>• Do not exceed the capacity of the warehouse or cold rooms, because the products will not be cooled properly.</li> <li>• Make sure that the products that arrive first at the warehouse leave first, so that the rotation of the products is adequate and we avoid that they may expire.</li> <li>• Control at least once a day the temperatures of the storage chambers, and make sure that the appropriate temperature limits are complied with (refrigeration 0°-5°C, freezing -18°C).</li> <li>• Leave sufficient space between products to allow air circulation between them.</li> <li>• Do not leave suitable food near the garbage or returns area.</li> </ul>
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	In addition, the expiration / best-before dates required for each product should be observed, as indicated by the manufacturer (do not reuse products once they have expired) and do not store products outside the original packaging.
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### 7.2.2. Personal hygiene for food handlers

Hygienic behaviors are those clean attitudes that must be remembered and practiced in all situations. They refer to those habits that make possible lower contamination of raw materials due to correct attitudes of the worker, cleaning and disinfection of facilities and machinery, water control, pests and cleanliness of the industry. Hygiene must be respected in all its facets.

All those processes through which the raw material constituting the food has to pass in order to become a product ready to be used by the consumer.

Normally we speak of handling when it is carried out by the food handler, but, in the same way, those actions in which the meat is treated, whether it is cooked, minced or stuffed, are also manipulations.

Good Handling Practices are all those actions and decisions that occur during food processing that have a positive effect on the maintenance of food in wholesome conditions. These actions should be preserved and promoted. Together, they constitute the manual of Good Food Handling Practices. These include all those practices that, in a preventive manner, reduce the risk to health, such as contamination by germs and harmful substances.



Food hygiene is the set of measures necessary to ensure the safety and wholesomeness of food products. These measures cover all stages of production up to the point of sale to the consumer. This means that hygiene must preside over any activity related to the manufacture and sale of food.

The cleanliness of a factory depends to a large extent on the hygiene of those who work in it. Therefore, employees in a food factory must be aware of the need for good hygienic practices.

The proper preservation of the product, the cleanliness of premises and utensils, etc. will not be of much use if the professionals who handle food contaminate them by not taking into account certain behaviors and attitudes.

The food handler has the responsibility to take scrupulous care not to add personal bacteria to the food. Bacteria originating from the following sources can pass into food through the hands:

- a) Nose, throat, and skin secretions; dust, dander, and loose hairs from the scalp.
- b) Intestinal excretions.
- c) Other secretions and excretions from people.
- d) Liquids from raw meat and poultry and other foods, dehydrated powdered products.
- e) Utensils and equipment.
- f) Cloths, kitchen cloths, cloths to dry cutlery.

**Adequate measures and effective control should be imposed to avoid contamination.**

<b>Hands</b>	<p>Hands are the main agent and vehicle for transmitting bacteria, hands should be as hygienic as possible at all times and nails should be kept short, clean and unpainted.</p> <p>Source of contamination.</p>
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	<p>The major contamination of our hands by pathogenic microorganisms is basically caused by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fecal contamination produced after using the toilet or handling garbage. In the home, in addition, contamination produced by changing diapers or touching pets or their feces should also be included.</li> <li>• Handling of raw products, usually with high surface contamination, such as meat, poultry, fruits and vegetables.</li> <li>• Contamination by contact with objects commonly used by many people, such as telephone, money, door handles, railings....</li> <li>• Contamination with secretions produced by sneezing or coughing, or by touching various contaminated body areas such as the mouth, nose or hair.</li> </ul> <p>Hand washing is a simple act but one that is not always carried out properly. The regulations for food handlers simply state that hot water and soap or a suitable disinfectant should be used. The objective is the elimination of transient microbiota. This depends largely on the individual characteristics of each person. However, there is one location on the hands where microenvironmental conditions conducive to microbial maintenance and development are created: around and under the nails. In addition, in the mechanical act of hand washing, several areas are often insufficiently washed, such as the interdigital spaces and the back of the hands.</p> <p>Washing also depends on the type of contamination or its origin. If the contamination is significant, for example after leaving the bathroom, the</p>
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reduction procedure should be more aggressive than in other circumstances, and a single or double scrubbing with a nail brush may be performed. The use of a nail brush has an important mechanical effect for the elimination of transient microbiota.

In all circumstances it is essential to use soap, whether it has bactericidal or non-bactericidal activity. If washing is carried out properly, the use of soaps with disinfectants would not be necessary, since as a consequence of the mechanical action, important reductions of pathogenic microorganisms can be achieved.

How should hands be washed?

1. Wet hands with lukewarm water (20-37°C). The water will eliminate the most superficial microorganisms.
2. Brushing the fingers and nails. In a nail brush, add a little soap, then brush and lather mainly fingers and nails for 12-15 seconds; meanwhile, the water will run over the fingers, ending the process when the brush and fingers lose the foam.
3. For the actual washing, soap is added on the palms of the hands and they are rubbed well, performing mechanical friction on the palms, back and interdigital space, and even on the arms. The approximate time required is about 20 seconds. Afterwards, the fingers, hands and arms should be rinsed with warm water.
4. Finally, it is necessary to dry the hands using single-use paper towels. This avoids recontamination of the hands, and the use of hot air dryers is not advisable. Drying hands is essential because it has a lethal effect

	<p>on microorganisms, producing an approximate reduction in the microbial count of one tenth.</p> <p>When should hands be washed?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Before starting work, i.e., before beginning food handling.</li> <li>2. When restarting work when work has been interrupted for any reason and you have had to touch objects that are not rigorously clean such as money, telephone or keys.</li> <li>3. Every time the toilets are used.</li> <li>4. After touching raw food.</li> <li>5. After pouring garbage or touching waste.</li> <li>6. After touching any cleaning utensils (mops, buckets, etc.).</li> <li>7. After touching eyes, ears, hair or nose.</li> <li>8. After using a handkerchief. It is necessary to emphasize, that once washed correctly the hands, these do not remain sterile reason why it will be necessary to repeat the process the times that it is necessary to maintain the suitable hygiene and to avoid this way to contaminate the food.</li> </ol>
<b>Hair</b>	<p>A handler should have clean hair in a hairnet or head covering to avoid contamination of food with hair or dandruff, since hair is in continuous renewal and picks up environmental dirt. It is also advisable not to use hairpins to hold hats or hairnets as they can fall into the food and cause physical contamination of it.</p>
<b>Eyes, nose and mouth.</b>	<p>The microorganism <i>Staphylococcus aureus</i> causes food poisoning and is present in the nose and mouth of approximately 50% of the population. These</p>

	<p>microorganisms are easily spread by talking, coughing or sneezing, so these behaviors should be avoided when handling food.</p>
<b>Body</b>	<p>Handlers should not have unkempt hair, unkempt beard or lack of personal cleanliness.</p> <p>It is advisable to shower daily and keep their skin as clean as possible to avoid the presence of nails and any type of infection that could be dangerous for the food and for the consumer.</p>
<b>Clothing</b>	<p>Work clothes are for work only. Every day should be clean and light colored. In the case of using specific clothing such as aprons, protective systems such as mesh gloves or forearm protectors, they should be washed as many times as necessary, in places provided for this purpose, such as cabins or showers for this purpose.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If possible, clothing should not have external pockets and fastenings should avoid the use of buttons.</li> <li>• Work clothes must be left exclusively in the lockers, which will be divided into two parts so as not to mix them with street clothes.</li> <li>• Boots used for work shall be washed outside the work areas. A place will be assigned for this purpose, if possible with boot-washing machines.</li> </ul> <p>The use of rubber gloves for food handling is not advisable, as bacteria can colonize the inside of the gloves. In some circumstances, single-use gloves may be worn, although they should be disposed of immediately after use.</p>
<b>Cuts and wounds</b>	<p>Wounds or cuts in the skin are ideal environments for the development of bacteria, so it will be necessary to keep them covered with suitable bandages (gauze, plasters,...) which in turn are waterproofed by means of gloves or thimbles and always clean.</p>

<b>Jewelry and personal objects.</b>	It is advisable not to wear jewelry or personal objects (watches, rings, earrings) when handling food, since in addition to being places where dirt tends to accumulate, they can cause problems of physical contamination if they become detached from the food.
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Therefore, the food handler is key in maintaining proper hygiene and contributes with his habits to the placing on the market of safe, innocuous and quality food. The most important habits he should comply with are:

- Keep your work station, tools and equipment clean and tidy.
- If you suffer from any illness (vomiting, diarrhea, colds) you should notify your manager.
- Maintain proper personal hygiene.
- Comply with the rules of hygiene in terms of clothing and personal cleanliness.
- Avoid habits that could lead to contamination of the food. Therefore, they must not cough or sneeze, talk, eat, chew gum, smoke, scratch their hair or nose, or wear jewelry or creams that may transmit odor or taste to the food.

### **7.3. Hygienic-sanitary requirements of the facilities.**

#### **7.3.1. General requirements for premises used for foodstuffs (other than ambulant or temporary).**

According to Regulation No. 852/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council:

1. Premises intended for foodstuffs must be kept clean and in a good state of maintenance.
2. The layout, design, construction, location and size of food premises shall:
  - a) Permit adequate maintenance, cleaning and/or disinfection, prevent or minimize airborne contamination and provide sufficient working space to permit hygienic performance of all operations.

- b) Prevent the accumulation of dirt, contact with toxic materials, the deposit of particles on foodstuffs and the formation of condensation or undesirable mould on surfaces.
  - c) permit good food hygiene practices, including protection against contamination, particularly pest control.
  - d) where necessary, provide suitable temperature-controlled handling and storage conditions and sufficient capacity to enable foodstuffs to be maintained at an appropriate temperature that can be checked and, if necessary, recorded.
3. There is to be a sufficient number of flush toilets connected to an effective drainage system. Toilets should not communicate directly with rooms in which foodstuffs are handled.
  4. There is to be a sufficient number of washbasins, suitably located and intended for cleaning hands. Handwashing sinks should be provided with hot and cold running water, as well as hygienic hand-cleaning and hand-drying equipment. Where necessary, facilities for washing foodstuffs should be separate from those for washing hands.
  5. Suitable and sufficient means of mechanical or natural ventilation should be provided. Mechanical draughts from contaminated areas to clean areas should be avoided. Ventilation systems should be so constructed that filters and other parts to be cleaned or replaced are easily accessible.
  6. All toilets should have sufficient natural or mechanical ventilation.
  7. Food premises should have adequate natural or artificial light.
  8. Sewage disposal systems must be sufficient to meet the intended purpose and so designed and constructed as to avoid any risk of contamination. Where drainage channels are fully or partially open, they should be so designed to ensure that waste does not flow from a contaminated area to a clean area, in particular, to an area where foodstuffs likely to present a high risk to the final consumer are handled.
  9. Where necessary, adequate changing facilities should be provided for personnel.

10. Cleaning and disinfection products should not be stored in areas where foodstuffs are manipulated.

### **7.3.2. Specific requirements for rooms where foodstuffs are prepared, treated or processed (excluding canteens and mobile premises).**

1. The design and layout of rooms in which foodstuffs are prepared, treated or processed (excluding canteens and mobile premises, but including spaces contained in means of transport) should permit good food hygiene practices, including protection against contamination between and during operations. In particular:

- a) floor surfaces are to be maintained in a sound condition and be easy to clean and disinfect. This will require the use of impervious, non-absorbent, washable and non-toxic materials, unless food business operators can satisfy the competent authority of the suitability of other materials used. Where appropriate, floors must allow sufficient drainage.
- b) wall surfaces are to be maintained in a sound condition and be easy to clean and, where necessary, to disinfect. This will require the use of impervious, non-absorbent, washable and non-toxic materials; their surface is to be smooth to a height appropriate to the operations to be carried out.
- c) ceilings (or, where there are no ceilings, the interior surface of the roof), suspended ceilings and other suspended installations should be so constructed and worked as to prevent the accumulation of dirt and to reduce condensation, the formation of undesirable mold and the shedding of particles.
- d) Windows and other openable openings should be so constructed as to prevent the accumulation of dirt, and those which can communicate with the outside should, where necessary, be fitted with insect screens which can be easily removed for cleaning. Where



contamination could result from the opening of windows, these should remain closed with a lock during production.

- e) Doors should be easy to clean and, if necessary, to disinfect, requiring smooth, non-absorbent surfaces.
- f) surfaces (including equipment) in areas where food is handled, and in particular those in contact with food, are to be maintained in a sound condition and be easy to clean and, where necessary, to disinfect, requiring smooth, washable, corrosion-resistant and non-toxic materials.

2. Adequate facilities for cleaning, disinfection and storage of equipment and working utensils shall be provided where necessary. Such facilities should be constructed of corrosion-resistant materials, be easy to clean and have an adequate supply of hot and cold water.

3. Adequate provision shall be made, where necessary, for the washing of foodstuffs. All sinks or similar facilities for washing foodstuffs should have an adequate supply of hot and/or cold potable water and should be kept clean and, where necessary, disinfected.

### **7.3.3. Equipment and Facility Requirements**

All articles, installations and equipment in contact with foodstuffs:

- Must be thoroughly cleaned and, if necessary, disinfected. Cleaning and disinfection must be carried out as frequently as necessary to avoid any risk of contamination.
- Their construction, composition and state of repair and maintenance must minimise the risk of contamination and permit them to be thoroughly cleaned and, where necessary, disinfected.
- Their installation must permit adequate cleaning of the equipment and the surrounding area.

If necessary, equipment should be fitted with all appropriate control devices to ensure compliance with the objectives of this Regulation.

If to prevent corrosion of equipment and containers it is necessary to use chemical additives, this should be done in accordance with good practice to avoid transmitting toxic substances, odours and tastes to food.

#### **7.3.4. Cleaning and disinfection of the facilities.**

Let's first determine some concepts.

**Cleaning:** Elimination of dirt and organic remains by means of water and detergents. This reduces some microorganisms but mainly removes grease and visible residues. It is carried out using detergents and when choosing them it is important to take into account the material of the article or surface to be cleaned and the nature of the dirt to be removed. The recommended water temperature is 40° C.

In addition, the products should be kept in original closed and well labeled containers in exclusive places and away from storage and product processing areas.

**Disinfection:** This consists of eliminating bacteria that we cannot see. It is always performed after cleaning. Only duly authorized disinfectants should be used. After proper disinfection, most of the microorganisms on surfaces are eliminated, but not their resistant forms or spores.

Chemical disinfectants that have a lethal action on microbes are used for this purpose. There is a wide range of disinfectants and their choice will depend on:

- Characteristics of the materials to be disinfected.
- Germs to be eliminated.
- Concentration of the disinfectant: adding a concentration higher than that indicated in the product data sheet will not result in greater disinfection and a concentration lower

than that recommended will not kill all germs and may lead to the appearance of resistance. To avoid the latter, it is advisable to rotate disinfectants.

- Time of action: it is essential to respect what is indicated in the technical data sheet.
- Water temperature: if chlorinated compounds are used, the recommended temperature is 10° C.
- Solution pH.

In all establishments where food is handled, there should be a cleaning and disinfection plan that clearly defines the frequency of cleaning and disinfection, the tools or surfaces to be subjected to these processes, the nature of the substances to be eliminated, the dosage of the product to be used, the way to carry out these operations (manual or mechanical) and the person responsible for them.



The reason for cleaning surfaces and utensils that come into contact with food and the environment is to reduce or prevent the risk of microbiological or physical contamination and to allow and facilitate disinfection.

To achieve these objectives, a series of phases must be carried out:

1. Pre-cleaning: elimination of visible dirt, food remains, waste and grease; this will normally be done dry (brushes and shovels) so as not to spread the dirt, if wet cleaning is carried out it is advisable to use cold water.
2. Pre-washing: low pressure water projection to eliminate the remains on the equipment; the water temperature should be higher than 35-40°C to solubilize fats and lower than 60°C to avoid coagulation of proteins.
3. Cleaning: consists of the application of a detergent to remove the remaining dirt. It is convenient to perform an additional mechanical action such as brushing to remove the dirt.
4. Rinsing: this is the removal of the detergent and dissolved substances by means of pressurized water. The shape of the water jet and its inclination with respect to the surface is important in order to achieve a good effect without projecting residues into the environment.
5. Disinfection: apply the disinfectant according to the manufacturer's instructions.
6. Final rinsing: it should be abundant and with hot or cold water according to the disinfectant used (hot if it is a chlorinated compound).
7. Drying: the water is eliminated by draining or using dry air or hygienic cloths. Many risk microorganisms are very sensitive to environmental conditions and are destroyed by drying. This step is important to avoid the presence of conditions that favor recontamination and also to avoid the formation of biofilms.

### **STEPS TO AVOID FOOD CONTAMINATION**



Source: Own production.

Cleaning and disinfection programs should ensure sanitization of all parts of the facility (including cleaning equipment).

The suitability and effectiveness of the products used and the corresponding programs should be constantly and effectively monitored and, where necessary, documented.

The programs should be prepared in writing and their preparation should take into account and, therefore, specify:

- a) Product to be processed.
- b) Surfaces, elements of the equipment, utensils and facilities to be cleaned.
- c) Cleaning method.
- d) Temperature, pressure and potability of water.
- e) Knowledge of critical points.
- f) Available means: personnel, timetable, systems, equipment, etc.
- g) Products to be used: form of application, dosage, time of action, etc.
- h) Frequency.
- i) It is important to have a file of technical data sheets for the products.
- j) Records or control sheets of cleaning and disinfection work.
- k) Monitoring system used: periodic inspections and, if possible, the use of microbiological tests.

Throughout the stages of the food chain, there are many residues and waste products that originate and must be eliminated. It can cause odors or be an active source of microbial contamination of food.

Food product wastes, inedible by-products and other residues should:

- be removed as quickly as possible from the rooms in which the food is deposited to avoid their accumulation by eliminating them hygienically and without harming the environment (separation of waste in the different containers: used oils, paper and cardboard, plastic and packaging, glass and organic matter).
- be deposited in closable containers. These containers should be of suitable construction to prevent access to the waste by pests, be in good condition and be easy to clean and disinfect.
- Adequate provision should be made for their storage and disposal. Waste tanks should be designed and treated in such a way that they can be kept clean and free from animals and harmful organisms.

### Pest control

In food handling, we call pests to the presence of animals that live in or on food and that in contact with them produce an alteration or contamination of them. These animals are destructive and cause health, economic and labor problems.

The main pests in the food industry are:

- Rodents: rats and mice.
- Insects: cockroaches, ants, flies, wasps, beetles, weevils, mites.
- Birds.

An effective and continuous pest eradication program for insects, birds, rodents and other pests should be implemented. Facilities and surrounding areas should be inspected periodically to ensure that there is no infestation.

We must establish a disinsecting and rat extermination plan in which the following sections are indicated in writing:

- a) Areas to be treated: (Indicate each and every one of the premises and areas).
- b) Treatments: (Indicate methodology).
- Method of application.
  - Possible risks of food contamination.
  - Possible risks for people.
  - Safety measures to be adopted during application.
- c) Products used. The following should be stated:
- Utility (insecticide, disinfectant, rodenticide).
  - Commercial name.
  - Composition (active material of the products).
  - Manufacturer and registration number.
  - Dosage and safety period.
  - Harmful agent to be controlled.
- d) Date of beginning and start of the campaign.
- e) Applicator's data and card code.

