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TRAVELING EXPERIENCE: ROMAN EMPERORS AND DANUBE WINE ROUTE

Iskustvo putovanja – Put rimskih imperatora i dunavski
put vina

Abstract

Cultural tourism is a new, rising tourist product worldwide, particularly in Europe. A cultural route is one of the most complex cultural products, comprising material and nonmaterial heritage, combined with interpretation, gamification and other drivers of sophisticated experience that a modern tourist expects. The Roman Emperors and Danube Wine Route is one of the certified European Cultural Routes with specific content, but also a hub structure, a pattern of development and potential for extension. As such, it emerges as an important vehicle of regional tourism integration.

Keywords: *cultural tourism, cultural routes, Roman heritage, thematic touring.*

Sažetak

Kulturni turizam je novi, u svetu i posebno u Evropi, rastući turistički proizvod. Kulturna ruta spada u najkompleksnije turističke proizvode, objedinjujući materijalnu i nematerijalnu baštinu, kombinovanu sa interpretacijom, generisanim igricama i drugim pokretačima sofisticiranog iskustva kakvo očekuje savremeni turista. Ruta rimskih imperatora i dunavski put vina je jedna od sertifikovanih evropskih kulturnih ruta sa svojim specifičnim sadržajem, ali sa specifičnom strukturom čvornih tačaka, obrascem razvoja i potencijalom za širenje. Kao takva, ova ruta postaje važno sredstvo integracije regionalnog turizma.

Ključne reči: *kulturni turizam, kulturne rute, rimski spomenici, tematske ture.*

Introduction

Since the beginning of the development of modern tourism, cultural contents successfully play the role of a magnet that attracts visitors and gives added meaning to travel. Today's tourist expects not only to see cultural contents, but also to be involved in them, to experience them and to share experiences with friends. That is why modern tourism products are becoming more complex. It is not enough just to have an attraction, but also full comfort when arriving and leaving, accommodation, food, as well as fun, connecting the basic content with all of the above elements. A modern traveler wants all the information to be brief, accurate, fun and humorous, but on his own rhythm, not by the ideas of a tourist guide. Sometimes he seeks company, and sometimes he needs no one to bother him. An ideal tourist product that offers all the above listed is touring, and cultural routes have a special potential in this regard. The Council of Europe recognized the value of this tourist product, as it was recognized by tourism authorities in the different parts of the world. This text is dedicated to one of the 33 accepted and certified Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe.

Characteristics of cultural tourism

The concept of cultural tourism has evolved and Richards [14, pp.12-21] explained this evolution of the “cultural tourism” definition. Early definitions were broad and connected with learning, assuming the desire of visitors to acquire knowledge. Later definitions were more precise, in order to measure the performance of different types of activities. The latest definition is again broad; as adopted by UNWTO [20], it refers to “learning, discovering and experiencing tangible and intangible cultural attractions/products...”. This need to broaden the approach to this type of tourism shows its development, dynamic growth and the emergence of various new tourist offerings connected with it.

Many new niche concepts are derived from basic cultural tourism. Timothy [17] illustrates this by describing pilgrimage tourism (improving the spiritual side, seeking forgiveness, or something similar), dark tourism (visiting places of suffering) and sport tourism (with or without connection to some event). Also, festivals and other cultural events, sometimes connected with material monuments, and sometimes related to contemporary themes (games) are considered important cultural products with potential to integrate or promote the material heritage of the destination [5, pp. 162-173].

Dogan [1, p. 45] explains that historical layers of one destination, in this case Istanbul, could be narrated through myths, ideologies, power and politics. Clearly, myths connected with Istanbul are powerful: first the Greek colony in the 7th century BC Chalcedon; Byzantium upon the advice of Delphi oracle; umbelicus – spiritual center of the city calculated following Roman principles, projected in the crossing of the axes according to the movement of the Sun (Decumanus Maximus) and movement of the stars (Cardus Maximus); Constantinopolis named by its founder Emperor Constantine. Ideology and power are interlaced and could easily be found in the city architecture: Hagia Sophia as the symbol of new Christian capital (Deutera Rome – the second Rome) side by side with Süleymaniye Mosque. Politics became particularly important in the second half of the 20th century, with modernization that became a threat and skyscrapers and other “copy-

paste” projects of “starchitects” supported by involved politicians. The final step in creation of the narrative is spectacularization of the destination. In Istanbul, it played a part in 2010 when it was transformed from a European City of Culture into a European Capital of Culture.

