Rural wellbeing tourism services – market research results
April – May 2015, internet survey

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Project partners:
550 completed questionnaires

Age groups

- 26-35: 0.3
- 36-45: 0.3
- 46-55: 0.2
- 56-65: 0.1
- More than 65 years old: 0.1

Gender

- Men: 21.50%
- Women: 78.50%
Nationality

Nationality of the respondents

- Finnish: 1
- Norwegian: 0
- Latvian: 0
- Lithuanian: 0
- Estonian: 0
- Danish: 0
- German: 0
- Russian: 0
- Other, what?: 1

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Rural tourism holidays

How many times during the past three years have you been on a rural holiday in Norway, Denmark, Sweden or Finland?

- 0
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4-5
- 6-10
- More than 10 times

How many times during the past three years have you been on a rural holiday in Estonia, Latvia or Lithuania?

- 0
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4-5
- 6-10
- More than 10 times
Preferred duration for a rural wellbeing holiday

How long rural holiday would you prefer?

- 1-2 nights
- 3-4 nights
- 5-7 nights
- 8-10 nights
- 11-14 nights
- More than 14 nights
How would you describe the area you live in (Choose only one):

- A large city (100,000 or more inhabitants)
- A medium-sized city (10,000 to 99,000 inhabitants)
- A smaller city (from 2000 to 9999 inhabitants)
- A village (under 2,000 inhabitants)
- A rural area
- Do not know
- Prefer not to answer
Preferred rural wellbeing holiday company

Preferred rural holiday travel group

- Family: 0.47
- Partner: 0.19
- Friends: 0.24
- Alone: 0.04
- Work group: 0.06

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18.9.15
### Important rural wellbeing destination attributes

(0: not important at all, 4: very important)

When you think about your perfect rural wellbeing destination, how important are the following attributes?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attribute</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lake and river landscapes</td>
<td>3.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiet places</td>
<td>2.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farm landscapes</td>
<td>2.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forest landscapes</td>
<td>2.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free access to natural resources</td>
<td>2.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coastal landscapes</td>
<td>2.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plants and animals</td>
<td>2.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open spaces</td>
<td>2.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountain landscapes</td>
<td>2.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilderness</td>
<td>2.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long rural traditions</td>
<td>2.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History of the region</td>
<td>2.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geology (rocks, glaciers, dunes etc.)</td>
<td>2.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protected areas</td>
<td>2.09</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Most interesting rural wellbeing activities (0:not important at all, 4: very important)

How important are the possibilities to enjoy following activities during your rural holiday?
Least interesting rural wellbeing activities
(0:not important at all, 4: very important)

How important are the possibilities to enjoy following activities during your rural holiday?
Importance of travel motivations (-3: completely disagree, 3: completely agree)

When you think of yourself as a tourist, what characterizes you?

- For me wellbeing is about being together with family/relatives/friends: 2.11
- I am environmentally conscious when on holidays: 2.07
- I want to be closer to nature: 2.04
- I like to experience something new and different: 2.01
- I want to recharge my batteries: 1.87
- I want to strengthen my mental wellbeing: 1.82
- I am curious and seek information about the culture of the area that I visit: 1.73
- I want to escape from the ordinary: 1.68
- I go for destinations that can offer a good deal of relaxation: 1.64
- I am always looking for good deals: 1.63
- I want to strengthen my physical wellbeing: 1.49
- I like to meet new people: 1.07
- I prefer warm climates for my holidays: 1.06
- Being one with the nature, connectivity between earth and water: 1.03
- I want to be a part of the local community during my holidays: 0.60
- I travel only during school holidays: 

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Most important information sources (scale 0-4)

How important are the following information sources for you when you are planning a holiday?

- Search engine (e.g., Google.com) - 3.09
- Your own experience from previous visits - 3.08
- Talking with family / friends - 2.96
- Online travel agencies (e.g., booking.com, hotels.com) - 2.63
- Company website - 2.57
- Local tourism organisation websites (e.g., www.visitfinland.com) - 2.55
- Guide books - 2.28
- Review websites (e.g., Tripadvisor) - 2.27
- Portals (e.g., GoFinland.fi) - 2.24
- Discussion boards / blogs - 2.11
- Travel agents’ website - 2.10
- Social media (e.g., Facebook) - 2.02
- Brochures and tour operator travel catalogues - 1.95
- Newspaper and magazine websites - 1.64
- Travel fairs - 1.54
- Television - 1.50
- Visiting travel agency / other expert - 1.50
- Magazines - 1.48
- E-mail newsletters and advertisements - 1.46
- Newsletters - 1.41
- Newspapers - 1.37
- Radio - 1.33
Daily smartphone & Internet use

Daily smartphone use

- I don't know
- I don't have smartphone
- Less than 15 minutes
- 15-30 minutes
- 30-60 minutes
- 1-2 hours
- More than 2 hours

Time spent online daily on average

- Less than 1 hour
- 1-2 hours
- 3-4 hours
- 5-6 hours
- At least 7 hours
Five categories of information sources

1. Traditional media
   - Magazines, Newspapers, Radio, Television, Newspaper and magazine websites, Guide books, Brochures and tour operator travel catalogues

2. Experts
   - Visiting travel agency / other expert, Newsletters, Travel fairs, E-mail newsletters and advertisements, Travel agents' website

3. Social Media
   - Discussion boards / blogs, Social media (eg Facebook), Review websites (eg Tripadvisor), Online travel agencies (eg booking.com, hotels.com)

4. Destination information
   - Local tourism organisation websites (eg www.visitfinland.com), Portals (eg GoFinland fi), Search engine (eg Google.com)

5. Personal information
   - Your own experience from previous visits, Talking with family / friends, Company website
Analysing the correlations:

• People preferring treatments and spas use experts to find information.

• Slow living services are best marketed through experts and traditional media.

• Experts are also important in marketing exercise services.

• Alternative medicine services should be marketed through traditional media.

• Museums should be marketed in traditional media and destination websites.

• Nonetheless, search engines are most often used information channel.
Conclusions:

• Transnational rural wellbeing products are viable.
  – People still prefer to travel to near-by countries.
  – Short holidays up to four nights are preferred.
  – Family is most popular travel party.

• Rural wellbeing tourism is also connected to water and quietness.
  – Moving around in the nature, eating local food.
  – Environmental friendliness is a must for rural wellbeing companies
    and should be actively promoted.

• Rural wellbeing tourists can take holidays outside school holidays,
  but only for longer weekends.

• Search engines are most often used information channel and
  should be focused on.
  – Also personal information is very important, meaning that the quality
    of the rural wellbeing services must be very high.
Conclusions (cont.)

• The rural tourism services should be considered as categories.
  – 14 rural wellbeing product families.
    • Core services should almost always be offered and marketed together
    • Ancillary services should support core services and be an option for tourists.
  
• For some services special attention need to be paid to information channels used.
  – Traditional media is good for slow living, alternative medicine and museum products
  – Experts should be used in marketing of treatments and spas, exercises and slow living.
  – Personal information is important for those enjoying wilderness services and outdoor sports.
Questions, comments?
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