If the disinfection and rat extermination program is carried out by our company, all of the above information must be recorded in writing.

If this program is carried out by an authorized company, after each application the company will issue a certificate of guarantee in which all the above data will also be stated.

If any pest invades the surrounding establishments or areas, eradication measures must be taken. Control measures involving treatment with chemical, physical or biological agents should only be carried out under the direct supervision of personnel who have a thorough knowledge of the health risks associated with the use of such agents, especially the risks that may arise from residues retained in the product.

Pests are controlled by:

- Adoption of preventive physical measures: these are intended to prevent penetration, spread and proliferation.
- Application of methods to destroy existing pests.
- Preventive physical measures:
  - Sealing and airtightness of holes and cavities in structures, special care in elevator and freight elevator shafts, plumbing and drainage insulation.
  - Placing guards on grill covers and drains, screens on windows.
  - Avoiding sources of attraction, avoiding the accumulation of waste materials around the slaughterhouse.
  - Adequate storage, isolate products from the floor. It is advisable to leave an aisle around the walls and not to deposit food next to them.
  - Maintain a clear separation between clean and dirty areas.
  - Cleanliness:
    - a) Protecting garbage with containers with lids, and placing garbage away from food.
    - b) Hygiene of facilities.

In terms of rodent control, the means of control can be:

- a) Physical: it has limited and random results, so its use is not recommended. These include ultrasound, magnetic fields, etc.
- b) Mechanical: the most commonly used are vegetable glue and traps.
- c) Chemical: they are the most used in the industry. They have different forms of presentation: powder, grain, paste, block, etc. It should be indicated on a plan where they have been placed and a record should be kept of the characteristics of the products, frequency of replenishment, whether they have been ingested, etc.



The pest control program should indicate who is responsible for placing the products, how they are used, etc. With regard to disinsecting, the means of control can be:

- a) Physical: the most common are the "light traps", which consist of an ultraviolet light that attracts insects to an electrified grid.
- b) Chemical: these are insecticides that can act by ingestion, contact or inhalation.

The design and execution of a specific treatment plan and preventive chemical measures, as well as the use of legally permitted products and the control of the results and issuance of a certificate, must be carried out by a specialized and registered company with the pertinent authorization to carry out disinsecting and rat extermination.

## **8. COSTS AND RISKS.**

### **8. 1. Common mistakes when starting a business and cost breakdown.**

There are some problems or mistakes that are made when starting any business activity. Let's take a look at some of them in the following lines.

#### **a) The wrong business form/legal organization.**

As a general rule, you start as a self-employed person and then set up a limited company. This is not necessarily the best option if you want to protect your assets as an entrepreneur. Evaluate all the company forms and the benefits offered in your country.

#### **b) Think about finance rather than income**

Financing is an important part, but it is even more important to earn income, which means that you have to focus your attention especially on your customers. A common mistake is to spend a lot of time looking for extra funding that may not be needed instead of focusing on the business.

**c) Forgetting about legal issues.**

Setting up a business involves a lot of legal formalities and paperwork. When starting a business, don't forget about issues such as trademark patents, data protection or the delivery of documents within the requested deadlines.

**d) Starting without a partnership agreement.**

A shareholders' agreement regulates the relationship between the partners and protects them in case of future sales or capital increases. Few companies draw it up at the time of incorporation and it is one of the biggest sources of conflict in the future.

**e) Confusing invoicing with getting paid.**

Selling is good, but it does not necessarily mean that the business works. For that you need to be paid with a profit margin.

**f) Focusing only on the idea.**

Do not forget that execution is as important, or even more important than having a good idea or relying on the quality of the product. Wanting to come out with everything perfect is a common mistake.

**g) Being too optimistic.**

According to a study by CB Insights, 29% of companies close because they run out of money. One of the reasons for this is that entrepreneurs tend to be too optimistic with their income forecasts and also with the costs they will have to assume. Don't forget to have a buffer for unforeseen events.

**h) Lack of a business model.**

According to CB Insights, 17% of failures are due to launching a product without a good business model or without evolving the initial model. In addition, 14% closed because they did not know how to execute their marketing plan correctly and another 10% because they did not know how to manage the business.

**i) Not getting the price right.**

This is the reason for 18% of startup closures, either for being too expensive or too cheap and barely covering costs.

**8.2. How to make a good product costing.**

Control and good management of raw materials is a fundamental aspect in order to obtain profits. Keeping track of the products that we are going to use for the preparation of a recipe will make it easier to calculate the costs.

To obtain the price, we will use a tool that helps us to determine the total cost of a dish or product through the raw materials involved in its preparation. This is a fundamental and essential aspect in hotel and catering and kitchen



management, with which we control what price to put on our dishes to make them profitable, as well as to control and optimise our spending. In simpler words, it is to give a real cost to the dish or product according to the work it costs us and the quality of the raw material.

### 8.2.1. What should be reflected in the cost breakdown?

- **Ingredients:** A complete list of the ingredients used to make the product.
- **Unit purchased:** This is the unit of measurement in which the ingredients were purchased from your suppliers. This can be anything from grams to kilos to millilitres to litres, etc.
- **Unit purchase cost:** The price per unit of measurement on the supplier's invoice.
- **Yield:** Yield is expressed as a percentage and is the amount remaining after trimming and cleaning. For example, the usable weight after trimming and cleaning of a 1,000g piece of meat may be 700g (70% yield).
- **Actual unit cost:** The cost after you have calculated your yield.
- **Portion size:** How much of each ingredient goes into each serving.
- **Serving cost:** The cost of the serving size of that ingredient, calculated using the following formula:  $\text{Serving size} \times \text{actual unit cost}$ .

This is a starting point for calculating the price of a product. Calculating the selling prices of dishes and products is the key to the profitability of a business. And it is not just a matter of knowing all the costs, there are also questions of business strategy, positioning, and market acceptance.

Before proceeding to calculate the prices of your product, it is important to be clear about some basic notions. Among them, and in terms of business strategy, it would be advisable to know your total profit margin, i.e. what you have left over after all business expenses have been paid. The clearest way to calculate this percentage is to divide expenses into three broad categories: raw materials, labor costs, and premises expenses.

The general consensus within the industry tends to divide these expenses as follows:

Raw materials: around 30% but never more than 35%.

Labor costs: around 35%.

Occupancy costs: which include insurance, taxes and permits, plus mortgage or rent, energy supply and cleaning of the premises, which should be around 20%.

Sticking to these figures will give you a target gross profit margin of around 15%.

From your gross profit analysis, you will have a better basis on which to proceed with budgeting your business, defining your menu, and calculating the prices of your products.

### **8.2.2. Final price calculation.**

Starting from the cost breakdown, there are many methods for pricing a product. Many of these pricing methods are based only on subjective criteria and are unsuitable and inefficient, as they

do not focus on real information about the products and their real costs. In general, they are methods that belong to a time when IT tools were conspicuous by their absence and were based more on comparison with competitors or the establishment of what were considered reasonable prices for customers.

A method of calculating the selling price must always be based on objective criteria resulting from an exhaustive analysis of all the expenses we are going to incur with our activity, the gross profit margin we want to achieve, and the market research we have done.

The prices we set must be aligned with the quality of the experience we are offering the customer, and with the average level of expenditure that our target public considers appropriate for our value proposition, according to our positioning, our location, etc. They must be attractive prices for the consumer and profitable for your business.

There are different objective criteria applicable, and although none of them is a 100% infallible method, we will be able to get as close to the maximum possible profitability.

These are some of the main ones:

#### **a) Price premium methods**

These are based on adding a price premium to the cost of the product, without taking into account other variables such as labour costs or wastage. It is not a 100% reliable method as it overlooks something important for your valuation, which is what your customers are willing to pay for the dishes you offer.

#### **b) Marginal contribution method**

This programme has been funded with support from the European Commission. The author is solely responsible for this publication (communication) and the Commission accepts no responsibility for any use that may be made of the information contained therein.

This method is the difference between the selling price of the product minus the variable costs.

- Fixed costs: These are costs that remain constant regardless of whether more or less is produced.
- Variable costs: These change according to the volume of production.
- Profit: This corresponds to the percentage that you want to earn on the invested cost (fixed cost + variable cost).

Example: if the total cost of a product is €15 and he wants to earn 20% on that cost, he will have to sell the dish for €18. His profit will then be €3.

### **c) Percentage of profit on food cost method**

This is perhaps one of the most widely used methods and is estimated on the real cost price of our dishes that we have previously made using a price breakdown, calculating a profit percentage of between 30-35%. This percentage would include the costs of wastage, as there will always be some waste during preparation that must be taken into account; and the rest of the costs of our business, whether fixed or variable (rent, electricity, water, etc.).

The calculation exercise we will have to carry out would consist of dividing the cost of a product by this percentage, and in this way we will obtain the price of each of the products we will have for sale. If you pay €1 for something, you must charge a minimum of €3.35 at the time of sale. It may seem that you are charging much more than necessary, but remember that you are not only paying for the raw material. You are paying for all of its preparation. You also need enough gross profit to pay for the premises and other costs where you will be selling the product.

Being one of the most commonly used methods, let's apply it to an example of a 250g jar of honey and the results we obtained with its price breakdown:

- Real cost of a 250g jar of honey: 3,10€.
- Percentage increase: 35%.
- $3,10 / 0,35 = 8,85€$

This price may not seem commercial to us and we prefer to set it at 8,95€. Your gross profit margin on this menu item would still be in the 30-35% range, but the price is more attractive.

## **9. CONCLUSION**

Welcome to this entrepreneurial adventure! In this first manual we have taught you the basics of your next activity and some guidelines to keep in mind. The Chinese proverb says that 'whoever does not know how to smile should not open a store', so we have focused these first steps of your business on customer service, an essential task for you.

On the other hand, on your way as an entrepreneur you will face legal aspects, whose knowledge we have tried to facilitate you. It is very important that you arm yourself with patience and do not be afraid to take the first steps.

The path to start your business, especially in a rural environment, will provide you with many satisfactions; first of all, you will have to assume your own responsibilities without others directing you and you will generate added value in your community. In short, you will be the master of your own destiny.

## **11. CONTACT DETAILS OF NATIONAL AND LOCAL AGENCIES THAT REGULATE LGP.**



## **BULGARY**

Establishing a LGP in Bulgaria is relatively easy. The first thing is to contact the Bulgarian Trade Registry and apply to receive a Bulgarian trade license. This includes providing information about the company, such as the name and address, as well as the company's articles of association and the signature of the company's representative.

The documents must be submitted in Bulgarian and a fee must be paid to the Commercial Registry. After the documents are accepted, the company will receive a commercial certificate and will be able to start business operations. After that, a registration and certification from the Bulgarian Food Safety Agency (BFSA) must be performed.

### **National Agency**

#### **Bulgarian Registry of Commerce**

<https://portal.registryagency.bg/en/>

#### **Bulgarian Food Safety Agency (BFSA)**

Str. Sofroni Vrachanski 19

Bulgaria, Varna, pk9000

+359 /52/ 655 - 801

## **GREECE**

The system applied is the same as the system related to the establishment of companies. In particular, it is necessary to have an active Greek tax identification number (TIN) and to create a username and password (code pair) in the TAXIS system; the code pair is the electronic signature of the owners. For European citizens, it is essential to obtain a Greek VAT number which is done remotely.

The online registration platform for businesses is owned by the Ministry of Development and Investment and the responsible authority is the Directorate of Enterprises. Each business is electronically assigned to a component business register, depending on the location of its

headquarters. The application for the establishment of a company can be made through the digital platform ( <https://eyms.businessportal.gr/auth> ) or in person, either at the responsible Commercial Register or at an authorized notary.

**National Agency**

**Ministry of Development and Investments and the responsible authority is the Directorate of Enterprises.**  
<https://eyms.businessportal.gr/auth>  
<https://www.gov.gr/sdg/starting-running-and-closing-business/registering-%20Changing-legal-form-of-or-closing-business/general/how-to-start-business-in-%20Grecia>

**ITALY**

The procedure for the recognition of an LGPs involves synergistic work by the Ministry, which works alongside producers and their associations, interacts with the regions concerned and the European Commission.

The legislation defines specific stages of the procedure at the national and European level, qualifies the parties entitled to apply, and indicates the documentation to be produced. An application for registration of an LGP must be submitted to the Ministry of Agriculture, Food, Forestry and Tourism and to the region(s) in whose territory the production being registered falls.

The main documents that must be submitted with the application are: the articles of incorporation and/or bylaws of the association; the relevant assembly resolution; the product specification; the name, address and contact details of the inspection body; a historical report; a technical report; a socio-economic report; cartography on an appropriate scale to enable the precise identification of the production area; and the Single Document.

**National Agency****Ministry of Agriculture, Food, Forestry and Tourism**

Via XX Settembre, 20 00187 Rome  
+39 0646651  
[urp@politicheagricole.gov.it](mailto:urp@politicheagricole.gov.it)

## **PORTUGAL**

To initiate the operation of a LGP, interested parties must complete the Mera Comunicación Previa (MCP) form, addressed to the territorially competent city council, through direct access to the Entrepreneur's Counter (BdE) or through mediated access at the available service counters.

### **National Agency**

**General Directorate of Economic Activities**  
(Legal Regime of Commerce, Services and Catering Activities - RJACSR).  
Avenida Visconde de Valmor n.º 72  
1069-041 Lisbon  
+21 791 92 00  
[rjacsr.apoio@dgae.gov.pt](mailto:rjacsr.apoio@dgae.gov.pt)

## **ROMANIA**

For establishing a LGP in Romania first you have to reach out to the Romania Trade Register and to apply for receiving a Romanian trade license. This includes providing information about the company, such as the name and address, as well as the statutes of the company and the signature of the company's representative.

After the company receives the trade certificate it can apply at National Veterinary Sanitary and Food Safety Authority for the obtaining of the veterinary sanitary registration and food safety document that is mandatory.

### **National Agency**

**Ministry of Justice**  
**National Commercial Registry Office**  
Blvd. Unirii nr. 74, bl. J3b, sector 3,  
030837 Romania  
[onrc@onrc.ro](mailto:onrc@onrc.ro)  
+40 213160804

<https://www.onrc.ro/index.php/ro/>

**National Sanitary Veterinary and Food Safety Authority.**

Bucharest, Piața Presei Libere nr. 1, Corp D1, Sector 1,  
013701 Romania

[office@ansvsa.ro](mailto:office@ansvsa.ro)

+40 372184977

<http://www.ansvsa.ro/>

## SPAIN

There are two orders in the Spanish state legislation that regulate the regulations in the hotel and catering establishments, these orders began in the Ministry of Information and Tourism, which were dictated in 1965.

The main regulations governing bars, restaurants and cafeterias in Spain are:

- Order of March 17, 1965 (BOE of March 29, 1965), of Tourism Management of Restaurants, Ministry of Information and Tourism.
- Order of March 18 of the same year (BOE of March 29, 1965), of Tourist Regulation of Cafeterias, Ministry of Information and Tourism.

Royal Decree 3484/2000, of December 29, 2000, establishing hygiene standards for the preparation, distribution and trade of prepared foods.

<https://www.boe.es/buscar/doc.php?id=BOE-A-2001-809#:~:text=A%2D2001%2D809-Real%20Decreto%203484%2F2000%2C%20de%2029%20de%20diciembre%2C%20por,y%20comercio%20de%20comidas%20preparadas.>

**National Agency**

**Gobierno de España. Ministerio de Industria, Comercio y Turismo**

D.<sup>a</sup> Reyes Maroto Illera  
Ministra de Industria, Comercio y Turismo  
Paseo de la Castellana 160  
28046 Madrid (Spain)  
+34 913 494 640

<https://www.mincotur.gob.es/es-es/Paginas/index.aspx>

**Local Agency**

**Dirección General de Turismo. Consejería de Cultura, Turismo y Deporte. Junta de Extremadura.**

D. Francisco Martín Simón  
Director General de Turismo  
Avda. de las Comunidades s/n  
06800 Mérida, Badajoz (Spain)  
+34 924 332 461

[dgturismo.ctd@juntaex.es](mailto:dgturismo.ctd@juntaex.es)

<https://www.turismoextremadura.com/>

## 12. CASE STUDIES

### 1. **Turist in Dolhești – A unique rural destination from Romania**

„Turist in Dolhești” is a local initiative that focuses on developing tourism in rural areas, thus bringing tourists in the region. The vision is to create unique experiences for those guests who prefer holidays in the countryside. They will have the chance to discover local beauties, unaltered traditions and customs, tasty food prepared by locals and many other activities.

We invite you to discover a unique attraction in Europe, where the inhabitants are proudly keeping their old and valuable traditions, and are open to share local tastes, legends and rituals. ..the perfect place for a sweet escape from the hectic city life, where you can revive childhood memories, unveil hidden places, enjoy traditional dishes and connect with authentic romanian people that are happy with the simple but meaningful life they live.

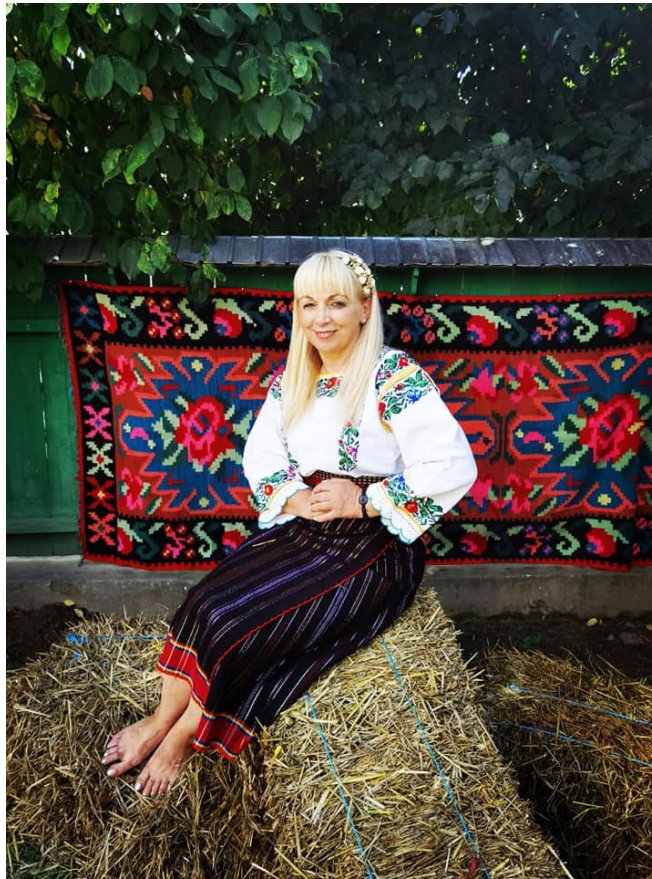
Mrs. Mirela Nechita is the founder of „Tourist in Dolhești” initiative and with the support of the town hall, the craftsmen and local producers brings tourists to a wonderful and authentic place from the north-east region of Romania, called Dolhești village.