The discussion of events and cultural destinations confidently leads to certainly the most successful European cultural project, the European Capitals of Culture (ECOC), initiated in 1983 by Melina Mercouri. More than 40 cities, one or two annually, would take the role of the European Capital of Culture for one year, enabling much local cultural content to become accessible and, at the same time, spreading the idea of a united Europe. Many different positive effects were generated by such a project, which needed a complex instrument, like ACCESS, to measure it [6, pp. 498-514]. Although more sophisticated instruments for the measurement of cultural projects performance were developed later, ACCESS appears to be the most used, and it is based on the assessment of the event in several dimensions: arts, culture, community, economy, society and stakeholders. Although all dimensions are important, the first step should be to assess economic impact, which is not as easy for multidimensional projects as for like projects usually dedicated to cultural tourism.

With the development of the cultural tourism activity, its economic influence developed as well. In the paper on the evolution of cultural tourism already mentioned above, although questioning the methodology of some estimates, Richards [14, pp. 12-21] indicates a strong development of cultural tourism, from 37% of international tourism activities in 1990's to 40% of all tourists consuming at least some cultural tourism products. Cultural tourism brought progress to many local communities. On the other hand, there is the often-raised question of mass cultural tourism sustainability: are there enough local people to perform traditional roles and dances or prepare local food, and also are there enough trained people to guide, interpret and present heritage in a traditional way. Tourism is seen as the vehicle to support conservation and interpretation of the monuments, as well as to improve host communities [4].

Cultural routes belong to the most complex cultural products. Routes integrate tangible and intangible remains

indicating certain historic tracks, with the purpose and function, according to the interpretation of International Cultural Tourism Charter [15, pp. 246-254]. Sometimes they are called paths or itineraries, and they always incorporate activities of different stakeholders, forming a kind of a natural cluster. Since the contemporary visitor is not interested only in visiting and seeing monuments, for some time routes have been expected to provide a full experience. This experience can require visitors to involve themselves in different activities. Furthermore, a modern route is expected to expand this concept of experience into the concept of “sharing”, i.e., involving other individuals in this experience and creating some new content (photo, text, drawing).

Cultural tourism, especially routes, cannot develop without public support. This is a special kind of public-private partnership. Basic research, conservation and preservation of cultural heritage need to be supported by a public initiative, because they are costly and with no clear return on investment criteria. Even investments in interpretation and marketing of such contents cannot guarantee payback in the early stages of cultural product development. That is why marketing, and very often advocacy of a new destination, also need public support. However, inclusion of a private initiative at the right moment in the activities of service (accommodation, catering, guiding) and commercialization can be of crucial importance for the destination with cultural content. Private stakeholders bring creative experiential elements in the tourist offering, enriching impressions on the site. As regards the RER&DWR, it could be said that this stage started with the EU certification of the Route. After the signing of a mutual memorandum of understanding among Serbia,

Bulgaria, Croatia and Romania, the act of certification was the last infrastructural act in the preparation of the Route, sending a clear message to private stakeholders to step in.

Overview of tourism in the SEE region

According to UNWTO data, tourism has recorded global growth for the 8th consecutive year with 1.403 billion of international arrivals in 2018, which represents a 6% increase in comparison to 2017 [22, p. 5]. This number of international arrivals was recorded two years earlier than envisioned by the UNWTO long-term forecast. Additionally, the numbers achieved represent further consolidation of the remarkable 2017 results, continuing to exceed the expected growth rate of 4-5% on the global level. Europe continued to be the leading tourist destination with about 700 million international tourist arrivals and 51% of the overall tourism receipts [22, p. 5]. The regions of South and Mediterranean Europe (where, according to UNWTO, Serbia and the countries of the Western Balkans belong) have reported an increase of tourism receipts of 7% [22, p. 7], while all the countries of the Western Balkans have recorded a double-digit growth. The UNWTO forecasts envisage that by the year 2030 there will be around 1.8 billion tourists traveling around the world [18, pp. 17-34].

To accomplish these expectations, it is crucial for tourism to gain an important place in shaping national policies of economic development while nurturing competitive and responsible business models and practices, as well as improving cooperation between the public and private sectors.

