Transborder Hiking through Albania, Kosovo and Montenegro

Columbia V11 Foro De Turismo De Naturaleza

Transborder Hiking through Albania, Kosovo and Montenegro

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“Peace works better than conflict and one of the best manifestations is travel and tourism.”

President Bill Clinton

The Peaks of the Balkans project is all about forging peace and interdependence........
The Trail was born of a passion to preserve the cultural, natural and spiritual heritage of these communities, linking them together to create a rare journey for both local inhabitants and for visitors.

Opening minds and borders
Peaks of the Balkans

Transborder hiking trail through the mountain regions of Albania
Kosovo
Montenegro
Project begins with a dream
Result chain approach
Setting the vision, objectives for the project
Models for new tourism

Sustainable tourism and enlightened destination stewardship

Local people’s participation in development and the benefits of tourism

Visitors being able to connect with local people, culture, communities

Long-term ecosystem management
The guiding principles for Destination Stewardship
The work: Border access

Formalising a green border crossing with the local border police for easy access
The work: Trail making
10 stages (to walk in 10-13 days) in three countries
The stages to walk in 6 to 9 hours
Length: 192 km
Elevation
  min: 670 meters, max: 2,290 meters
Level of difficulty ranges from easy to moderate (requires good physical condition and mountain equipment)
Challenging hiking trail
The Trail: Marking

- White/red/white
- Red/white/red circle/white fills
The Trail: Marking
Guide training

Professionally trained Guides ensure hikers are safe and can get the best out of their trek.
Health and Safety is a philosophical and practical approach
Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria

Maximizing social and economic benefits for the local community
Enhancing cultural heritage
Reducing negative impacts on the environment
- Energy efficiency
- Waste management
- Water conservation
- Conservation initiatives
Destination stewardship helps to integrate the criteria across the project.
Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria

Adoption and implementation, monitoring and addressing positive and negative tourism impacts.
Creating services

Involving local communities especially women: making accommodations, providing local food, offers for sale eg craft
Training local women
Hospitality, local entrepreneurs
Authentic Accommodation

traditional stone houses “Kulas“
traditional mountain huts
block houses
small guest houses, pensions, B&Bs
Celebrating local foods

Local provenance stimulates agriculture (in the production of homemade delights using cheese, meat, grains, and other locally grown products)
Protecting the environment

Hikers are asked to take only pictures, leave only footprints, and take out all their rubbish.
Setting up marketing

Telling real stories of natural provenance of place, people and responsible tourism
How do we communicate: ethically
Shared approach with country by country delivery
Setting up the marketing

Partnerships with Agencies, Guides, referrals – all changing with online space
Small steps = Success

2012: 35 organized tours
Hikers from all around the world
Trekking underway

Trail costs range but typically a 7-day package will be €350, 877,000 pesos, including food, accommodation.
Next steps

Preparing further funding applications for trail development and maintenance, infrastructural and service enhancements. For training, especially for rural women.
Governance for the project is a Steering Committee: a joint venture between the national and local tourism organisations of the three countries.
Thank you! See you on the Trail!
Enis Ljuljanović and Susan Warren

Kosovo

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