It all started with the enhancement of the house where the founder of the initiative grew up in, located in a magnificent orchard, just near the forest. They have restored the childhood house, preserving the specific architectural style of this area and transforming it into a guest house. That was the moment they realised the need to exploit the unique characteristics that the area offers: the authentic village itself and the rural inhabitants that are proudly keeping traditions and customs,

The tours are like a journey in the past: „you will discover traditional trades, we go together to the workshop of the blacksmith and the baker, we also stop at the 100 years old corn mill, we serve selected pieces in the heart of the forest, we listen to traditional songs interpreted by the folkloric ensemble and make memories you will never forget. You will spend the night at local’s places and you will enjoy traditional dishes cooked by the locals themselves.”

Through everything they do, the Dolhești people want to express the value of tradition as beautifully as possible. Every pot, jug, wooden barrel, every rug, rug or fabric with traditional motifs has its story and the hands that created it. The delicious dishes of the place, starting with the renowned traditional cheese pies (poale-n brâu) and ending with the soups and muffins with the local specificity, speak of a creative and tasty gastronomy.

<https://www.facebook.com/turistindolhesti>







## 2. La Elena din Deal – Gastronomic Local Point

The local gastronomic point "La Elena din Deal" is a good standard to follow in tourism, especially for families who carry out activities related to agriculture, as the concept follows the usual thread of a household.

The local gastronomic point was opened in 2021 and is situated in Bistrita-Nasaud county, Romania.

The owner, Elena Rus, wanted to take her passion for cooking further, so she launched this small business where she is preparing recipes from the past for the tourists who cross her threshold. Many of the products used in the preparation of the dishes are taken from local producers in the area or from what grows in her own garden.

"It's a family restaurant, where we serve local dishes, it's a family business, where everyone contributes something. I do everything, I cook, I serve, I welcome the guests who cross my threshold. When we have a larger group, the family also comes to help. I tell the tourists a story with each dish," says Elena Rus.

The recipes are inherited from his parents and grandparents, and the products used are taken from the local producers of the area. The story of the gastronomic point began in 2019, when Elena Rus wanted to do something on her own, at that time she was cooking for tourists arriving in her village. In addition to the gastronomic side, the entrepreneur introduces tourists to the traditions and customs of the place, preserving a good part of the things inherited from parents and grandparents. Every day, Elena Rus prepares a different menu for the tourists who cross her threshold, and in busy periods such as the summer season she even has 50-60 tourists a day. The investment in this gastronomic point was not large, representing only the costs regarding the establishment of the company and a request to the National Sanitary Veterinary and Food Safety Authority.

In order to be able to open a local gastronomic point, in addition to the documents, Elena Rus says that you only need two tables placed in the yard or even the garden, but the total number of tourists who can be served at the same time should not exceed 12 people.

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100077007134558>



### **3. La Grisha – Local Gastronomic Point with fish specialties**

A Local Gastronomic Point through which the initiators want to promote their village as a tourist and gastronomic destination, to bring back to the present the architecture and traditions of the region and to support local producers.

In Ghindărești commune, Constanța county, "La Grisha", a new Local Gastronomic Point (PGL) that serves traditional fish-based dishes, was inaugurated. "La Grisha" is located in an old restored Lipovian house and offers, in addition to an authentic culinary experience based on fish, the opportunity to get to know the specific traditions of the local Lipovian Russian community and to spend time in nature, on Danube's shore.

The menu includes well-known fish specialties prepared according to Lipovan family recipes and everything is prepared in-house, with ingredients sourced from local fishermen and producers.

More than that, the owner are promoting the concept of local shopping and contribute to the development of new economic activities in the commune, by promoting existing local producers and creative and artistic activities in Ghindărești.

In the commune of Ghindărești, the population consists, in proportion of more than 98%, of Lipovian Russians lipovians, an ethnic group of Slavic origin.

Starting from the 18th century, numerous russians settled in the Romanian territories, especially in Dobrogea and the Danube Delta, being known here under the name Lipoveni. Over the centuries, the lipovians have kept their language, customs and ancestral faith with sanctity, and proudly celebrating their roots. The LGP La Grisha is also an example of how the locals get involved in preserving and carrying on the customs of their community.

<https://www.facebook.com/lagrisha/>



#### **4. Casa VLC Bilbor – Local Gastronomic Point**

A family that has returned to its home village, after a long period of working abroad, establishes an LGP in one of the least populated localities in Romania, thus attracting over 1000 tourists a year.

Sorin Vilcan together with his wife, both tow drivers, learned about local gastronomic points, a small-scale tourism concept, and decided to invest in one in Harghita county, more precisely in the village of Bilbor, considered one among the most unpolluted places in Romania, located in the commune of the same name, which has about 1,500 households.

"We have started the business in 2021. We returned home with the idea of capitalizing on authentic local products, and so we opened the first local gastronomic point in the north-west of Harghita, in Bilbor. I started with my own savings and I can say that you don't need a lot of money to start a business, but the pleasure of working", said Sorin Vilcan, co-founder of the local gastronomic point Casa VLC.

The owners are very proud that they have tourists from all over the country, but also groups of tourists from Switzerland, Slovenia, Cyprus and even America have visited them. At Casa VLC, tourists can find traditional, home-made products, such as sausage, cranberry juice, blueberry juice, up to mushroom stews, game meat.

As some of the visitors want to participate in the whole food preparation process, the owners are also offering this experience. All the food is made that day and 90% of the products used by husband and wife are from their own household.

At the same time, the owners also focused on attracting families with children to Casa VLC, offering them the opportunity to take pony rides, horse-drawn carriage rides or sleigh rides.

"Bilbor is at the end of the world, we are on the border with Suceava, and if the infrastructure was put in place, the demand would be different (higher - n. ed.). The local authorities are delighted with what we have achieved and said they support us. For my part, I guide young people to come to the country and do agritourism, because this is the future", Vilcan believes.

<https://www.facebook.com/pensiunea.casa.vlc/>



## **5. Gastro Local – Local Gastronomic Points platform**

Gastro Local, a platform dedicated to local gastronomic points, has created a network of over 20 households that offer meal services from products based on traditional recipes and are located in peasant households, small farms, stables or fishing places. They are located in Brasov county, and Dorian Lungu, the founder of Gastro Local from Brasov, intends to expand in Bistrița-Năsăud, Covasna, Harghita, Iași and Neamț counties.

It is a way of creating a community synergy and a model of rural socialization around the gastronomic act. It has the role of offering visitors the opportunity to serve a meal with traditional Romanian products at local households, in the area where they spend their vacation, in a rustic atmosphere, but in compliance with the hygiene standards imposed by law.

Gastro Local achieve its goal by creating a trusted network, based on the same common values, on traditions and diversity, through a unitary promotion of the network, at local/regional/national level, using digitization intensively and valuing rural space.

It creates a national level collaboration of all these local producers, through examples of good practices, exchange of experience and other activities aimed at the credibility and economic growth of the Romanian rural areas;

Gastro Local also offers visibility of the Gastro Local network to the press, tourists and internal and external tour operators.

Thus, the development of rural mountain areas in Romania based on Local GAstro programs will lead both to an increase in the number of products from rural and mountain areas, registered as recipes or established products of the regions and the country, as well as to the expansion of the market and of the competitiveness of traditional Romanian dishes.

<https://gastrolocal.ro/>





## 6. Audio Guide Bulgaria - Personal Multilingual Tour Guide for Sightseeing tours and Day trips

- Free of charge city travel guide
  - Navigation to the place the tourist has chosen
  - Multilingual user interface
  - Tourist audio guide
  - Interactive city map
  - Blog with traditional recipes and historical places
- The tourist can benefit from the interactive map that navigates him/her from one place to another. One can get it by email after he/she registers and provides an email address.
- The tourist can listen to stories developed by professionals, that contain not only historical data but also interesting facts and legends about the sites and artifacts that one wants to see.
- The tourist can listen to creative storytelling inside the museums and temples that one intends to visit.
- Pleasant background music relevant to the atmosphere of the particular place is added to all the stories and makes one's experience more exciting and memorable.
- The tourist can choose in what language he/she wants to listen to a story and so do your friends.
- The tourist can have all the instructions on how to use the audio guides so that he/she can fully enjoy his/her walking tours in the beautiful country Bulgaria.

The multilingual mobile personal tour guide **designed particularly for individual tourists and/or small groups and groups of friends** is quite easy to use because anytime when one needs the app is available on one's mobile phone.

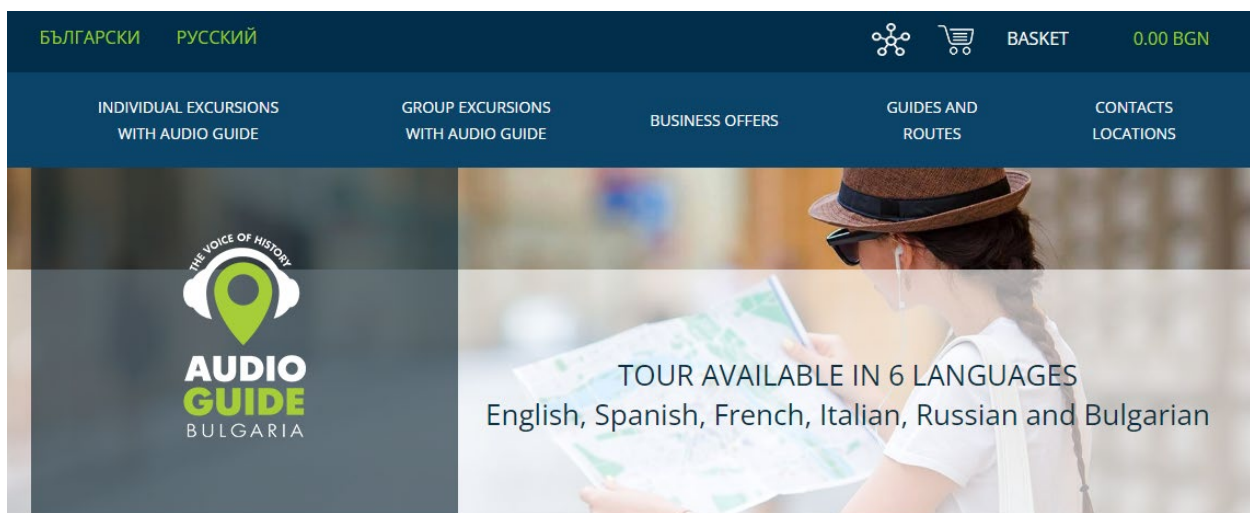
Audio Guide Bulgaria mobile travel application offers a **free of charge travel guide** to help tourists discover all the best things to do in the city or town one is interested in – museums, attractions, shops and restaurants. One can choose from ready-made tours, created by the platform team to guide one through a tour and help the tourist visit the most popular places, enjoy the storytelling and find out about interesting facts.

And what makes it most attractive and convenient is that **one can travel and discover Bulgaria on his/her own without the need to stick to pre-planned schedules**. One can choose his/her own pace, time for rest, places to visit and the language.

<https://www.audio-guide.bg/en/blog/bulgarian-traditional-kitchen-9/>

<https://www.facebook.com/AUDIOTOURBULGARIA>

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCVG7X1G4vFwgQkCUQxRjchA>



The screenshot shows the top navigation bar of the Audio Guide Bulgaria website. It features language options for Bulgarian (БЪЛГАРСКИ) and Russian (РУССКИЙ), a shopping cart icon, and a basket showing 0.00 BGN. Below the navigation bar are five menu items: Individual Excursions with Audio Guide, Group Excursions with Audio Guide, Business Offers, Guides and Routes, and Contacts Locations. The main content area features a large image of a woman wearing a hat and sunglasses, looking at a map. On the left side of this image is the Audio Guide Bulgaria logo, which includes a green location pin icon and the text 'THE VOICE OF HISTORY', 'AUDIO GUIDE', and 'BULGARIA'. To the right of the image, text reads 'TOUR AVAILABLE IN 6 LANGUAGES' followed by 'English, Spanish, French, Italian, Russian and Bulgarian'.

Audio Guide Bulgaria - Your Personal Multilingual Tour Guide  
for Sightseeing tours and Day trips



SOFIA

PLOVDIV

NESEBUR

RILA MONASTRY

BOYANSKA CHURCH



AN AUDIO GUIDE DAY TRIP IN SOFIA



A DAY TRIP FROM SOFIA TO PLOVDIV



GUIDE WITH SOFIA GRAFFITI



## 7. Gotvach.bg (Bonapeti.com) - Recipes Database

Gotvach.bg is one of the biggest databases featuring various recipes including traditional ones. Users register and can add their own recipe with all details and pictures. Admins check the quality of the content. Other users can comment and rate the recipes, as well as upload pictures, video recipes, articles and start forum discussions.

The platform is easy and convenient to navigate and includes a search engine - users can search for a particular recipe by keywords, by category, etc.

Finally, the platform's message has been translated into several languages.

The webpage is gamified - the more recipes one uploads, articles, comments and likes, invites friends to the page, the more points he/she has. Due to ads on the page and an online shop, the

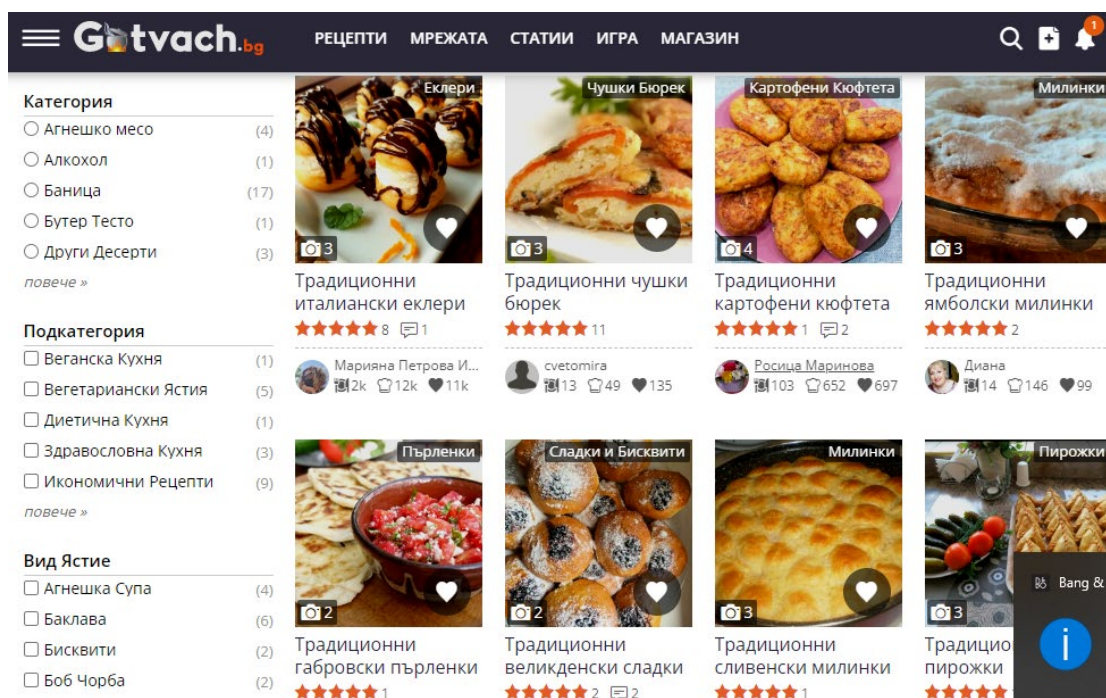
platform can afford to grant prizes to these superb users, such as coffee machines, kitchen items, ect. This way good quality content is being created constantly by the users of the platform.

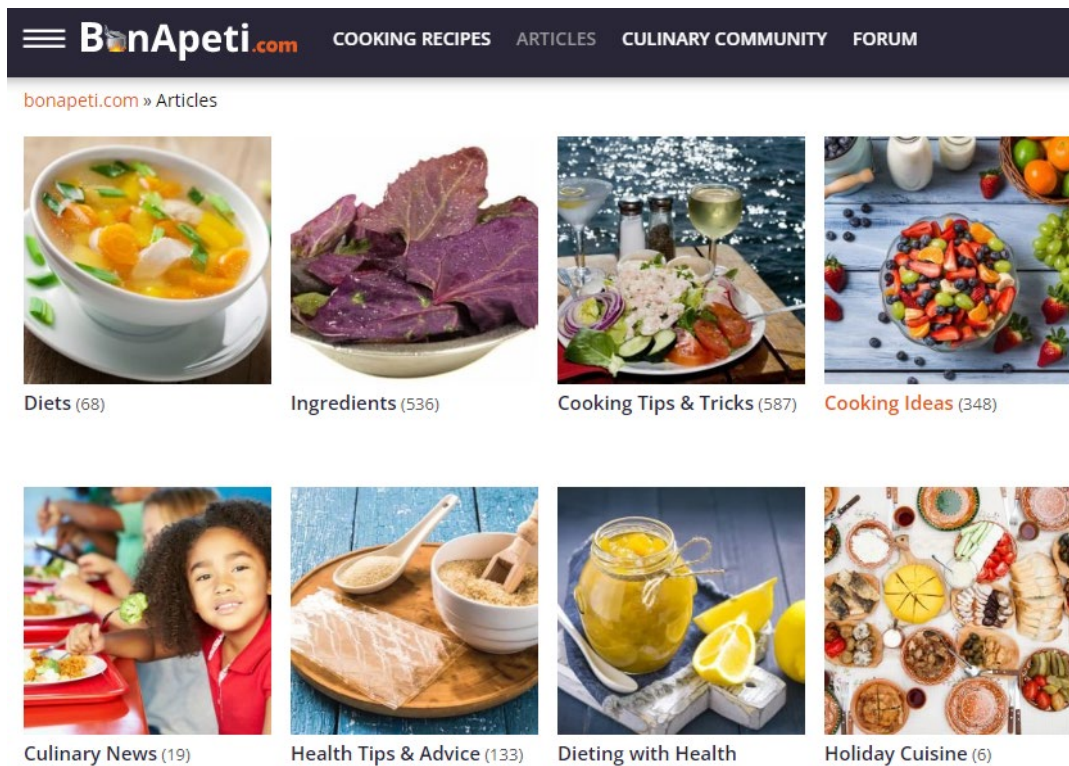
The platform is one of the most famous sites containing recipes in Bulgaria. Due to its extreme popularity, the site has a lot of advertisements, which makes it financially sustainable, but also a bit burdensome for users.

<https://gotvach.bg/>

<https://www.facebook.com/bggotvach>

<https://www.youtube.com/c/GotvachBgVideos>





## 8. Food cooperative uniting consumers and producers of clean food

<https://www.hrankoop.com/>

Hrankoop's mission is access to clean food through solidarity participation of consumers and producers in production, distribution and control. It started in 2010 as an informal group, registered as a cooperative in late 2015 and now has 74 full members and over 150 associated consumers and producers. The cooperative provides clean food from farms in the bigger cities.

The main activities of Hrankoop are:

- Cooperative supply;
- Farmers markets;
- Events;

Accompanying but also important to Hrankoop are:

- Solidarity actions;
- Social support;
- Urban agriculture;
- Educational events;
- Catering with farm products;

How does Hrankoop work?

Hrankoop works according to the 7 cooperative principles:

- Voluntary and open membership;
- Democratic governance by members;
- Economic participation of members;
- Independence;
- Education;
- Cooperation between cooperatives;
- Care for the community;

Hrankoop not only supports local producers by showcasing their products, but also encourages voluntary service and community initiatives, as well as urban agriculture.