Internationally, special emphasis is placed on regional cooperation and regional dialog in tourism that

Table 1: International tourist arrivals and overnights data in the selected SEE countries

	2015 (in 000)		2016 (in 000)		2017 (in 000)	
	Arrivals	Overnights	Arrivals	Overnights	Arrivals	Overnights
Croatia	12.683	65.863	13.809	72.099	15.593	80.222
Slovenia	2.707	6.614	3.032	7.342	3.586	8.572
Bosnia and Herzegovina	678	1.426	777	1.647	923	1.913
Serbia	1.132	2.410	1.281	2.739	1.497	3.175
Montenegro	1.560	10.651	1.662	10.528	1.877	11.470
Republic of North Macedonia	486	1.036	510	1.054	631	1.294
Albania	3.784	/	4.070	/	4.643	/

Source: UNWTO World Tourism Barometer, volume 17, issue 1, January 2019, official national statistics in selected countries.

Table 2: International tourism receipts data in the selected SEE countries in 000 USD

	2015	2016	2017
Croatia	8.834	9.634	10.924
Slovenia	2.328	2.424	2.750
Bosnia and Herzegovina	661	724	826
Serbia	1.048	1.151	1.346
Montenegro	902	925	1.041
Republic of North Macedonia	265	280	327
Albania	1.500	1.691	1.929

Source: UNWTO World Tourism Barometer, volume 17, issue 1, January 2019.

promotes deepening overall relations among the countries, continuation of the integration processes and the creation of conditions for economic growth and increasing the living standard of local populations.

Tourism in South and Southeast Europe, especially in the Western Balkan countries, has been recognized as an extremely important economic and social phenomenon that in the last several years has been gaining the attention it deserved for a long time: with 5.6% direct and 14.7% indirect share in GDP of the Western Balkan countries, a 24.1% share in their overall exports and 5.4%, and 14% direct and, respectively, indirect share in overall employment [11, p. 6]. The rationale behind this resides in the recognized economic gains (FX income, income for the local population, creating new jobs, influence on other industries, such as trade, agriculture, transportation, etc.) created by tourism. What is also recognized as equally important is political marketing on the national level and social influence that traveling and the feeling of new experiences, as defined by modern tourism, can have on the population in a region. This enlightening influence is important in a region that carries an inherited burden of a not-so-distant past. It should not be forgotten that a significant number of the population in the region born after 1991 practically does not have personal experience of traveling to other countries of the region. Their opinion on the countries and nations in the neighborhood is based solely on information obtained from media. This statement is supported with the empirical data that state that 72% of the population in the region sees regional cooperation as a strong factor of economic and political stability, while 56% of the participating companies in the survey consider

regional cooperation of tremendous importance for the development of their own businesses [11, p. 7].

The region of South and Southeast Europe/the Western Balkans is characterized by a diversified structure of tourist attractions, a rich cultural and historical legacy, preserved natural resources and considerable human potential. This region represents “old” Europe, “a richness of diversity”, world with roots in history and, at the same time, a region that is not “overexploited”, a kind of mystic and not fully explored setting. The region is interesting enough to become an indispensable destination for global tourists. However, the tourist offering of the region is extremely fragmented, and regional tourist products are not sufficiently developed. Administrative procedures are still strict (like the visa regime), limiting free inflow of tourists, which can be illustrated by the completely different regime of visas of different countries of the region toward tourists from a potentially very promising destination such as China [8]. Also, the business environment is inadequate and unequally developed, dominated by small and medium enterprises, family businesses that experience limited access to favorable financing, while current business practices are characterized by undeveloped managerial and other skills for conducting business. The Western Balkan countries are spending only 2% of their budget directly on tourism.

Analyses have shown that a rich culture heritage, remarkable natural beauty, but also hospitality and the warmth of the local population represent a common denominator for all the countries in the Western Balkan region. The latter often compensates for the imperfections and lack of the tourist offering, necessary infrastructure and other lack of facilities at tourist destinations. Given that 40% of world tourism [21, p. 23] is based on cultural heritage, while in Europe that share exceeds 50%, it can be concluded that culture is what brings European citizens, as well as citizens of the Western Balkan region, together. Therefore, the Council of Europe initiated the program of cultural routes in 1987, when the Santiago de Compostela Declaration was adopted, making Way of St. James (Camino de Santiago) the first Cultural Route of the Council of Europe. The idea was to show that the history and culture in Europe are based on traveling and cultural

exchange among people and to show the way in which rich and vibrant past helps to understand the modern period and discover European identity.

