

Innovative ways to exploit the natural resources of Romania spa services through travel

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Candidate's background

Aluculesei Alina-Cerasela, aged 24, is a freshman in PhD at the Academy of Economic Studies, Faculty of Commerce. She attended the Faculty of Commerce at the Academy of Economic Studies of Bucharest, with a degree in the study of health tourism.

After that she followed the courses of Masters Program, Operational Research and Intervention in Medical Services Management Social and Public Health, Carol Davila University of Medicine in Bucharest, with the dissertation "Analysis lifestyle of workers employed in a stressful environment" and master's program "Business Administration in Tourism" from ASE Bucharest, with dissertation on "Diagnostic Analysis of tourism enterprises". Since August 2012 she owns and manages Catalog Med Tour – a medical tourism website, through which intermediates medical tourism services.

Brief presentation of the research project

Health tourism is one of the most dynamic areas that can harness the natural resources for recreation, but especially for medical purposes. Because Romania is one of the countries where there is a paradoxical situation: resource abundance generates more poverty than wealth, I decided to study this area.

My thesis is based on research into health tourism in Romania and how can be valued the strengths of the country for it to become a landmark in health tourism from Europe. For this purpose I take into account several steps, such as:

- Consulting books and articles having as topic health tourism. I take into account the analysis of health tourism from Romania and other countries known for this activity;
- Inventory of natural and entropic potential: natural resources, infrastructure, reputation;
- Researching health tourism websites from Romania and Hungary in order to analyse the specific products offer in the online environment;
- Interviewing managers of the resort spa and physicians to find out their attitudes about health tourism;
- Finally, I wish to come with an innovative solution for Romania regarding natural spas resources, so it can become a top destination.

Keywords: *spa resources, health tourism, SPA, health tourism in Romania, balneology*

Research methods

To achieve the objectives of the thesis I take into account several methods of research. Regarding the theoretical part, I will investigate the specialized literature. The aim is not just a simple review of what has been written about the spa potential of Romania and about the health tourism in the country, but also a critical analysis of them.

Another element of the methodology is direct observation. By this I analyze specialized websites to see how health tourism is presented in the online environment.

Also, I will use investigation based on a questionnaire and an interview, and SWOT analyzes of Romania and Hungary about health tourism.

Research outputs and their implementation

In order to accomplish the thesis I take into account the participation as auditor in national and international conferences, symposiums, scientific session. In addition, I will write scientific articles and case studies related to my research topic: article about the state of knowledge for a publication which is indexed in an international database, articles for an ISI quoted magazine. I take into account writing at least two articles and participation in at least one international conference every year.

Auxiliary elements that may support the research

For my professional development to achieve at the end a quality thesis I take into consideration the participation in Science seminars/courses, pedagogical activities, contributions to organize conferences and scientific sessions.

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