Hrankoop is a valuable initiative not only because it connects small producers with consumers, but also because of the wide variety of events it organizes. Examples are: an educational edible garden, photo exhibitions, a series of 'Save the Soil' events and many more. Hrankoop is active in the largest regional cities in Bulgaria and continues to grow.

<https://www.hrankoop.com/>

<https://www.facebook.com/HrankoopSofia/>

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCXQ-UvobU5zXA3BE3bjG8EQ>



ХРАНИ  
КООП  
За чиста храна



## 9. LocalFood.bg Foundation - an incubator for small startup food business initiatives

LocalFood.bg Foundation develops a national network of micro-enterprises and provides expert assistance for their effective market access and long-term successful development, in compliance with all regulatory requirements.

The foundation is a heir of Sustainable Society Association (founded 2012 – closed 2016), which ran the first farmers' markets in major cities in the country. Now it has brought together a team of experts dedicated to the development of the local food market in recent years. In addition to training and mentoring, the team also has a mission to make a lasting impact on small and local food business policies.

Some activities of the organization are supported by the America for Bulgaria Foundation.

### PROJECTS

- PENDARA

PENDARA is a long-term project, which aims to support the launch stage of small startup food business initiatives, to explore the potential of the involuntary gray sector and to contribute to reforms in favor of the homemade and local food market.

### Main activities

- Pendara Academy – an annual training program for complete launching of small local food startups.
- Business training – individual and small group courses for transferring business knowledge and experience from local food masters to startups.
- Training and gastro tours – organized visits to small farms and local food producers to share knowledge and experience.



- Service program – a suite of services designed specifically for local food startups. It includes free questions-answers service and paid business testing, business training, registration of new small production facilities, monthly internal control subscription.
- LOCALFOOD.BG

The foundation' main website, rich in examples of operating micro business, resources, guides,

- Collaboration of team of experts in order to create high quality content;
- Reaching out to a sponsors, who can support that idea (e.g. America for Bulgaria and others);
- Offering training and mentoring to small businesses;
- Mission: to make a lasting impact on small and local food business policies;

The platform has a separate category "stories" and presents the stories of small producers and enterprises that preserve Bulgarian food, seeds and traditions, which is very inspirational.

<https://www.localfood.bg/foundation/>





#### 10. "Pendara" - local food market and gastronomic rural tourism, aiming to improve the business environment for their development

In Bulgaria the implementation of European legislation lags behind in this category of products and a whole key livelihood for the local economy, such as the preparation and sale of home-made authentic foods, is forced into the informal sector.

Pendara is a complex and long-term project of the LocalFood.bg Foundation, whose mission is to solve this problem and make the environment for local food businesses more favorable.

Pendara's team impacts the problem through 3 main activities:

- They study in detail the potential of the forced gray sector,
- They create and support the development of local food business initiatives,
- They influence directly for reforms in favor of a free market for local, authentic and homegrown food.

What does PENDARA do:

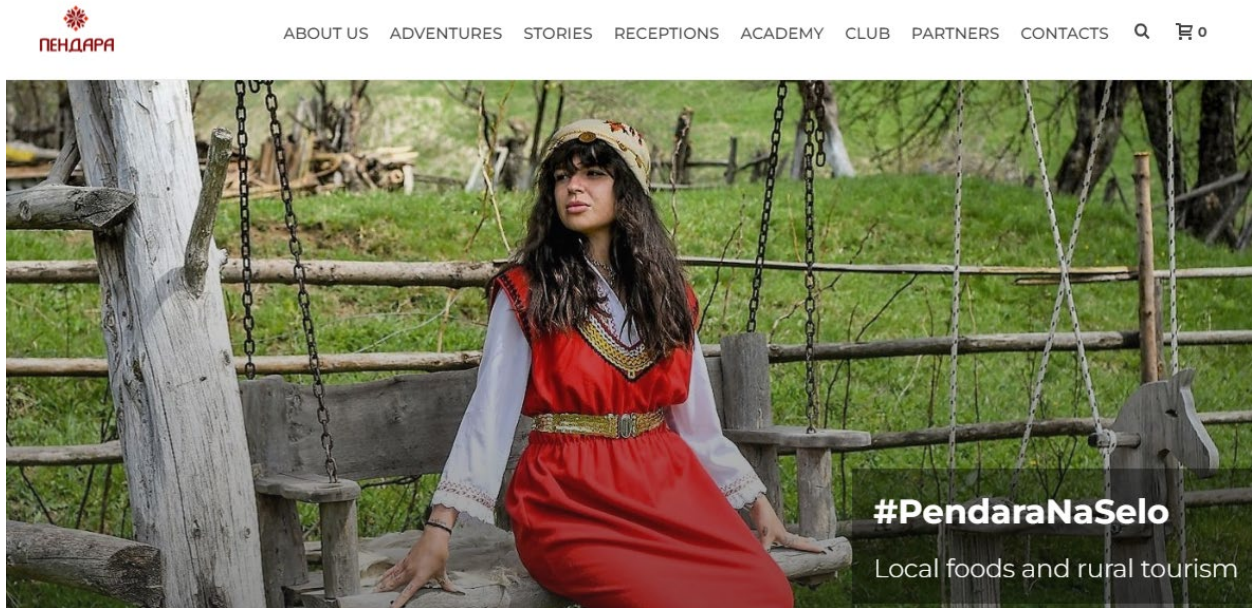
- **Pendara Farmers Markets** - an urban event that brings local producers of clean food directly to consumers.
- **Pendara Market** - online store for direct deliveries of local farm foods;
- **"Pendara in the village "** - zone for gastronomic rural tourism. There one will find guest houses offering local food, places and markets for local food, adventures through the unknown rural areas of Bulgaria.
- **"Pendara Academy"** - specialized program for comprehensive training of small business initiatives in the field of local food and gastronomic rural tourism. It includes basic online training and specialized in-person courses.
- **Club Pendara** - network of farmers, producers, guesthouse owners, restaurateurs and shop owners whose small businesses Pendara supports with expertise, networking and development opportunities.
- Great marketing and attractive vision of the project.
- User-friendly online shop with locally produced foods;
- Culinary tourism offered as an adventure;
- Online academy for rural gastronomy entrepreneurs + business consulting;

In cases of enquiries and within the Pendara Club, the team is committed to **connecting and implementing business partnerships between farmers**, artisans, guest house owners and traders such as restaurateurs, café owners, hotels, shops and investors. For example, they provide brokerage services when a small restaurant is looking for farm-to-table or authentic food suppliers.

<https://pendara.bg/>

<https://www.facebook.com/pendara.bg>

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCahbV7ECuaAEgmkQzEkT3aw>



A STORY ABOUT CHOCOLATE:  
SWEET "SOAPS" BY SVOGE AND  
VELIZAR PEEV



AN APRIL CULINARY SESSION IN  
GORNA ARDA



THE UNKNOWN BLACKSMITH

[Read More](#)

## 11. Olive oil tasting in Alentejo, Portugal

An olive oil tasting in Alentejo, Portugal, is an activity which many visitors are looking for these days. Why? Because it is something so natural and authentic in this region. Because the olive trees have been in Alentejo for thousands of years and because the olive oil produced here is of outstanding quality.

Visit wine cellars is now a tourist activity in Alentejo since Alentejo wine has won so many awards worldwide.

This is a unique experience as the person who visits it, will be in personal touch with the incredible story of a small producer in love with his old olive grove for more than 6 decades.

The owners took advantage of having in their property olive trees over 2000 years of age. In this property, olives are picked by hand and processed the same day to keep all the best olive oil characteristics. Such features make olive oil a natural product highly beneficial for people's health.

<https://www.visitevora.net/en/olive-oil-tasting-alentejo-portugal/>





## 12. 'Winemaker For a Day' Experience in Alentejo, Portugal

Dated in 1997, this Alentejo-style Adega has about nine thousand square meters (96.875 ft<sup>2</sup>) of covered area and is equipped with the most modern vinification technology, a bottling room and cellars for the ageing of wines. In the Adega Vila Santa, modernity embraces harmoniously the centennial Portuguese wine-making tradition. Some of the grapes intended for the most sophisticated red wines, where the production follows the ancestral rules, are trodden in marble mills and partially destemmed.

The innovative aspect of this experience in Adega Vila Santa is that you have the opportunity to create your own wine and become a winemaker for a day. You also can taste premium wines and do a Picnic while tasting the wines.

<https://www.jportugalramos.com/>



### 13. Rural House Sete Quintas, Portugal

Sete Quintas, located 25km from Coimbra, in Retorta, municipality of Miranda do Corvo, in the heart of Central Portugal, bathed by the Dueça river. Abandoned for more than 60 years, these former olive oil and flour mills, now recovered, preserve the rustic layout combining the traditional stone with warm wood; modern perks such as air conditioning, wi-fi and television with the simplicity of yore.

In total, there are three bedrooms, and two independent houses, guaranteeing comfort and privacy. You can also visit the Olive Oil Museum, a tribute to the “Galega” olive tree (a typical Portuguese olive tree from this region) and to our ancestors and their hard daily lives.

Sete Quintas is considered an innovative case study since it was built around an ancient olive oil museum, abandoned over 70 years ago that you can visit and among all the traditional objects in a time where labor was the only product of men’s strength and will. In the private museum, you can get to know the artisanal process behind the making of the much-appreciated olive oil.

<https://sete-quintas.pt/>

<https://www.facebook.com/museudoazeite>







## 14. Nobre Terra, traditional liqueurs and jams, Portugal

The company Nobre Terra, located in Cajados in the municipality of Palmela, was created in 2009 by a young couple of teachers who decided to dedicate themselves to the production of liqueurs and jams, from fruit and aromatic plants produced on their farm in organic farming.

The creation of the company represents more than a business, it represents a lifestyle and the option for organic farming, the respect for nature and the environment, the appreciation of local products and the quality and authenticity of the products.

Creation of a micro-enterprise producing traditional liqueurs and fine jams, from local products produced on the farm, based on the recovery of ancestral and family recipes, improved with the introduction of new ingredients and flavours that result in high-quality products.

The project consisted in the installation of a liqueur and jam production unit based on the fruits and herbs produced on the farm.

<https://www.nobreterra.pt/index.php>





## 15. Quinta do Miguel

Quinta do Miguel, with an area of 12,000 square meters, is a charming and peaceful getaway made up of separate villas, studios & a loft with carefully designed interiors and an idyllic garden filled with a variety species of flowers and trees to be discovered.

With a unique swimming pool and an outdoor hot tub merged into the surrounding nature, everything is thought through to the utmost detail for those looking for a peaceful holiday during the summer or a restful time during the colder months

Quinta do Miguel as a form of entrepreneurship and innovation in rural areas, bearing in mind that it is located in the Aldeia do Meco, in Sesimbra. It is refined tourism, which privileges the comfort and privacy of the client, without forgetting the specificities of the village where they are located.

<https://www.nobreterra.pt/index.php>



## **16. The Merlina Guest House - La Foresteria La Merlina**

The Merlina Guest House was born from Marco and Luciana's desire to take on a new work challenge. After creating and managing for thirty-five one of the most influential gastronomies in Tortona and in the whole Italian scene, they decided it was time to return to their childhood places, in that strip of land on the border between Val Curone and Val Borbera.

Thanks to the valuable work of recovery of a 1970s villa now in a complete state of abandonment (which lasted 6 years!), in 2016 one of the most dynamic realities of the entire tourism scene in eastern Piedmont was born, in one of the most spectacular places in the entire surrounding area.

On the slopes of Mount Giarolo, between Val Curone and Val Borbera, with a breathtaking view of the Tortonese Hills and a strategic location, the Foresteria La Merlina is the ideal place, both to set off to discover the area through its paths, which can be traveled both on foot and with the brand new e-bikes, and to relax by the pool with a cocktail in hand, contemplating the sunset. The 4 comfortable rooms, each named after a typical local grape variety, are ready to welcome you and give you magical moments of relaxation.

In this structure, guests can enjoy a Restaurant with about 30 covers: you can find a cuisine that enhances the territory and uses food km0 produced directly by the owners and at the same time animals raised by them.

In addition you can find four rooms facing the pool to stop and rest after a dinner or take full advantage of the facility, which also offers a pool overlooking the valley, expanses of meadows where you can do MTB, Horseback Riding, Trekking or just relax in nature.

The goal of this facility is to enhance culinary products, giving people the opportunity to taste real local products from the surrounding area.

A clear example of this desire is certainly the breeding of pigs in the wild.

It was a dream come true for the owners to bring their livestock products to their customers' tables. To give the opportunity to anyone who wishes to do so to follow the growth and processing of meat, so as to enjoy a genuine and certified product under the banner of quality. They want to make their culture and culinary tradition usable to all guests through the direct raising of their pigs.

That is why they are now offering the possibility of bringing their pork to the table with two types of products i: "fresh cuts" and "cold cuts" (including their famous salami "Angels with String") seasoned from three to twelve months, in ancient stone cellars of our valleys.

Following the fresh chain you can choose from the following cuts of meat:

- Lonza
- Coppa
- Salamelle
- Sausage
- Shank
- Ribs
- Cotechino
- Tenderloin

While if you want to taste their cold cuts you can choose from the following products:

- "Noble" salami with seasoning from three to six months.
- Salami "Cucito" with seasoning from more than six to twelve months.
- Cacciatorini with seasoning from thirty days.
- Pancetta seasoned over twelve months
- Coppa aged over six months
- Cooked salami

But why choose the products of la Merlina Guest House:

What pigs eat: In the guesthouse they raise their pigs in the wild, supplementing their diet with fodder and grains from their own farm.

Where do the pigs live? The pigs live about 700 meters from the Guesthouse in a protected green area with more than one hectare among pristine meadows and forests.

Why choose this opportunity: it is a new way of understanding the gastronomic and domestic economy. They offer you the chance to make the community for the direct management and purchase of a pig so that no surplus or food waste is generated and you can be sure of the provenance and quality of your food.

Another great proposition of this facility is the E-BIKE service with pedaling assistance.

In fact, it is possible to admire the beautiful views and immerse yourself in nature by pedaling on trails of varying difficulty, on dirt or paved road, enjoying the assisted pedaling of their E-BIKES.

[www.foresteriamerlina.it](http://www.foresteriamerlina.it)







## **17. Lindhouse - Country House**

Lindhouse is a small country house with two apartments at the end of a cul-de-sac road. A few kilometers from Alba and Asti, it is an excellent solution for those who want to have their own apartment to spend pleasant vacations surrounded by greenery. The house is close to the historic center of Govone, which offers all the necessary services such as restaurants, bars, pharmacy and supermarket.

The house is simple but special. Two small but extremely cozy apartments, furnished with simple but handmade furniture by the hosts, suitable for peaceful and serene vacations.

Lindhouse is bike and cyclist-friendly: enclosed and covered bike storage, maintenance room, facilities for washing your bike and sportswear, and tour suggestions.

The hosts are Andrea, Sara and Linda. It all started when they decided to raise their daughter somewhere peaceful and serene, where she could run freely and grow up surrounded by nature. So in 2016 they purchased two small houses that share a courtyard and an old porch.

One piece at a time, they are trying to give new life to these two buildings, while respecting their original structure. Another important aspect is that Lindhouse is ecofriendly: in an ever-changing world they have decided to do their part by trying, where possible, to make responsible choices and respect the nature surrounding us. So their house has become green both outside and inside.

Lindhouse is located in Govone, a quiet little town surrounded by the rolling hills of the Roero region. The small garden of the house comes with tables, chairs, deckchairs and a comfortable hammock to make the most of sunny days. All around the house there are many trails for hiking or mountain biking. You can easily reach San Damiano, famous for its fantastic summer festivals, or Priocca and Canale.

The entrance of the house is on a small terrace that in summer we equip with a dining set to relax and enjoy the view. As soon as you enter, you will find the living area with the fully-equipped kitchen, ideal for longer stays, the dining table, the television and the closet bed for a 3rd guest. In the kitchen you will find, free of charge, a kettle, a coffee machine with pods, jams, cookies

and herbal teas.

Warm and snug in the winter, cool and bright in the summer, the bedroom is simple yet extremely cozy. We designed and built the furniture you'll find in the room, using natural and recycled materials. The room is equipped with air conditioning, two windows that overlook the garden and a comfortable double bed. We can also add a bed with rails for your little one. Lights and candles create the right atmosphere for your relaxing vacation.

Each morning you will find a picnic basket outside the door with your breakfast, filled to the brim with local delicacies and homemade cakes.

They're committed to responsibly sourcing all the food they use for their meals, in an effort to make a positive impact in this ever-changing world. You can eat what you like and where you like!

You can even bring your basket in the garden for an outdoor breakfast, weather permitting.

But why visit the Langhe and Roero Region, you ask?

There are so many reasons to visit the Langhe and Roero region, any time of the year: ancient castles, beautiful landscapes and a fascinating food and wine culture.

Let's discover some more details about this part of Piedmont.

Sandwiched between two rivers, the Tanaro and the Bormida, this area is known for its beautiful rolling hills and valleys lined with vines (the so-called Bassa Langa), as well as for its fortified villages surrounded by woods and hazelnut fields (the fascinating Alta Langa). Alba is one of its most important towns, famous all over the world for its truffle auction, the wine and its many culinary delights.

Barolo is also a town not to be missed, it embodies the essence of one of the most noble wines of Piedmont, which bears the same name. The Langhe region is beautiful all year round, even if in Autumn it's simply magical, thanks to the wonderful foliage.

Regarding Roero, first of all, Roero is the name for a geographical and historical area in Piedmont comprising of 24 municipalities, located in the northeastern part of the province of Cuneo. The left bank of the Tanaro river separates this area from the Langhe, which, together

with Monferrato is now a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

The Roero region extends to the provinces of Turin and Asti and is a great destination for anyone wanting to unwind and escape the city. Here you'll find excellent food and wine, beautiful landscapes and great trails for outdoor sports.

One certainly innovative aspect that this facility offers is the experiences it gives its clients: in fact the hosts, in partnership with TourDivini, a tour operator in the area, have selected some of the experiences that can be had in their area and of course they recommend them all!

These include:

- Visit to the Altalanga dairy (slow food presidium) with explanation of how the goats are raised, collection of milk exclusively from their own production, visit to the strictly manual production workshop, storage caves and the farm with the animals, free to graze.

The experience will end with a tasting lunch of cheeses made according to ancient recipes.

- Fresh pasta cooking lesson with Grandma Francesca:

In the house, together with the owners' mother, Nonna Francesca, guests can discover all the secrets of fresh egg pasta making. A half-day spent together to live an authentic Italian family experience.

- Dinner in the vineyards:

Dinner and music by moonlight among the Roero vineyards. Magical event, the dream of a late summer night to immerse yourself in the ancient atmosphere of the hills and live a unique experience. Long tables nestled among centuries-old vineyards with Piedmont tasting menu and wine galore.