Currently there are 33 [3] certified routes that stretch all around Europe and thematically cover everything, from Mozart to Roman emperors, from olives to European ceramics, from towns with mineral springs to the Danube wine route. These routes combine material and nonmaterial heritage, points of interest interlinked through the network of the local communities, museums, universities, associations. The Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe promote transnational cultural cooperation and offer possibilities for sustainable socioeconomic cooperation. Partners on the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe are working jointly on creating attractive programs for visitors at their destinations, offering a variety of activities and creative ways of traveling and exploring Europe.

The model promoted by the Council of Europe is the right model to be followed by the countries of the Western Balkan region: to connect and integrate in the already existing Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe, but also to create their own, authentic cultural routes and authentic tourism products. The exploration of this region is an endless adventure while cultural routes offer different ways in which this exploration can be realized through unique individual experiences in discovering the culture and history of towns and villages, people and their knowledge and experiences, gastronomy and handicrafts.

Cultural routes offer possibilities of connecting countries of the region, but, even more importantly, the possibility and a good opportunity for having their own citizens traveling throughout the region. This is especially important for younger generations, initiating considerable social impact on the overall events, but also for the economic development of the countries in the region.

Archaeological and historical foundation of the Roman Emperors Route

The Roman Emperors Route (RER), a cultural route combined with the Danube Wine Route (DWR), certified by the European Institute of Cultural Routes, is a linked group of archaeological sites which tell the story of the Roman Empire in the Danube region and the emperors who governed it. This part of the Empire, which the Romans originally called Illyricum, stretched from the Adriatic Sea to its northern border on the Danube. [Author's note: as a geographical term, Illyricum effectively includes the modern political units represented by Southeast Europe or the West Balkan countries.] Roman territory was extended even further when the Emperor Trajan completed the conquest of Dacia, modern Romania, north of the Danube in AD 107. The security of the Roman frontier and adjacent territories was maintained by the active presence of the Roman army which in turn required personal leadership of the Roman emperors in times of crisis. These

Table 3: Certified cultural routes that pass through the selected SEE Countries

	Routes
Croatia	The Saint Martin of Tours Route, Phoenicians' Route, The Routes of the Olive Tree, The Iter Vitis Route, The European Cemeteries Route, European Route of Historic Thermal Towns, ATRIUM – Architecture of Totalitarian Regimes of the 20th century In Europe's Urban Memory, The Roman Emperors and Danube Wine Route, Destination Napoleon
Slovenia	The European Route of Jewish Heritage, The Saint Martin of Tours Route, The Routes of the Olive Tree, The Iter Vitis Route, The European Cemeteries Route, Réseau Art Nouveau Network, The European Route of Impressionisms
Bosnia and Herzegovina	The European Route of Jewish Heritage, The European Cemeteries Route
Serbia	TRANSROMANICA – The Romanesque Routes of European Heritage, The Iter Vitis Route, The European Cemeteries Route, Réseau Art Nouveau Network, The Roman Emperors and Danube Wine Route
Montenegro	The Iter Vitis Route
Republic of North Macedonia	The Iter Vitis Route
Albania	Routes of the Olive Tree, ATRIUM – Architecture of Totalitarian Regimes of the 20th century In Europe's Urban Memory

Source: Cultural Route of the Council of Europe, www.coe.int/en/web/cultural-routes/by-country.

circumstances led to more frequent and longer visits of the emperors, as migrating barbarian groups created increasing pressures on the frontier defenses. Physical witnesses to the intervention of the Roman emperors in the Danube affairs are the archaeological sites which testify even today to the crucial significance of this region in the defense of the Empire.

Archaeology, as the study of the remains of past civilizations, has always attracted public interest, and the remains of Roman civilization are no exception. In general, “Romans” is a term familiar to the wider public, but Romans outside of Italy, the Roman Empire in the Danube region and the Roman emperors who lived and worked there present a novel experience to many. These are the concepts that drive the Roman Emperors Route, based on the premise that a thematically linked series of well-presented archaeological sites associated with the Roman emperors will constitute an effective tourist draw which will encourage serial visits. The success of the tourist attraction depends not only on the quality of archaeological remains (the extent of their preservation and conservation), but also on their presentation, the way each individual story is told to meaningfully bring the visitor back into the time when the emperors lived and ruled there.

Three case studies are presented here to illustrate the workings on the cultural route through the interpretation of its archaeological sites. The three sites chosen are directly associated with three native son emperors who were born and raised in Illyricum and who spent significant amounts of time there, time to be calculated in years of residency in the Danube region. The order is chronological in the

late Empire, beginning with the emperor Diocletian in the late third and early fourth centuries AD.

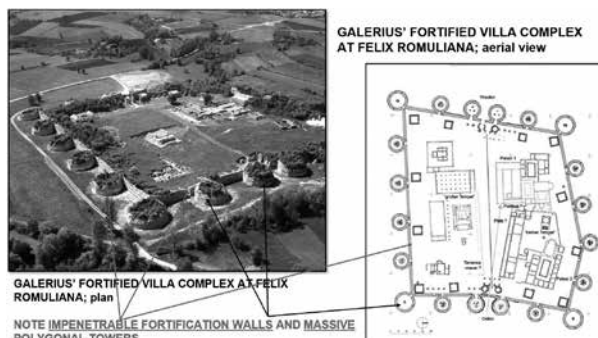
In the 290’s, Diocletian as emperor founded the Imperial Palace in Sirmium (Sremska Mitrovica, Serbia), an RER site which will be featured in the last case study. Diocletian was born on the Adriatic coast and rose through the army ranks to finally assume supreme command. When he decided to retire, following a normal human inclination, he chose his Dalmatian birthplace in AD 305; as a co-ruler of the Roman Empire, he created a retirement retreat on an imperial scale, so grand that today it is called a palace, Diocletian’s Palace (RER) in Split, Croatia. Major elements of the palace are preserved as the historical core of the modern city of Split and form a priority tourist attraction on the Adriatic coast, especially in late August when the Roman palace comes to life during the celebration of the Days of Diocletian.

To ensure continuity in the management of the Empire, Diocletian appointed another Illyrian-born general Galerius as his successor and married him to his daughter Valeria to cement the bond. The Emperor Galerius’ origins were close to the Danube, on the northern frontier of the Empire, and so, following the example of his father-in-law or perhaps in competition with him, in the early fourth century he prepared a monumental palatial complex (RER) near Zaječar in Eastern Serbia for his retirement. Like a faithful son, Galerius named the complex Romuliana after his mother and had his wish for his mother’s good fortune inscribed over the entrance gate of Felix Romuliana: “blessed be my mother Romula”. Galerius’ palatial villa and temples were protected behind impenetrable defensive walls and massive towers.

Figure 1: Celebration of the Days of the Roman Emperor Diocletian in his palace, Split



Figure 2: Felix Romuliana Palace near Zaječar

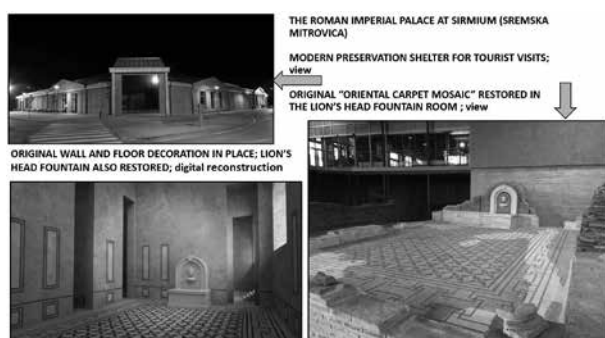


This is one of the best preserved Roman architectural complexes in the West Balkans, and it dramatically reflects the power concentrated in the hands of the Roman emperors, a true example of what Italian scholars have called “architettura di potenza”, the architecture of power. Nothing was built on this site after the Romans abandoned it, and so Romuliana stands in splendid isolation amid the rolling hills of the Danube hinterland.

Constantine the Great deservedly must rank as one of the most distinguished Roman emperors. He consolidated once again the control of the Empire under the authority of a single ruler and is most well-known for establishing Christianity as the official religion of the Roman Empire. This was a major event in the history of the Western world. Constantine was another Illyrian general, born south of the Danube in Naissus (modern Niš, Serbia). Before he completed the construction of his “new Rome” in Constantinople (modern Istanbul, Turkey) in AD 330, Constantine used Sirmium (modern Sremska Mitrovica, Serbia) in the Middle Danube region as a strategic location to administer the Empire and manage the army on the troubled northern frontier. Historians can document the presence of Constantine in the RER Imperial Palace in Sirmium for over 500 days in the years between AD 317 and 324. His actual presence most probably extended for a much longer period. The excavated remains of the Imperial Palace are presented today in a modern preservation shelter to facilitate visitor access to the site.