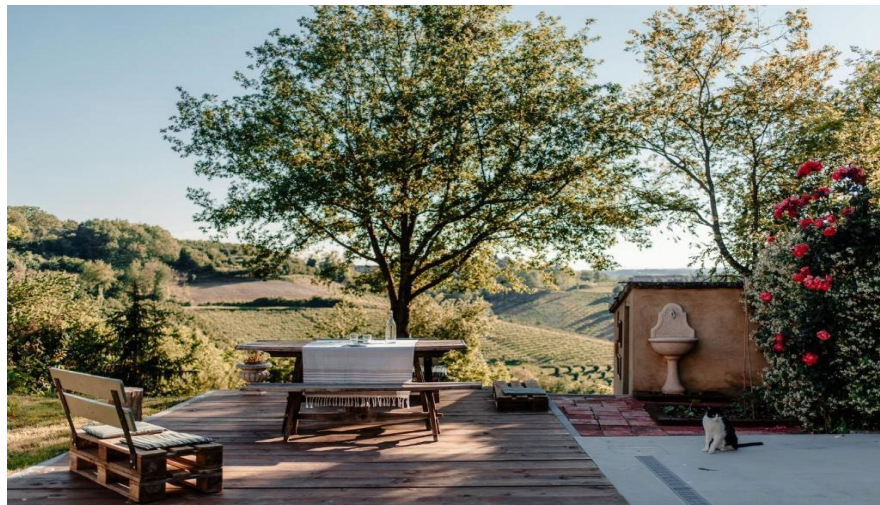
- Creating your own essence:

Interactive 1½-hour seminar run by a Maître Parfumeur, who will take participants through the history of perfume, essential oils and herbs combined with a multisensory tasting of herbs, spices, essences and infusions to enable participants to move toward their own perfume. The experience concludes with the creation of one's own perfume and if desired with lunch or aperitif.

- Herbal workshop and topics cooking class:

The workshop lasts about 2 to 3 hours under the guidance of an expert in the area but also a naturopath and cook. The expert will guide guests to learn how to include herbs in recipes, how to benefit from their use, what their properties are, how to dose and use them for traditional dishes, healthy recipes, decoctions and herbal teas. Part of the educational course will be devoted to herbs in cosmetics.

<https://www.lindhouse.it/>





## 18. Organic Farmhouse of Etna - Agriturismo Biologico dell'Etna

The Farmhouse is located on the slopes of Mount Etna, at 550 m above sea level, in one of the oldest and most fascinating of Etna villages, Trecastagni, called “Belvedere of Etna”. Etna is the highest European active volcano, whose lavaflores offer a unique sight, evocative and amazing. In this context the Agriturismo Biologico dell'Etna is set, in a helthfu and restful place, fresh at summer and mild at winter, full of colours and fragrances that allow a pleasant stay. It is about 2 hectares wide, cultivated with fruit plants and vegetables under biological management (AIAB certificates) since 1988, that, together with other products such as sugar-free biological jams, are sold directly in the Farm.

The building, recently completely restructured, well refined with walnut doors and with sicilia “cotto” floors, offers ospitality during the whole year, with at least two-night stays.

Guests have access to five rooms each with an independent entrance, fully furnished and with a private bathroom, for a total of nine beds. All rooms are equipped with hot water, heating, air conditioning with ceiling lights. At guests' disposal, a playground for children. Free parking inside the company.

Possibility of charging an electric car, free of charge (subject to availability).

In 2009 the building was equipped with solar panels, in compliance with its environmental and energy saving policies.

In the surroundings of Trecastagni it is possible to practice various sports: winter skiing, excursions on Mount Etna, ice-skating, trips in boat and swimming along the Ionic coast, horse-riding, soccer, football, tennis, gym, karting, rides on bicycle and mountain-bike, trekking along the paths of Monti S.Nicolò, Gorna and Ilice. For those who prefer golf, there is a golf pitch 20 km far. During their stay in the Farmhouse, the guests will be given free depliants with routes to places of interest, in order to let them organize their stay as well as possible. Of great interest is the visit of Mount Etna and of the Parco dell'Etna, which begins just 2 km far from the Farmhouse. Proximity to the motorway entrance allows it to quickly reach the provinces of Siracusa, Ragusa, Enna and Agrigento.

A strong point and innovation of this farmhouse is definitely the route called "Etna Wine Route" that allows guests to get in touch with the wine reality of the area.

Organic Farmhouse of Etna, is excellently connected, to start a route on the "Etna Wine Route" and with all the cultural, historical, naturalistic and eno-gastronomic itineraries of the Ionian territory and eastern Sicily. You can choose the ones that best suit YOUR craving for knowledge. (Itinerary sea, mountain, religious, route of the Castles). With the hosts, you can bring together along different routes, the various alternatives of those listed above so as to combine the useful with the delightful. In this context we find a synthesis of how they spend their days our curious and eager Guests have the opportunity to bring back an indelible memory

of all those things they can admire during their travels in this wonderful and spectacular island "Sicily."

From the Organic Farmhouse of Etna, we start the first route of the "Etna Wine Route," with a visit to the Nicosia Group Wineries, to stock up or taste the "Etna Rosso" and "Etna Bianco" wines produced in the area of Trecastragni, (possibility of a guided tour of the Nicosia Group vineyards, which arose on Mount Gorna and Mount Cava), along the way we can admire the dry stone walls supporting the land where the vineyards and orchards rise, we can see the Eramo di S. Emilia and the Common Cave to go down the valley to behind Monte Serra guests will meet the "MULA" museum of Lava. Afterwards, we return to the "Etna Wine Road " with a visit to the Monte Serra Winery of Dr. Giuseppe Benanti of Viagrande, a producer of D.O.C. wines, where special wines can be tasted, cared for in every detail by expert master winemakers. A stone's throw away in Viagrande is the liquor factory of Nonna Rufina, which produces liqueurs with particular aromas, to mention a few such as those with "Laurel." "Chilli." and "Fennel." We go down towards Aci Bonaccorsi and then Valverde, on the "Etna Wine Road" we meet the liquor factory Le Antiche Delizie, we will stock up on the liqueur "Elisir dell'Etna" or the Rosoli di Mandarino or Arancio produced with the organic method. Passing through the town of Aci Catena, a visit to the archaeological zone of Reitana in Aci S. Nicolò is a must, where we find the Achillean Baths of Santa Venera al Pozzo and some old water mills. We continue the journey to Acireale for a visit to the historic center full of Baroque-style buildings and churches. A visit to the Azienda Autonoma delle Terme di Acireale, continuing on to Aci Trezza, made famous by Homer in the Odyssey and by Giovanni Verga in the novel "I Malavoglia." for a seafood dinner followed by a short visit to Aci Castello at the famous Norman Castle. At the end, guests will return to the Farmhouse.

[www.agruturismobiologicoetna.it](http://www.agruturismobiologicoetna.it)





## **19. Farmhouse Falcare - Agriturismo Falcare**

Farmhouse Falcare is located at about 550 meters above sea level, in the beautiful scenery of the plateau of the Gargano National Park. Staying in this house allows you to marry the idea of a calmer life, dictated by the rhythms of nature, in a place full of scenic suggestion, quiet and tranquility throughout the year.

The family that embarked on this life path has always resided in the nearby town of Cagnano Varano, cultivating the land on this plateau since the 1970s, with wheat and legume crops. In 2000 they decided to start their reality as an agriturismo company and since then they have never stopped doing it with passion and dedication. It is a type of company that is still family-run, in which the agricultural activity is included to the agriturismo one where Aldo and Dina, those who started this company more than 20 years ago, are an active part of the organizational life of this reality supported by their children and grandchildren.

There are several interesting services that this type of facility offers.

First of all, there are the accommodations.

Guests are accommodated in double rooms, triple rooms or apartments, all with independent entrances, surrounded by greenery and featuring simple and rustic decor, perfecting your relaxing days as a couple or with the whole family.

As for the restaurant, they offer for breakfast, lunch and dinner the specialties of their farm with great attention to organic production: milk, dairy products, seasonal vegetables, legumes and meat are of their own production and breeding, served in a family atmosphere in our restaurant room.

For sports lovers, on the other hand, inside our facility you can find the Adventure Park, a 5-levels-of-difficulty course consisting of Tibetan bridges and pulleys on the trees of the forest. In addition, you can take advantage of the Nature Trail and the Life Trail equipped with benches and directions for exercises and workouts immersed in the woods.

In addition, a vacation at the farmhouse can be an opportunity to hike in the tall forests of Valle Ragusa, the Umbra Forest, Bosco Quarto, but also an ideal place to reach San Giovanni Rotondo, the city of St. Pio, Monte Sant'Angelo with the Grotto of St. Michael, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and the various Gargano villages, such as the characteristic cave of St. Michael in Cagnano Varano and the wonderful Gargano coast framed by the Adriatic Sea only twenty minutes away, Rodi Garganico, Peschici, Vieste, Mattinata, the maritime lakes of Varano and Lesina, and Lake Salso.

[www.agriturismofalcare.com](http://www.agriturismofalcare.com)





## 20. Bramasole Estate - Tenuta Bramasole

The Estate was born from the passion for breeding purebred dogs of Julius & Stephen, rainbow husbands and fathers.

Over time, dog breeding expanded, and the desire to expand this passion for animals was born.

Thus was born Tenuta Agricola Brama Sole, a 32,000-square-foot facility in Inveruno, in the Castanese area, which in addition to dogs is home to many animals, those that now make up the Educational Farm.

The structures of the Estate and Club House are created giving attention to sustainability and ecology, so much so that many of the pieces that make up the two spaces come from an old abandoned and dismantled farmhouse in the Vercelli area.

The cuisine of Brama Sole Estate is a predominantly Lombard and KM0 cuisine: what is not produced on the Estate is purchased from small local businesses that provide dairy products, cured meats, rice, and allow the cuisine to be contemporary and high quality.

The owners' desire is for the Estate and its entire complex to be perceived and experienced as a place of openness, relaxation and freedom: here everyone is free to be who they are and - while respecting others and the rules - to do what they want.

Do you want to come dressed as a Harlequin? You can, feel free to be what makes you feel good!

One of the advantages that this estate offers is to give clients the opportunity to get in touch with nature through the educational farm.

The animals on the farm have only exhibition and educational functions: adults and children interested in the animal world can understand their behaviors and habits.

All the animals were born and raised in captivity and some were rescued from difficult situations for their welfare (mistreatment, malnutrition etc.): we brought them to the Farm so that their only thought is to feed and be well.

You can walk among the animals, get to know them and, if you wish, enjoy one of our picnic baskets while having lunch within walking distance of them.

During the week, schools of all grades and levels are welcome to hear about the history of OUR animals and visit our museum of old-fashioned farm equipment, so you can rediscover the work of our grandparents directly from the equipment they used.

Another innovative aspect is definitely the antiques and modern market.

In fact, when the two owners opened the Estate they imagined it as a place that unites people, not only thanks to the kitchen and the Educational Farm, but also through organized events that give everyone the opportunity to be protagonists of a territory.

This is how the Estate market was born: a day when anyone who wants to exhibit or pass as a visitor can do it.

The market takes place every second and fourth Sunday of the month and is open to all people who want to exhibit antiques, modern art, crafts and vintage products.

[www.tenutabramasole.com](http://www.tenutabramasole.com)



## 21. Greek entrepreneur finds huge success returning to nature at his dad's village

Sotiris Liberopoulos is a Greek person who worked in a multinational company. But after a lot of consideration, he moved to his father's village in Raches, Messinia. Here, he has a garden in which he produces local products and organic greens. He sells all his production to award-winning restaurants in Athens and Paris. The products harvested in his garden are considered of a high quality because they're fresh and they can't be found anywhere else. In addition, he has a team by his side which helps him in the search and the delivery of edible greens.

Sotiris Liberopoulos is considered a leading Greek food entrepreneur; he provides to award-winning restaurants with organic and homemade food from his own garden. Furthermore, his entrepreneurship is characterized as sustainable because he does not use chemical substances in his products and the delivery of edible greens are transferred with the minimum environmental cost.

<https://greekcitytimes.com/2018/05/21/greek-entrepreneur-finds-huge-success-returning-to-nature-at-his-dads-village/>



This programme has been funded with support from the European Commission. The author is solely responsible for this publication (communication) and the Commission accepts no responsibility for any use that may be made of the information contained therein.



## 22. Vamvakou Incubator: the village in Laconia transforming into a Greek Silicon Valley

Vamvakou is a Greek village located on the western side of Mount Parnonas in Laconia. The Social Cooperative Enterprise (SCE) “Vamvakou Revival” was founded in 2018 in order to bring the sustainability of the village and it receives financial support of the Stavros Niarchos Foundation. The Vamvakou Revival initiative intends to attract and develop the young entrepreneurship in this village, and it has helped in its revitalization.

Vamvakou Revival is an initiative which proves that entrepreneurship can revive a village. Since its launch in 2018, residents have risen to 26 (in the previous period, there were only 9) and it welcomes over 12,000 visitors annually. It has also transformed the school into a place where educational programs, cultural events and innovation workshops take place.

The Vamvakou Incubator programme aims is to attract young entrepreneurs who want to establish their start-ups or groups who want to implement a business idea that meets the needs and the development opportunities of the Peloponnese region in the fields of agriculture, food, tourism, culture, technology and innovation. Finally, it constitutes a source of inspiration for similar programmes who want to focus on the revival of other small Greek villages.

<https://www.travel.gr/en/experiences-ee/travel-en/vamvakou-incubator-the-village-in-laconia-transforming-into-a-greek-silicon-valley/>



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### 23. Smart Village Strategy of Kythera (Greece)

Kythera is situated under the Peloponnese, and it is considered one of the largest islands in Greece. Its local economy is mostly based on tourism and agriculture but also on other areas, such as trade and services, health and education. The Smart Village Strategy aims to develop this village by improving its economic, social and environmental conditions. The Strategy focuses on the island's strengths, and it demands full involvement of stakeholders, innovation and experimentation.

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This type of initiative aims to the development of Kythera Island into an autonomous village. Its main objectives are to reinforce the local economy and the social status because Kythera is financially supported by tourism and local production/agriculture. It also wants to make it more sustainable. There are 3 main strategies that are about to be implemented: The “Sustainable Energy Action Plan”, the “Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan” and the “Water Resources Management Plan”. Finally, the Smart Village Strategy will attract more people, especially young entrepreneurs, to settle there permanently and set up their own businesses.

[https://www.smartrural21.eu/wp-content/uploads/Kythera\\_Smart-Village-Strategy.pdf](https://www.smartrural21.eu/wp-content/uploads/Kythera_Smart-Village-Strategy.pdf)

SMART RURAL  
KYTHERA



## 24. Central Macedonia named “European Entrepreneurial Region’ of the year

The European Committee of the Regions (CoR) awarded in 2017 the title “European Entrepreneurial Region” to Central Macedonia of Greece. This award highlights the outstanding and innovative entrepreneurial policy strategy followed by the specific region. In addition, the Governor of Central Macedonia, Apostolos Tzitzikostas, claimed that this award proved that this region and, overall, Greece can produce creativity and entrepreneurship during difficult times (like the global economic crisis).

By this award, it is proven that regions, such as Central Macedonia, which are composed by a lot of villages, can also be areas for the development of entrepreneurship. In particular, despite the economic difficulties due to the global economic crisis, Central Macedonia proved that it followed an efficient entrepreneurial policy strategy, and it produced a lot of creative entrepreneurs.

<https://greekcitytimes.com/2017/08/28/central-macedonia-named-european-entrepreneurial-region-year/>





## 25. Ecosystem of collaboration in Karditsa: developing social economy in rural Greece

The “Ecosystem of Collaboration” of Karditsa was firstly launched in 1989 and its first steps were the inclusion of the “incubator” in its activities. Its primary goal was to host all the innovative collective initiatives or to support the existed ones. In 1994, the Credit cooperative of Karditsa was founded and it became the cooperative bank of this region supporting the economy of the prefecture. In 2017, the local “Ecosystem of Collaboration” included 36 collective schemes.

This is a very good example of an initiative that promotes the development of a village, such as Karditsa. The main objective of the “Ecosystem of Collaboration” is to support the local activities, to boost the process of business plan elaboration and to communicate the initiative to the local society. Since 2017, the incubator supports or hosts more than 15 collective schemes:

- 2 Civic cooperatives
- 5 Agricultural cooperatives
- 3 Social cooperatives
- 3 Networks of family-run businesses (small or micro)
- 2 NGO

[https://www.forum-synergies.eu/bdf\\_fiche-experience-178\\_en.html](https://www.forum-synergies.eu/bdf_fiche-experience-178_en.html)



## **26. Loft Chalet: Luxury accommodation in a former farmhouse near Gura Humorului, Suceava**

The brilliant idea of turning an old barn from 1907 into a superb accommodation comes with a lot of effort. A couple decided to move from Bucharest to their hometown, in the Gura Humorului area, where they decided to build a Loft Chalet guest house in which they invested around 250,000 euros. The two haven't given up their jobs yet, carrying out the Loft Chalet project in parallel, which they plan to develop further. The two say that they watched with interest the conversion of old buildings, a fashion that is still in its infancy in Romania, so they thought that the house built by their great-grandparents more than 100 years ago, when they moved to Bucovina, would be a building with the potential in this regard. Although initially they were thinking of opening a guest house near Bucharest, the two entrepreneurs chose to build the guest house in the Gura Humorului area because it is where they are from, but they also have knowledge that can help them with the guest house. The style in which the guest house was decorated is a combination between the Scandinavian and the traditional Romanian. The idea came to the two entrepreneurs when they realized that they wanted a modern house, not crowded, where there would also be architectural elements of the local style.

The owners mentioned that: „The first thing we proposed when we started the work was to take advantage as much as possible of the aesthetic value of the wood and the original structure, to which we brought a minimum of interventions. The second thing I looked for was that the silhouette and color of the construction should match the architecture and history of Bucovina. This style has been refined in the area for hundreds of years and has a special beauty: the now iconic <<grandmother's house>>. The modern style was used to be able to enjoy the landscape through the wide glazed surface and to let the natural light highlight the materials used - wood, stone, metal.”

The construction of the guest house took about two years, so the two entrepreneurs started the project in 2017, and the first tourists arrived at the Loft Chalet in December 2019. They want to further develop the guest house, so they plan to open a new house, built in the same style, in the same place. In addition to another cottage where tourists will be able to stay, the two entrepreneurs also plan to develop more facilities, such as a sauna.

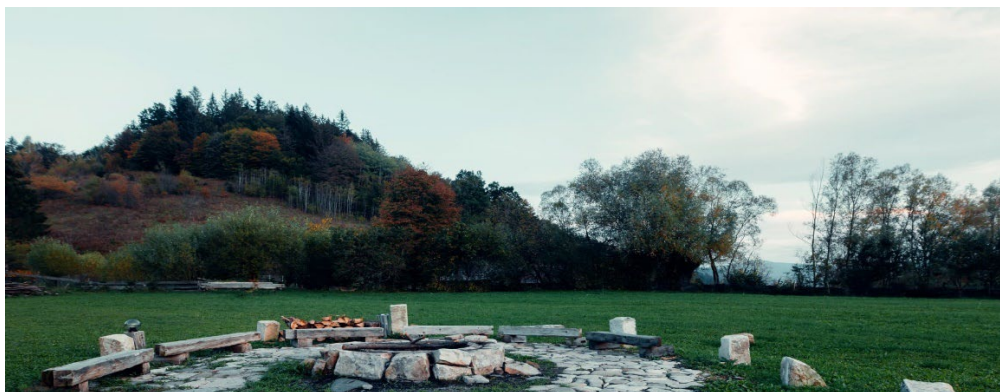
Inside the Chalet, you will enjoy a rustic architecture with lots of wood, beams and refurbished old objects. The gazebo, the dining area in the courtyard and the dramatic hearth where you can relax by a campfire are the corners that can become your favorites on summer evenings.

Loft Chalet is located in Mănăstirea Humorului Commune. The location represents an interweaving of old and new. A guesthouse for 10 adults was built from the old farmhouse, with four bedrooms and an apartment, each with a bathroom in the room and two very generous living rooms. The rustic elements combine perfectly with the modern ones, thus ensuring all the necessary comfort. It is a perfect example of how you can bring back to life and accommodate with the modern century, an old building that few gave any chance to rehabilitate, but to which the owners gave all their passion, all their resources and ideas, and the result is amazing. The process of disassembling old wooden constructions is not easy at all. The beams must be marked and then dismantled in order, so that later, if you want to reassemble walls from them, you can join them in place. One of the big challenges was to reinforce the resistance structure with metal parts, to be masked by the wooden ones.

Loft Chalet it is a good base point to visit the painted monasteries in Bucovina. Also, there are ski slopes nearby. This accommodation is close to nature: the nearby hills, a lovely forest and a small water stream. You can explore the surroundings by hiking, biking or with your eyes, just sitting on the chalet's patio. The Chalet is self-catering, but you can order food specific to the area.

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/LoftChaletBucovina/>

Website: <http://loft-chalet-hotel.carpathiansromania.net/en/>





(Source: <https://www.facebook.com/LoftChaletBucovina/>)

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## **27. „Casa Filip” from Sarichioi, a landmark of traditional architecture in the Danube Delta**

Casa Filip is an old deltaic house, built in 1921, in the heart of Sarichioi village and just a few steps from the shore of Razim lake. The couple who bought the house and now open it to guests, wanted to break the fast pace of their daily lives and live differently, more slowly. And that's what they did. They retired to Sarichioi, the birthplace of the wife, where they bought and renovated this house, and now they are in charge of tourism and the family farm. They bought 1000 square meters of tradition for 20,000 euros. The history of this home spans more than 100 years. The first house built on the property found by the two was in the period 1860-1870, then the 1000 square meter area was bought in 1921 by a Russian-Lipovian couple from the village. They tore down the old dwelling and build a new one of adobe, wood and reeds. And the Filips bought the property from the couple's niece in February 2018, after which they began the restoration process. Reconstruction did not mean tearing down everything that was old, on the contrary. The old house, the one with the window, is intact, they kept the old adobe walls, which they seriously strengthened and plastered with natural lime. All the openwork details are executed in wood and later painted in blue specific to the Danube Delta. The 3 apartments at Casa Filip can accommodate up to 12 people. Two of these are located in the old house and the third in the attic of the new house. At the 2019 Architecture Annual, Casa Filip from Sarichioi received the trophy for the section dedicated to restoration, rehabilitation and reconversion + the special award of the president of the Romanian Order of Architects (Dobrogea Branch). And at the TopHotel Awards 2022, it won the 3rd place in the „traditional style pension of the year” category.

Their mission is: to guarantee unique and authentic experiences for the guests who cross their threshold, but under the urge to practice a responsible and slow tourism.

Their ambition is: to open the gates all year round because they believe that Dobrogea is an area that deserves to be visited both in summer, autumn and even winter.

„Tourists are impressed by the beauty of the house, the culinary preparations of our cook, the picturesqueness of the village and everything that the area offers from a tourist point of view”. The ingredients for the tourists' meals come exclusively from the area, from fish to fruit, cheese and milk. The vegetables, as well as the wine and sour cherries, are produced by the entrepreneurs, who wanted to offer the guests traditional products specific to the place.

A special place is a unique collection of small things that fit together. Architecture, location, ambience, cuisine, comfort and tradition. All these find a special composition at Casa Filip in Sarichioi, an authentic place, recovered and brought up to modern standards. The best combination of the two experiences, the traditional and the current, invites you to Sarichioi for a unique experience. The guesthouse has rooms with modern comfort and a traditional dining room, where events related to the Lipovian cultural heritage are frequently held. Other strong points are the sauna and the certification as a local gastronomic point, which is why here you can try some traditional, organic food made in the kitchen.

Restoring an old house definitely costs more than building a new one from scratch. It involves considerable efforts to subsidize and strengthen the walls using different techniques. As for the carpentry part, working with wood is particularly beautiful, but also extremely difficult. Most of the old houses were built of mud (the cheaper version) or adobe (the more expensive version), from the natural resources offered by the area (soil, sand, gravel, reeds). A lot of stone was used for the foundation, also brought from the region. And for the roof, of course, reeds, an accessible resource.

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/casafilipsarichioi>

Website: <https://casa-filip.ro/>





(Source: <https://www.facebook.com/casafilipsarichioi>)

## **28. „Verde de Bran”, three in one: gastronomic point, organic products, and bicycle rental**

The reasons that led to this small rural business: „After many years spent between concrete and red traffic lights in a city like Bucharest, we wanted a return to nature. The searches were long, the discussions even longer, but in the end we decided to settle down in Bran, Brasov county, so the two of us forgot about our old life and step by step we started to build our dream. We discovered that worldly worries become smaller and smaller when we take a break to see the green life growing around us, when we see the squirrels jumping from one fir tree to another, when the hedgehogs start to make their beds in the freshly mowed grass, we have once again a zest for life! After about 7 years of living here, we decided to share with you a piece of the peace and tastes of the area, so we started with small but sure steps the arrangement of a gastronomic point where you can stop after a bicycle tour. The Bran area, a special one that must be discovered at your leisure and appreciated with all your soul, is divided into four villages separated from the daily hustle and bustle. Curious by nature and talking to people, we found various itineraries that can be conquered by bike, where at every break you can admire the Bucegi or Piatra Craiului mountains and the meadows full of animals.

Website: <https://www.verdedebran.ro/>





(Source: <https://www.facebook.com/VerdeDeBran>)

## **29. „Păstrăvăria Alex”, the charm of historical Maramureș**

„In the heart of Maramureș, at the foot of the Gutai Mountains, along a water that springs smoothly and cold from the depths of the rocks, there is an oasis of peace and relaxation, stretching over brightly colored hills like a string of pearls carefully chosen from feelings deeply gloomy. Sirag is formed, but from small houses covered with shingles kept from the elders, built with the sweat of the villagers from the wood they brought on their heavy shoulders from the heart of the forest. Then, youthfully carved, by the gifted hands of the craftsman from their native village, they are cooked and carefully attached to each other, just like some boys who join their hands to play in the village choir.” This is Păstrăvăria Alex. If you have decided to try an authentic culinary experience, Păstrăvăria Alex is the right place. In an established pattern of the area, the restaurant is made of carved wood and mountain stone. The way you look at it, it hypnotizes you beyond repair. In the distance you can hear the waterfall and the small bridge is waiting for you to take pictures and make memories for a lifetime. On the water's edge, in wooden gazebos, with wipes and Romanian street lights, travelers are invited to an authentic Maramureș feast.

„Pastrăvăria Alex”, family business, is in the top of the most appreciated trouts in Romania. The trout raised in Mara is originally from North America and was brought to Romania for the first time at the beginning of the last century, in the Putna Valley. The head of the family, aged 46, takes care of the trout personally, while his wife works in the kitchen, alongside his employees. Hundreds of trout are served in the restaurant in a single day. The owners understood that people want to eat the fish caught by them. If we also add the song of the frogs in the ponds, which replaces the annoying ringtone of the mobile phone, we get a successful day of relaxation.

Near „Pastrăvăria Alex” there is also a beautiful swimming pool, built by the same entrepreneur. The „Piscina pă Coastă” project, in the village of Mara, on the hill near the trout pond of the same name, appeared after the owner wanted to make a swimming pool at his home, but which would not be surrounded by concrete. This was not at all easy to achieve, but after all the effort, the result is extraordinary. Located at over a hundred meters above sea level, it offers a



dreamy view. From above, you can see almost the whole village, a gorgeous waterfall, but also the forest in the middle of which the pool is dug. In addition, the design respects the traditions of the area, the pool terrace being built exclusively from wood. On the way to the pool there is an old wooden gate with traditional Maramureş elements.

Located at the foot of the Gutai Mountains, Pastravaria Alex is on DN18, 25 km from the town of Sighetu Marmatiei and 40 km from Baia Mare, in Mara village, Desesti commune. It is located in a wonderful place where it is „musai” (that is, you have to) to stop and eat a trout in „malai flour” with „mamaliga” and garlic and cream sauce. The waiters who serve, mostly women, are dressed in popular clothes, specific to the area, and they bring your order to you in a reed basket. Pastravaria is in the „hands” of a householder who works „side by side” with the employees, you don't even realize that he is the „boss” behind the business. He is a hardworking man, you will recognize him easily because he is the one who feeds the fish in the pond. In the menu you can find from fish to mămăliga with cheese and jumări, traditional platters with different types of meat produced by them, cheeses and pickles. Everything is made in house including the fish sauce which is made in a water mill. And the bread served here, which you can't get enough of, is made on the hearth according to an ancient recipe with eggs. For those who don't want fish, the hosts have also built a farm with sheep, cows and goats. The restaurant and the cottages are always full, so the investments continue. The guesthouse also has cottages that are specially designed for fishermen who come to the tourist complex.

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/pastravariaalex/>

Website: <https://www.pastravariaalex.ro/index.html>





(Source: <https://www.facebook.com/pastravariaalex/>)

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### **30. „Căsuța din Scobai”- a traditional Romanian experience**

The „Căsuța din Scobai” guesthouse is located on the banks of the Mara river, in the town of Vadu Izei in Maramureș. The foundation elements of the cottages belonged to peasants from Maramureș and were brought by water to the scobai, where we started the construction. All the furniture in the rooms and cottages is carefully carved by a master carpenter. The decor and details in the rooms worked by the host, contribute to the authentic and welcoming experience in this place.

Where it all started: „Because the traditional things have always been part of our life, we decided to harmoniously combine them with woodwork, manual work, gardening, but also with tourism and to share with you the beauties of Maramureș. Our two traditional cottages are located in Scobai, that is, they are surrounded by forest and river, hence the name of the guesthouse „Căsuța din Scobai”. You can stay in an authentic Romanian house. Wooden beds, windows with embroidered curtains, handmade ceramic hanging plates, the decor is fabulous. Walk barefoot through the room and feel the war-woven carpet. How much history fits in a small house in Maramureș!” „The roof with „draniță” (pine wood shingles) - is one of the oldest materials used in Romania to make roof coverings. It is a natural material that makes it very friendly to the environment. It is not used very often because it requires special attention compared to other types of covers. Before being mounted on the roof, the shingles are boiled in oil. Over the years, the maintenance must continue and as proof, we do this procedure every year, only differently. After the shingles have been installed, a layer of oil is applied annually to form a protective film against water and weather. It is a beautiful, traditional, effective roof that requires special attention with the passage of time.

The houses have passed the test of time (over 115 years each) and are waiting for you to visit them and travel to the past, when people were closer to nature and valued its every gift. Here the beauty of Maramureș traditions is combined with the comfort, peace, harmony and charm of nature. We invite you to enjoy all this and try the drinks and food of our area!”

Maramureş is one of the most beautiful regions in Romania, where you should visit at least once in your life. Here, the customs of the grandparents have been preserved, the people keep their traditions, crafts, speech and wear their folk costumes with pride!

The family that owns this guesthouse loves and preserves traditions, they mention that: „In our village, located near Sighetu Marmaţiei, the people are hardworking, cheerful and eager to receive guests with whom they can share stories over a glass of horinca. Sundays and feast days remain holy days, when we go to church with love in traditional customs. At Easter, Christmas and New Year, the people of „ceterașii” cross our threshold and we rejoice together, with folk songs and dances, with „slană”, „pită”, and „horinca”. Weddings are another reason to get together with all our friends, also in traditional weddings, and those in Maramureş are famous for the hundreds of guests (800 on average) and for the huge parties they host.”

The „Căsuța din Scobai” guesthouse is, indeed, an experience; a simple one but so close to the meaning, what we need to understand better, to stop a little from the rhythm, to appreciate what a culture of wood, tradition and faith has to offer for all of us.

At the guest house in colorful Maramureş there are two 100-year-old houses, rescued from nearby villages, transported by water and rebuilt here. Authentic details, old wood, reborn with the story of the place, bright colors, flowers in the yard and on the windows. Small houses take you to a childhood story, when everything, problem or concern was much smaller. In the courtyard surrounded by the woven wooden fence, we discover details that belong to the place: the tree with colored pots (sign of the family's wealth), the fountain (symbol of life, youth and immortality), the wooden gate (the pride of a family and household), the wooden wheels (the symbol of the cyclical rhythm of life) and the beautiful pitchfork, the voice of Maramureş, rendered on a much larger scale. In the gazebo we tell stories by the fire, then we simply experience the charm of the place on the porch, in the sun or in the wooden swing. Everything is a story at „Căsuța din Scobai”, a break from time and a return to the world. Also here we learn that the customs of the grandparents are still preserved in the area, on Sundays or on holidays the villagers proudly wear their traditional

costumes: shirt, sumna, cloth and opinci and go to church together. The famous Maramureş impresses with wooden churches and monasteries, museums or natural beauties or popular sights.

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Casuta.din.scobai>

Website: <https://www.casutadinscobai.ro/>





(Source: <https://www.facebook.com/Casuta.din.scobai>)

### **31. Turismo rural El Jiniebro**

El Jiniebro is a rural estate with Special Forest Protection. To the west of the community of Extremadura located in a natural environment, of high ecological value, in the foothills of the Sierra de San Pedro, declared an area of special protection for birds and next to the Serra de Sao Mamede Natural Parks (Portugal), and International Tajo. It is located in the municipality of Valencia de Alcántara. Just 3 km from Berrocal de la Data, declared a Natural Monument in 2021. And 10 km from the border with Portugal and 100 km from the city of Cáceres.

This small tourist complex offers a unique experience in an idyllic rural setting to enjoy nature. From there you can take routes to megalithic sites, visit the Roman city of Ammaia, the nearby Portuguese Villa of Marvao or enjoy a walk through the Gothic-Jewish quarter of Valencia de Alcántara. also enjoy ornithological tourism, horseback riding, enjoy the natural pools of Portugal, fishing, large and small game.

At the El Jiniebro Rural Accommodation Reception you can find books, guides, brochures, books about birds, hiking routes, guided tours, festivals and store hours in Spain and Portugal.

These are 6 Rural Houses in Valencia de Alcántara, Cáceres, Extremadura (Category: 4 \*\*\*\*) located on a rural estate with swimming pool, reception, living-dining room and large garden areas with native trees, aromatic herbs and fruit trees.

All houses are equipped with fireplaces, air conditioning, central heating, bed linen, towels, kitchenware and parking in a closed farm.

In addition to having enviable views from the Era and being able to walk through the 12-hectare estate, it also has a swimming pool. Each house has gardens and private terraces where they can have barbecues on the allowed dates.



El Jiniebro is designed to enjoy a relaxing experience with family and friends, with the comfort of individual houses and common spaces.

Leading this project is Isabel, a young Sevillian with Extremadura roots who had spent years looking for an excuse to reconnect directly with her land. In the first place, she was looking for a house or farm in this wonderful enclave where she spent her childhood vacations with her family. But in May 2021 she was presented with the opportunity to acquire this small rural complex that she encouraged to undertake in the hospitality sector and after much restoration and design work, Turismo Rural El Jiniebro was born.

This complex of six rural houses, located in the heart of the Tagus International Natural Park, a protected area in Spain and Portugal. It is a space dedicated to the conservation of various bird species that nest on the wild banks of the river and surrounding areas. It is also one of the areas with the lowest human density in the Iberian Peninsula, which favors the development of the Mediterranean forest.

This complex stands out for its rural style since, although they are fully restored and have all the comforts of a modern house, they retain the original structure of mud, slate and wood on the roofs.

The personal treatment is unbeatable, they will personally take care of making recommendations for tourist and nearby destinations adapted to the qualities of the client. They will also provide you with a long list of where to carry out typical gastronomic experiences of both countries.

They also offer the sale of typical products and supplies without having to leave the farm.

Some of the innovations it has are:

La Casita Anta, one of the rural houses, is fully adapted for people with reduced mobility, the other houses are semi-accessible.

Another of the innovations is that all pets are also welcome, since they have little beds that can be requested in the reservation so that they can be placed in the houses.

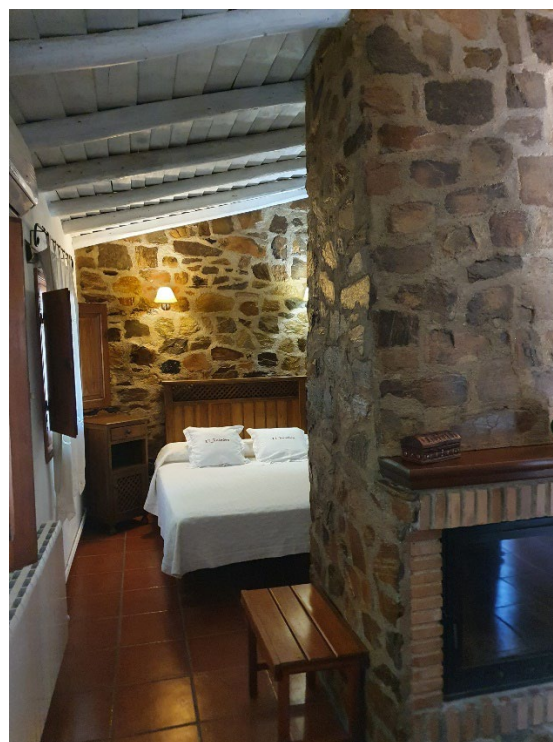
Of course they have internet access and Wi-Fi access from all the houses.

Another reason that makes this place so special is that every year its owner helps a charitable cause, in the year 2021 "Jini Solidario", as she names it on the website, collaborated with El Viaje de Aladina, in the Virgen del Rocío hospital in Seville, with the Aladina Foundation, which works with children with cancer. And in the year 2022 she has collaborated with Fundación Proyecto Esperanza for the construction of a well in Africa.

Some of the reasons why we have chosen this rural complex is that it is perfectly suited to the purpose that Flavor of Europe is looking for, since this project is carried out by an enterprising woman in a rural environment.

<https://turismoruraleljiniebro.es/>





### **32. Dehesia, cosmética ancestral**

Dehesia is a certified organic natural cosmetics store, which was born from the inspiration of the vegetation of the Extremaduran meadow for skin care with the best medicinal plants in our environment.

It is located in the Cáceres municipality of Malpartida de Cáceres, in Extremadura. Belonging to the Tajo-Salor Commonwealth. With a strategic geographical situation since it is located between the elevations of Cáceres and the Sierra de San Pedro.

It is an iconic enclave in tourist attractions such as the Vostell Museum, the Los Barruecos natural space (setting of the famous Game of Thrones series), as well as being the European Town of the Storks and some important archaeological remains have been found there.

Hundreds of medicinal and aromatic plants grow in Extremadura such as rosemary, lavender, thyme, mint, prickly pear, pomegranate, olive, elements with a multitude of properties for the skin and the body.

Dehesia Cosmética Econatural emerged in 2004 when the founder received a calendula flower ointment that was very effective in relieving the unbearable skin itching that she suffered from atopic dermatitis all over her body.

She began training in cosmetics, botany, herbalism and dermopharmacy to make the most of the plants and fruits of the Extremadura pasture. He started from her kitchen full of jars and sachets of aromatic plants, in which she made simple formulas that became mixtures that she gave to family and friends to try his creations.

After years of study and discoveries, in 2017 she founded Dehesia together with her husband.

They have carried out studies that verify that plants and foods grown in close environments are more effective for the body.

In Dehesia, a totally organic cosmetic is sought, based on high-quality, local active ingredients with which effective products are formulated that provide nutrients, vitamins and antioxidants. Dehesia's ultimate goal is daily care to maintain healthy, itchy-free skin in the easiest and most natural way possible.

All her formulas have the ecological certificate of A.C.E.N.E to ensure the quality and integrity of the products.

Dehesia arises from the need of its creator to provide a solution to her skin problems, since she was tired of trying chemical products that would help mitigate the symptoms of her atopic skin, after many years with this disease she decided to try making her own painkillers and provide a solution to a problem suffered by millions of people.

Today it has more than two hundred points of sale distributed throughout Spain, including the Canary Islands and Andorra. In addition to having their own stores, they give the option of becoming distributors of their products. And they offer an international shipping service so that they are accessible to any part of the world.

Since its inception, their list of products for facial, body, and hair care, all kinds of soaps, and even accessories for care such as exfoliating brushes, 100% natural luffa bath sponges, Konjac facial sponges for dry skin, etc.

It is a great example of growth and dedication on how to turn a personal need into an international business.

<https://dehesia.com/>



### **33. Quesos Silva Cordero, los quesos de siempre a todo color.**

Acehúche cheese is a cheese from Extremadura with Protected Designation of Origin (PDO), it is made with Murcino-Granadina, Málaga and Serrana goat's milk, in the Las Vegas de Coria region, west of the province of Cáceres. All this milk comes from the goats that graze on the banks of the Tagus and Alagón Rivers.

It is a cheese with a long tradition that is purely artisanal, made with raw goat's milk, which is characterized by its intense flavor and a great butteriness on the palate.

This type of cheese whose excellence has even been recognized by the Ministry of Agriculture, including it in its catalog of traditional Spanish cheeses.

Acehúche cheese is acid-enzymatic coagulation, lightly pressed, compacted white paste. It is salted with dry salt, by rubbing the surface. Its maturation takes place for a minimum of 3 months. During it, the bark is rubbed with a hand dipped in salt water with the aim of favoring the distribution and development of the superficial microflora.

The ingredients used for its preparation are raw goat's milk, rennet and sodium chloride.

One of the cheese factories most involved in the development and renewal of this product has been the Silva Cordero cheese factory. A family business dedicated to the manufacture of artisan cheeses created in 1998.

It currently has an approximate production capacity of about 120,000 pieces of cheese per year, for which it uses about 600,000 liters of milk.

The cheese that has been made in its cheese factory since its inception has been made from raw goat's milk, making the well-known and famous Acehúche Cheese, which, as its slogan says: "Possibly the most exquisite cheeses in the world."

However, since the beginning of 2010, they have incorporated raw sheep's milk cheese into production, which has given them great satisfaction.

Apart from the traditional "Anehúche Goat Cheese" in its hard paste modality, this company incorporated a few years ago to its range of products the soft paste goat cheese, cake type, having obtained with both products (pasta cheeses hard and soft cheeses) countless awards since 2013.

Some of these more recent awards are:

- Cups of Heart 2020.
- World Chesse Award - Bergamo 2019. Second prize for black cured goat cheese.
- World Chesse Award - Bergamo 2019. Third prize for soft goat cheese.
- Andalusian cheese show. 2019. 1st Prize in the category of Cured Goat Cheese.
- World Chess Award 2018-2019. Silver Award in the Natural Hard Pasta/Paprika Category.

This family business has managed to stand out from its competitors with a great commercial strategy. Increasing its offer of cheeses from one to eleven and becoming pioneers in the creation of colored cheeses such as carmine flavored or safflower and spirulina concentrate.

It should also be noted that, apart from goat cheese, in recent years, the "Silva Cordero" Cheese Factory has been making cheeses with sheep's milk, both in the form of hard paste and soft paste, having also achieved excellent quality in them, being more and more demanded.

The latest novelty introduced by Quesería "Silva Cordero" is the elaboration of colored cheeses (green, fuchsia, yellow, orange, black, blue, etc.), whose appearance has been a real bombshell, for what it represents as novel in the national cheese market, as it is a technique hardly known in Spain. Although we must emphasize that the introduction of color in the cheese paste does not affect its flavor, it is tremendously striking and attractive to the eye, being used mainly when preparing cheese tables for various events, a specialty that has become very popular. fashionable in recent years. This service is also offered by the "Silva Cordero" cheese factory, making all kinds of shapes and designs with their cheeses to make it an experience.

Other of the innovations that they have developed have been the shapes and packaging of the cheese, from heart shapes to glass containers for cheeses with soft textures.



In their online store they offer all their types of cheese, gourmet baskets and other products such as melted cheese cream with blueberries or cheese cubes in olive oil.

In this case, we can see how a completely handmade product that has been in the making for years can become different types of innovative products.

<https://www.silvacordero.com/>



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### **34. Glamping El Regajo, luxury in the middle of nature**

'Glamping' has become a growing trend. It is a way of staying that combines pleasure with the authentic experience of camping. The best conditions and comfort of a well-conditioned hotel with the advantages and freedom that the outdoors brings. Glamor and nature have never combined so well.

This concept has settled in the Valle del Jerte, one of the most magical places in Spain, it has been declared a site of cultural interest since 1973.

The valley is located in the extreme north of Extremadura, bordered to the north by the provinces of Ávila and Salamanca, to the west by Valle del Ambroz, to the south by the city of Plasencia and to the east by La Vera.

Its situation and orography mean that it has its own microclimate, ideal for growing picota (the cherry with the Jerte Designation of Origin) and for enjoying an exceptional natural environment and some beautiful places.

Every year, in the second half of March, the El Cerezo en Flor festival, declared of National Tourist Interest, is celebrated in the Jerte Valley. A million and a half trees bloom almost in unison, dyeing the valley white for fifteen days.

This confers a unique place where José Antonio García and Leticia Romero have embarked on the journey towards an essential life based on what is important.

The Jerte Valley is a paradise that extends over 373 square kilometers and shines especially during spring, although it is also ideal to be visited at any time of the year. There, in the town of Casas del Castañar, is where this couple decided to start a unique accommodation like few others.

A unique space, located in an ecological farm of cherry trees of 5200 square meters. El Regajo offers an intimacy for its guests that promotes an intimate relationship with nature, with large windows to enjoy the spectacular views of the valley landscape and sleep under the stars or cherry blossoms.

The inspiration came from yurts, a traditional type of housing of the nomadic peoples of Mongolia. And they got to work. In 2018, and after many efforts, meetings with the tourism directors of Extremadura, procedures, etc., they managed to change the tourism law and generate the figure of 'unique accommodation', since the legislation did not contemplate the figure of 'glamping'. It was at that time that the business was born.

The owners of these unique accommodations seek to offer a totally relaxing experience, they personally take care of the details and the people who visit them, since the real objective of this business is to live doing something they like, enjoy their life and see others enjoy through the means they offer.

In El Regajo innovation is present at all times since the fact of combining the best of camping with the comfort of a luxury hotel is a totally innovative concept.

Focused on providing authentic rest and absolute disconnection to its guests, the rooms are isolated from all noise and views that can generate a minimum of stress.

Other characteristics of these accommodations is that they have an outdoor jacuzzi at all times of the year, as well as being an exclusive stay for adults.

They also offer a local picnic service, Extremaduran wines, 100% Iberian assortments and Extremaduran cheeses.

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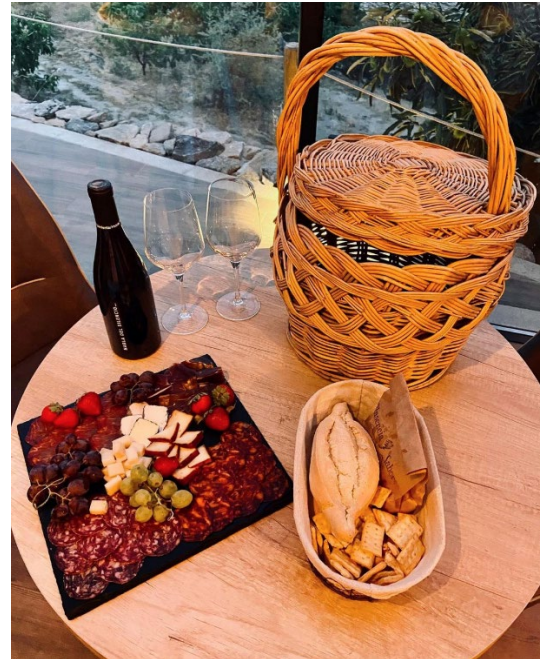
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<https://www.glampingelregajo.com/>





### **35. Val de Xálima, sustainable beekeeping.**

Val de Xálima, was born in 1985 by the beekeepers José Antonio Rodríguez and Alicia Berrío. Its facilities are located in a natural environment and develop sustainable beekeeping. Overcoming many difficulties, they have managed to produce high-quality natural products, respecting the environment and bees.

"Val de Xálima" is the name of the Sierra de Gata valley where its bees work, in the northwest of the province of Cáceres, next to the Portuguese line. A mountainous area, with wonderful landscapes with great plant diversity, where Pyrenean oak, holm oak and heather abound, as well as numerous endemic floral species.

The temperatures in this area are mild in winter and not very hot in summer. For this reason, the activity that takes place integrates perfectly with these places, free of pollution and full of a great vegetal layer. The Xálima valley configures an ideal environment to practice sustainable beekeeping. The Sierra de Gata is rich in places free of pollution and is home to natural ecosystems such as oak groves, holm oaks or chestnut groves.

The Val de Xálima area, of important ecological value, has a very unique culture, since "A Fala" is spoken in this area, a dialect that is only practiced in three towns in Spain, which make up this valley.

Its proximity to Portugal allows transhumance to the other side of La Raia or border. Also in summer to cooler areas of Salamanca to obtain the variety of oak and holm oak.

In Val de Xálima they offer a completely natural honey obtained daily from the best bees in Cáceres. This honey is the fruit of great daily work, a reward for the care and dedication that they put into each and every one of their hives.

The bees with which they make honey are in an unbeatable place. Its facilities are located within a completely natural environment. Located in a region of great ecological value.

The hives are distributed in different places, previously studied, within the same region. These are places with certain differences between them in order to obtain the different varieties of products such as natural honey, pollen, royal jelly, propolis, candies, cosmetics, etc...

In addition, they also sell material for the practice of beekeeping, such as beehives, special suits, food for bees, etc.

One of the great objectives of Val de Xálima is the maximum respect for the environment and bees.

This company dedicated to beekeeping has managed to take the sale of honey further, since it has created a wide range of products, starting with honey and pollen that is sold both in traditional formats and in more unique ones, such as the honeycomb itself. or in clay vessels with a taster. They have also created interesting derivatives such as honey with almonds or bitter strawberry honey. Another range of products are propolis and royal jelly, as well as their derivatives.

Some of their latest additions to their product list are natural cosmetics, all kinds of soaps, creams, and even lip balms.

They have recently opened a new branch of their business, training for future beekeepers. After thirty years of experience and training, they offer advice and materials.

<https://valdexalima.es/>





This programme has been funded with support from the European Commission. The author is solely responsible for this publication (communication) and the Commission accepts no responsibility for any use that may be made of the information contained therein.

### **36. Peña del Alba Hotel and La Era de mi Abuelo Restaurant: Sustainable entrepreneurship in a rural area**

The Hotel Rural "Peña del Alba", is located in a paradisiacal place: in the north, the Sierra de Tormantos, the last foothills of the Sierra de Gredos, in Extremadura (Spain). Its owners have opted for a model of sustainable rural tourism with high standards of quality and care in every detail.

A married couple from Madrid, tired of the stress, pollution and noise of everyday life in the big city, decides to undertake a new project and focuses the search for a new destination in the north of Extremadura (Spain), where they intend to find a paradisiacal place, a few kilometers from various tourist towns, and close and accessible to people looking for a haven of peace and rest where to disconnect from city life, and at the same time to connect with nature while enjoying an accommodation that has nothing to envy to the big hotel chains.

Once they found the ideal place to locate their new home, in Arroyomolinos de la Vera, they acquired an old 'Era' where to carry out their desired project, where cereals had been sown and cultivated since time immemorial, and decided to give a new use to the construction that was there. After carrying out the adaptation and restoration works, they decided to use a good number of antique and rustic style furniture that they had inherited from family and friends, and together with the newly acquired ones, they decorated the building with exquisite taste and turned it into a five-star rural hotel.

Once they have the location and the building, they decide to train and enter the world of hospitality and catering, finding out and researching about all the recipes and typical dishes of the area, and for this, they are dedicated to travel and visit every corner of Extremadura with the aim of knowing first hand each of the ingredients and typical products that will later be used for the preparation of each and every one of their dishes.

They decided to create in the Hotel Peña del Alba, a restaurant of typical Extremadura cuisine called "La era de mi abuelo", and for the cooking of the same, they hired one of the best cooks in the region, thus becoming one of the most popular restaurants in the area.

From the point of view of location, they have been able to condition a 'threshing floor' (a place where cereal used to be threshed in the past), the space has become an ideal place to relax and enjoy the outdoors in the middle of nature. Its owners have created an attractive and sustainable accommodation.

Hotel Rural Peña Del Alba has an outdoor swimming pool, a garden and free Wi-Fi, and the Sierra de Gredos is only 40 km away. Tourist information on the surrounding area is available at the reception desk, which offers endless tourist opportunities in the surrounding rural areas. Bicycles are also available for rent to explore the area, and the establishment has a restaurant.

But the star of the establishment is its cuisine. The Restaurant "La Era de mi Abuelo", is surrounded by a small oak forest, and its warm decoration combines traditional style elements such as brick walls and materials such as wood and clay, with other more modern ones such as bright colors and wrought iron ornaments. The investment in rustic but timeless materials has been a priority for the owners.

One of the reasons that led us to choose it for the case study, is that despite being located in the mountains, it always has all its rooms occupied and a large number of reservations in its restaurant. We are talking about a five-star rural hotel that over the years has done nothing but improve day by day and year by year to become a reference accommodation for all tourists in the area.

And we also want to emphasize that another reason that has prompted us to choose them, is that all the products used by the restaurant for the preparation of their dishes, are products of the area, from paprika de la Vera, meats and cheeses, to wines and desserts. In addition, it is a hotel adapted for people with reduced mobility and offers a wide range of possibilities for all its guests.

**Make the most of the surroundings.**

Situated in a paradisiacal location: to the north, the Sierra de Tormantos, the last foothills of Gredos; to the east the region of La Vera; to the west the Jerte Valley; to the south the Monfragüe National Park, the rural hotel "Peña del Alba" makes the most of its surroundings, offering guides, maps and advice on how to enjoy the nature that surrounds it.

**Use of raw materials and quality products with D.O.P. of Extremadura.**

They have a renowned restaurant "La era de mi abuelo" whose menu is made up of excellent quality raw materials from the land, accompanied by an exceptional pairing with wines from Extremadura with denomination of origin seal.

**Innovation in detail.**

Aware of all the benefits of salt water, they were pioneers in introducing the first salt water swimming pool in the community. This is a more ecological option, reducing the use of chemical products for its maintenance and providing bathers with a healthier option.

The rural hotel "Peña del Alba" takes care of the aesthetic aspect in great detail, using a rustic decoration but with high comfort to offer a complete immersion in the environment and to be able to disconnect from the noise and the hustle and bustle of the big cities.

- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/hotelruralpenadelalba>
- Website: <https://www.hotelpdelalba.es/>





### 37. Atelierul Sanzienelor

In the superb Valea Doftanei village, in Prahova County, Romania, a place where traditions are promoted and the authentic Romanian spirit is preserved, many beautiful things are happening. One of these things is the opening of a shop, a kind of museum with sale where you will find only objects with traditional characteristics, made by the skilled hands of Loredana Clinci.

Loredana Clinci, from Valea Doftanei, is a local producer and promoter of Romanian traditions, at "Atelierul Sânzienelor". The weaving machine, the crochet and the embroidery needle come to life in the "Sânzienel Workshop".

Specialized in tourism and, initially, with other plans for the future, Loredana's steps towards traditions were led by her mother. As a result of some family events, she started to learn from the ancient trades. As an apprentice, Loredana discovered a great passion and gradually what was a simple hobby would turn into a source of income.

The first handicraft made by her was a purse with an embroidered pattern that had an unexpected impact and thus Loredana attracted the first orders.

There are many tourists who step on the threshold of the place and are excited by what they find there, by the wealth of handmade and meticulously arranged things.

They are objects through which Loredana Clinci wanted to promote the beautiful Romanian traditions.

The innovation of the business is given by the promotion channels.

The website is user friendly and has all the tools to make it easier for the visitors to buy the crafts designed by Loredana and her helpers.

It is also one of the few businesses where you can buy online Romanian traditional crafted clothing and accessories.

<https://sanzienele.ro/>



Source <https://www.observatorulph.ro/>



Source: <https://sanzienele.ro/>



Source: <https://sanzienele.ro/>



### **38. Casa Pelinica**

The cottage was built at the end of the 19th century and offers the chance to spend moments of relaxation in a wonderful location, in the purest traditional style.

The house is only rented as a whole and is ideal for 4 people or a family with 2-3 children. The unit has 2 rooms, each with two single beds, a bathroom and a kitchen.

In each of the rooms, various categories of objects are brought together to illustrate the socio-economic and cultural specifics of the owner and implicitly of the area.

The kitchen is equipped with crockery, cutlery, toaster, coffee maker, refrigerator and an electric stove. The location has no internet connection or TV networks, which is a good opportunity to ditch the gadgets and enjoy nature and all that it has to offer.

Heating is done by electric convectors in the bathroom, kitchen and one of the rooms, while in the second room the heating is done by a terracotta stove. Hot water in the kitchen and bathroom is provided by means of electric instant heaters.

Outside, the house provides a barbecue, table and a view that takes your breath away.

The parking lot is located approximately 300 m from the house, access by car is not possible to the property.

Experience the traditional life of this old Bran settlement, where the location offers a unique image of the rural life specific to the Bran-Rucăr area.

The innovation is given by the group targeted by this business, i.e. a certain type of tourist is making its presence felt more and more, and this is the tourist who is looking for experiences, not luxury, not 5-star conditions and not facilities characteristic of these accommodations. This type of tourist is looking for locations with a story, with history and which are located in places where you can reconnect with nature and relax just "listening" to the silence and admiring the view of the mountains.

<https://www.airbnb.com.ro/rooms/46058379>

[https://www.instagram.com/casa\\_pelinica/](https://www.instagram.com/casa_pelinica/)



Source: <https://www.airbnb.com.ro/rooms/46058379>

This programme has been funded with support from the European Commission. The author is solely responsible for this publication (communication) and the Commission accepts no responsibility for any use that may be made of the information contained therein.



Source: <https://www.airbnb.com.ro/rooms/46058379>

### **39. Stana lui Aidan**

The small accommodation unit is located in the heart of Transylvania

Placed in a fairy tale setting and surrounded by the wonders of nature, from any angle you look at it, it is waiting to show you from the window the shine of the lake where all the fish of the earth swim, the generous and voluptuous shapes of the hills that make you you roam them from the first blink of light to the last spark of the sun, to show you how our little bird and animals live in harmony right in front of the house.

You can spend time on the wonderful terrace enjoying a special coffee, looking at the playground where the children run freely and at the same time admiring the beauty of the lake and the hills that surround the place. For the little ones there is a special place equipped with a tower with a slide and swings, in that they can have fun as they please.

Fishing enthusiasts can have an extraordinary experience on the shore of the lake.

The owners want their guests to spend quality time in nature and for this very reason the unit does not offer TV in the rooms, but they have very gentle animals in our farm that are free and can especially enjoy the company of children: ponies, bunnies, dogs, sheep and lambs, chickens, ducks, guinea fowls.

Here you can experience real and profound moments in nature together with the animals that grace our yard.

The roosters announce the sunrise every morning, the horse runs and neighs happily about how big the yard is, the sheep camp on you to feed them and the dogs protect you and watch over you night after night, being alert to any inappropriate noise.

The authentic experience, the almost total elimination of technology and the recreation of the environment of a local barn.

At the same time, the business offers to visitors the opportunity to invest in the property themselves.

<https://stanaluiaidan.eu/>

<https://www.facebook.com/stanaluiAidan>

<https://www.instagram.com/stanaluiaidan>



Source: <https://www.facebook.com/stanaluiAidan>



Source: <https://www.facebook.com/stanaluiAidan>

#### 40. Seva Sana Retreat

Seva Sana is located on the hill of Ardud Vii, located 20 km from the city of Satu-Mare, Romania. The owner's passion for healing plants made her dream of a guesthouse with a retreat, the only one in the country with a concept that brings the health and well-being of the tourist to the fore. Together with her husband, they opened the first Health Factory where visitors can stay. Inspired by the world of plants, the owner Ioana created a fairytale house, with 3 spacious and welcoming rooms named after them: marigold, lavender and thyme. Rooms have spacious terraces and shared bathroom. The price of one night is 170 lei, and an aromatic surprise awaits you inside. Viorel, Ioana's husband, is a lawyer by profession, but he wants to put his clothes on the line to devote himself entirely to the family business. Passionate about hunting, in many of the products on the board's table you will find, on request, game meat.

On request, the Seva Sana family can offer you, from local producers in the area, milk, curd, but also fresh and natural dishes, from the Danciu grocery store.

Examples of products that can be tried:

- Creams
- Therapeutic teas and medallions
- Perfumery

The location is a secluded area, surrounded by the fairy-tale hills of Codr, a historical region located on the territories of Satu Mare and Maramureş counties.

It is an oasis of tranquility where the family feeds exclusively on what nature offers

Dozens of fruit trees of all varieties dot the farm, which stretches over approximately 2 hectares, as well as vine cuttings.

There is a family that lives here permanently, even in the cold season.

Seva Sana is the only retreat-type location in Romania where you can see how cosmetic and medicinal products are produced, take health and wellness courses and experience a 100% organic cuisine

<https://sevasana.ro/>

<https://www.facebook.com/sevasana.ro>





Source:<https://sevasana.ro/seva-sana-retreat/>

This programme has been funded with support from the European Commission. The author is solely responsible for this publication (communication) and the Commission accepts no responsibility for any use that may be made of the information contained therein.



## **41. Cobor Farm**

Cobor is an ideal place for an active family holiday where you can learn about farm animals, vegetables from our organic garden, horses that are in our horse livery, slackline, archery, kite flying, horse cart rides or sleigh ride, visiting the surroundings, Cobor is a great place to spend time with your family

The Transylvanian hills offer some of the most important high natural value grasslands left in Europe. Cobor village is the perfect place for biodiversity conservation and grassland management. With its beech forests and rolling hills, fertile meadows, Cobor offers a great experience. The special birdlife of the area is amazing, you will have a good chance to see a great variety of bird species from our dedicated hide.

At Cobor Biodiversity Farm it is maintained the traditional cattle grazing methods with this hardy cattle breed. The biodiversity of the area can only be conserved if traditional land management continues alongside cattle grazing – considered to be the most suitable way for sustaining grassland biodiversity.

Cobor Biodiversity Farm runs a breeding programme for the indigenous Carpathian Shepherd Dog. Many pups can be found throughout the year at the farm. They are bred and offered for free to sheep owners in the Făgăraş Mountains for protecting the herds, thus preventing losses caused.

The farm employs local people and their horses, for the cart rides, so you can talk to them and hear their stories and emerge yourself even further into the village life. On the way, you can even stop for a picnic, wherever you find a nice spot. There can be done other activities such as horse cart ride and camping, bike tours or botanical tours.

Most of the food at Cobor comes from its own organic farm. And the vegetables are from old, Romanian varieties, with that taste of yesteryear. More than that, it is one of the few locations that offers wildlife watching and runs a breeding program for the indigenous Carpathian Shepherd Dog.

<https://cobor-farm.ro/>

<https://www.facebook.com/COBOR-ferma-ecologica-organic-farm-1593919307566916/>



Source: <https://cobor-farm.ro/>

### 13. FURTHER READING:

#### Existing Training materials/content

<i>The Demand for Gastronomic Tourism</i>
<b>Name of material/content</b>
1. <b>2nd Study of the Demand for Gastronomic Tourism in the Community of Madrid</b>
<b>Link</b>
<a href="http://dinamizaasesores.es/www/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Informe-completo-II-Estudio-de-la-demanda-de-turismo-gastron%C3%B3mico-en-Espa%C3%B1a.pdf">http://dinamizaasesores.es/www/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Informe-completo-II-Estudio-de-la-demanda-de-turismo-gastron%C3%B3mico-en-Espa%C3%B1a.pdf</a>
<b>Highlights (what topics/parts are useful? e.g. structure, certain topics, etc.)</b>
This study, conducted in November 2017, analyzes the demand for gastronomic tourism in Spain, expanding the traditional concept of 'gastronomic tourist', which characterizes people who travel solely motivated by gastronomy, to also cover the behavior and activities of travelers who choose destinations with other motivations, without gastronomy being the main reason for their trip.
Points of interest:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Identifying the gastronomic tourist.</li> <li>● Generalist tourist and influence of gastronomy.</li> <li>● Gastronomic destinations and positioning of regions.</li> </ul>
<i>Rural Destination Development and Olive Oil Tourism</i>
<b>Name of material/content</b>

<p><b>2. Rural Destination Development Based on Olive Oil Tourism: The Impact of Residents' Community Attachment and Quality of Life on Their Support for Tourism Development</b></p>
<p><b>Link</b></p> <p><a href="https://www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/9/9/1624">https://www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/9/9/1624</a></p>
<p><b>Highlights (what topics/parts are useful? e.g. structure, certain topics, etc. )</b></p> <p>Residents are an essential part of tourism destinations, which makes gaining a deeper understanding of residents' attitudes towards tourism development necessary because their favourable attitudes can contribute to destinations' success. This study sought to understand to what extent rural residents' perceptions of tourism development in their region affect their intention to support further tourism development. The present research also focused on the influence of the variables of community attachment and perceived quality of life on the relationship between residents' perceptions of and intentions to support this development. This study concentrated on the case of olive oil tourism development in the Sierra de Gata and Las Hurdes districts in Extremadura, Spain.</p> <p>Points of interest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Positive perceptions of Rural residents on Tourism</li> <li>● Structural Model</li> </ul>
<p><i>Gastronomy as a cultural heritage and a driving force for tourism development.</i></p>
<p><b>Name of material/content</b></p> <p><b>3. Gastronomy as a cultural heritage and tourism development engine. A swot analysis for Extremadura, Spain.</b></p>
<p><b>Link</b></p> <p><a href="https://dialnet.unirioja.es/download/articulo/5385975.pdf">https://dialnet.unirioja.es/download/articulo/5385975.pdf</a></p>
<p><b>Highlights (what topics/parts are useful? e.g. structure, certain topics, etc. )</b></p>

There is a growing interest in traditional foods and typical dishes that elevates gastronomy to the level of cultural heritage. The development of gastronomic tourism 'begins before the dish reaches the table'. Therefore, tourism proposals must be developed with a rational and comprehensive planning process. A complete SWOT analysis is also presented, which is very useful for this first Handbook.

Points of interest:

- Relationships between tourism and gastronomy.
- Weaknesses and strengths in the rural sector.

*Resources for entrepreneurship in rural areas*

**Name of material/content**

**4. Resources for entrepreneurship in rural areas of Extremadura**

**Link**

[https://www.redruralnacional.es/sites/default/files/documents/Dossier\\_EmprendimientoRRN\\_Extremadura.pdf](https://www.redruralnacional.es/sites/default/files/documents/Dossier_EmprendimientoRRN_Extremadura.pdf)

**Highlights (what topics/parts are useful? e.g. structure, certain topics, etc.)**

The National Rural Network (RRN) is a platform made up of administrations (state, regional and local), social and economic agents, representatives of civil society and research organizations linked to the rural environment. Its main objective is to promote rural development. This document describes a broad network of resources for entrepreneurship in rural areas, which may be of interest.

Points of interest:

- Identification and dissemination of examples of projects and good practices that can serve as inspiration to others.

- Exchanges of entrepreneurial experiences and network generation through events and participatory workshops.
- Specific training courses and resources.

*Creativity applied to Rural businesses.*

**Name of material/content**

**5. Idea Generation Techniques. Creativity applied to business.**

**Link**

<https://plandeempresa.extremaduraempresarial.es/users/downloadExamplePlan/65>

**Highlights (what topics/parts are useful? e.g. structure, certain topics, etc. )**

When you start a business, you get used to generating new ideas to solve all kinds of problems, both yours and your customers'. It's something you can't stop doing, although that doesn't mean you do it efficiently and profitably. The key is to manage the creative process.

There are many definitions of creativity, but we'll stick with psychologist Frank Barrow's definition: "creativity is a disposition toward originality and the ability to produce adaptive and unusual responses".

This vision is closely related to the chances of success of products or services in the market; Originality, we live in an era where customers are looking for something new to feel differentiated and unique; Adapted, that is, that it is designed from the perspective of the end user, to provide a value proposition that encourages them to make a purchase decision that benefits them.

The Extremadura Business Assistance Points offer this resource of interest for the beginning of the entrepreneurial process.

Points of interest:

- Members of a creative team
- Organization of sessions for the generation of ideas

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Other techniques</li> </ul>
<i>Rural Entrepreneurship</i>
<b>Name of material/content</b>
<b>6. Rural Entrepreneurship Program</b>
<b>Link</b>
<a href="https://emprendedoresrurales.com/programa-formate-aer/materiales-webinars/">https://emprendedoresrurales.com/programa-formate-aer/materiales-webinars/</a>
<b>Highlights (what topics/parts are useful? e.g. structure, certain topics, etc.)</b>
<p>The "Fórmate AER" Program is one of the strategic lines of action of the Association of Rural Entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurial projects need above all from an eminently practical aspect, where other entrepreneurs who have already gone through the same thing transmit their useful knowledge.</p>
<p>Points of interest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Training in business organization (Operations, Production, HR).</li> <li>● Digitalization and automation of processes with simple and free tools.</li> <li>● Self-knowledge and leadership.</li> <li>● Business communication and marketing.</li> </ul>
<i>Entrepreneurial Activity in Rural Areas</i>
<b>Name of material/content</b>
<b>7. GEM Report on Entrepreneurial Activity in Rural Areas</b>
<b>Link</b>
<a href="https://gemspain-my.sharepoint.com/personal/comunicacion_gem-spain_com/_layouts/15/onedrive.aspx?id=%2Fpersonal%2Fcomunicacion%5Fgem%2Dspain">https://gemspain-my.sharepoint.com/personal/comunicacion_gem-spain_com/_layouts/15/onedrive.aspx?id=%2Fpersonal%2Fcomunicacion%5Fgem%2Dspain</a>

<https://www.esapadarural.com/blog/datos-de-turismo-rural-espana-2021/>

**Highlights (what topics/parts are useful? e.g. structure, certain topics, etc.)**

The Observatory of Entrepreneurship in Spain leads the development of the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) project in our country. This project is an international observatory that, since 1999, annually analyzes the entrepreneurial phenomenon on a global scale.

For instance, the report establishes that the average age of the people who intend to start a business in the coming months in rural areas is 38 years old and of those who are managing their own activity is 43 years old in new activity and 50 years old in consolidated activity.

Points of interest:

- Values, perceptions and entrepreneurial skills of the adult population.
- Entrepreneurial activity and its features.
- The context in which the entrepreneurial process takes place.

*Facts and figures on rural tourism in Spain*

**Name of material/content**

**8. Rural Tourism Observatory Annual Report 2021**

**Link**

<https://www.esapadarural.com/blog/datos-de-turismo-rural-espana-2021/>

**Highlights (what topics/parts are useful? e.g. structure, certain topics, etc.)**

This report shows data on rural tourism in Spain with a current radiography of rural tourism demand and its evolution. It is a report developed by the Observatorio del Turismo Rural, the



largest rural tourism research project in Spain, which addresses two areas of research: the demand of the rural traveler and the supply, at the state level, of rural accommodations.

Points of interest:

- Average expenditure dedicated to rural tourism.
- Role of women in rural tourism
- Most valued aspects in a rural destination (Gastronomic richness is valued in 45% of the answers).

*Report on Rural Tourism 2021*

**Name of material/content**

**9. Report on Rural tourism. Regions of Tentudía and Ambroz (Extremadura).**

**Link**

[https://www.turismoextremadura.com/.content/observatorio/2021/EstudiosYMemoriasAnuales/Informe\\_turismo\\_rural\\_2021.pdf](https://www.turismoextremadura.com/.content/observatorio/2021/EstudiosYMemoriasAnuales/Informe_turismo_rural_2021.pdf)

**Highlights (what topics/parts are useful? e.g. structure, certain topics, etc. )**

This report is part of the activities of the agreement between the University of Extremadura and the Junta de Extremadura for Extremadura with the Junta de Extremadura for "The generation of tourism knowledge in Extremadura".

The study of the tourist demand is carried out by incorporating the segregated information provided by the micro data.

The study of tourism demand is carried out by incorporating the segregated information provided by the microdata of the National Institute of Statistics and the qualitative part from surveys of tourists on the street, in the Points of Tourist Interest (PIT).

The supply, from the data available in the Extremadura Tourism Business Register. Whenever possible, the current situation of some indicators has been compared with the previous situation

<p>in 2018, which was when the first of these agreements was developed and we have data from that date.</p> <p>Points of interest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Presence in social networks</li> <li>● Digitalization of companies in the rural world</li> <li>● Importance of tourism demand</li> </ul>
<p><i>European Network for Rural development</i></p>
<p><b>Name of material/content</b></p> <p>10. Thematic Group on Smart and Competitive Rural Businesses.</p>
<p><b>Link</b></p> <p><a href="https://enrd.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/tg_rural-businesses_final-report_0.pdf">https://enrd.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/tg_rural-businesses_final-report_0.pdf</a></p>
<p><b>Highlights (what topics/parts are useful? e.g. structure, certain topics, etc. )</b></p> <p>The final report of the REDR Thematic Group on "Smart and Competitive Rural Enterprises" summarizes the main recommendations and conclusions drawn by this group. It also describes the context, objectives, approach, methods and activities of the thematic group.</p> <p>Points of interest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The importance of creative ('wild') ideas for viable local businesses that can respond to new rural challenges.</li> <li>● Business support approaches (such as the accelerator approach) to help these business ideas emerge and help businesses to realise them.</li> <li>● Creating a supportive ecosystem (including access to broadband and other services) that can help businesses to settle in rural areas.</li> </ul>
<p><i>Impact of COVID on the hospitality industry and measures to overcome it.</i></p>
<p><b>Name of material/content</b></p>

**11. Hotel industry in Aragón and covid 19: economic impacts and measures for its recovery.**
**Link**

[https://www.camarazaragoza.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/HOSTELERiA-EN-ARAGoN-Y-COVID-19\\_Version-final-2.pdf](https://www.camarazaragoza.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/HOSTELERiA-EN-ARAGoN-Y-COVID-19_Version-final-2.pdf)

This study quantifies the drop in economic activity suffered during the year 2020 by the Hospitality sector in Aragón (Spain) as a consequence of COVID 19. This estimate is based on data available in public statistical sources that allow us to contextualize the economic impact of the pandemic and takes as a starting point the specific estimate of how employment in this sector has varied. It is necessary to carry out an estimation exercise because the representativeness of the usual labor market data has been distorted by the widespread use of ERTES (employment adjustment plans), support for the self-employed and the fall in the labor force.

**Points of interest:**

- Measures that may be of interest to any business related to gastronomic tourism.
- Reaction capacity of the sector.

*Small business ideas*
**Name of material/content**
**12. 60 Small Business Ideas for anyone who wants to run their own business.**
**Link**

<https://blog.hubspot.com/sales/small-business-ideas>

**Highlights (what topics/parts are useful? e.g. structure, certain topics, etc. )**

This study, conducted in November 2017, analyzes the demand for gastronomic tourism in Spain, expanding the traditional concept of 'gastronomic tourist', which characterizes people

who travel solely motivated by gastronomy, to also cover the behavior and activities of travelers who choose destinations with other motivations, without gastronomy being the main reason for their trip.

Points of interest:

- Identifying the gastronomic tourist.
- Generalist tourist and influence of gastronomy.
- Gastronomic destinations and positioning of regions.

*Business Start-up Kit*

**Name of material/content**

**13. 9 Free Templates to Help You Turn Your Idea Into a Business**

**Link**

[https://offers.hubspot.com/business-startup-kit?hubs\\_post-cta=anchor&hubs\\_post=blog.hubspot.com%2Fsales%2Fsmall-business-ideas&hubs\\_signup-url=blog.hubspot.com%2Fsales%2Fsmall-business-ideas&hubs\\_signup-cta=cta\\_button&hsCtaTracking=1a0a4e5a-b3ce-4c8b-bc42-4e24cde930ae%7C647c2da9-64b9-4057-88e0-1713cad40ed9](https://offers.hubspot.com/business-startup-kit?hubs_post-cta=anchor&hubs_post=blog.hubspot.com%2Fsales%2Fsmall-business-ideas&hubs_signup-url=blog.hubspot.com%2Fsales%2Fsmall-business-ideas&hubs_signup-cta=cta_button&hsCtaTracking=1a0a4e5a-b3ce-4c8b-bc42-4e24cde930ae%7C647c2da9-64b9-4057-88e0-1713cad40ed9)

**Highlights (what topics/parts are useful? e.g. structure, certain topics, etc.)**

Sometimes it is important to equip yourself with tools for the development of your business idea. The consulting firm Hubspot offers free advanced tools to design and develop the first documents of our future business.

Points of interest:

- Porter's Five Forces analysis template
- Pitch deck Template
- Tech Stack Checklist
- Marketing Plan Template

- Elevator Pitch Templates



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