Interpretation of the site is realized through a collage of different modes of presentation, ranging from restoration in place of the original mosaic pavements to three-dimensional reconstructions of the interior rooms

Figure 3: Roman Imperial Palace in Sremska Mitrovica



and graphic panels explaining important architectural features. The Imperial Palace in Sirmium is yet another historic monument and tourist product where we can observe the hand of an emperor in the design and use of an imperial administrative and residential center.

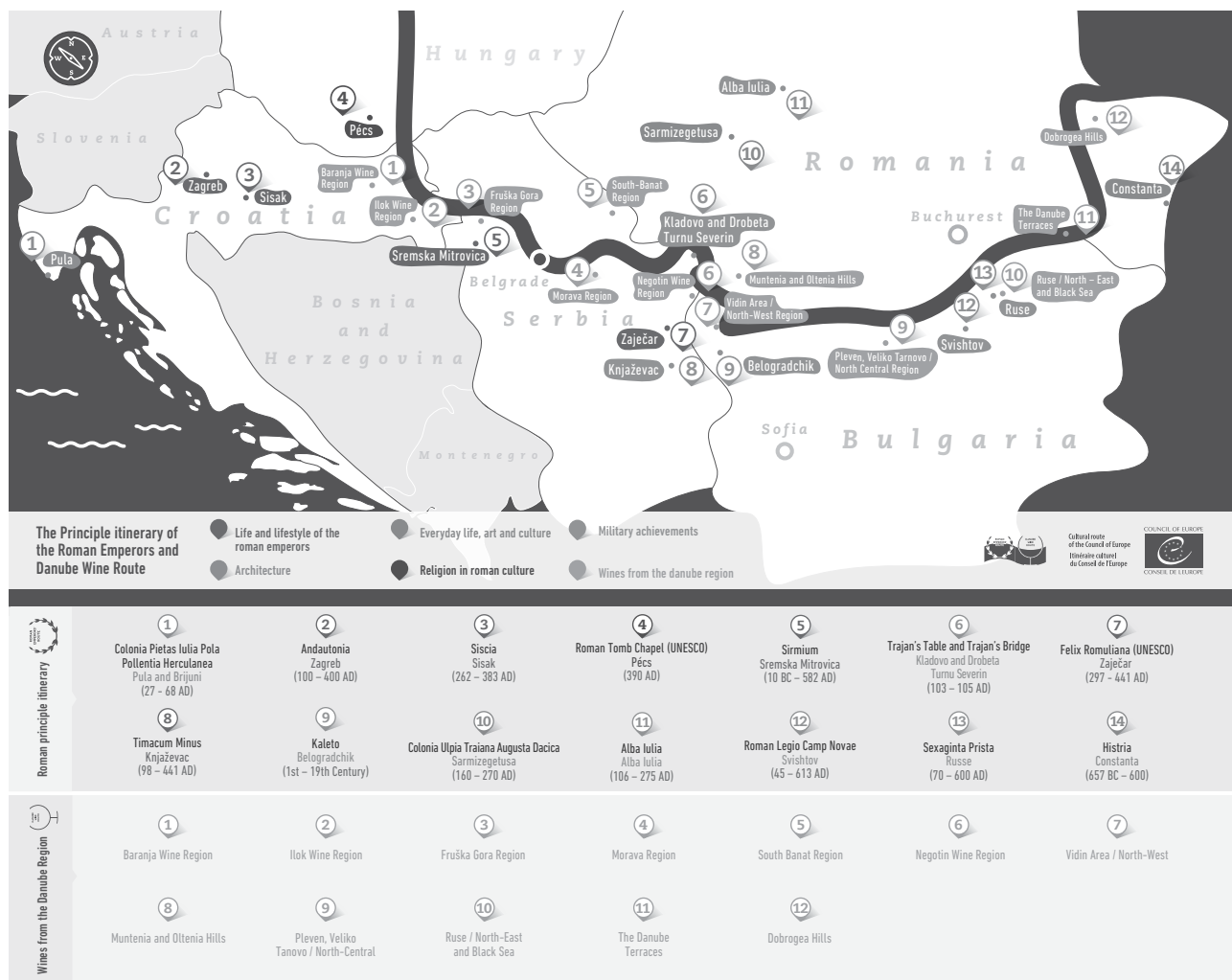
Traveling experience as the unique selling proposition of the Roman Emperors and Danube Wine Route

The Roman Emperors and Danube Wine Route was certified in 2015 by the European Institute of Cultural Routes (EICR), Luxembourg, under the auspices of the Council of Europe. Sometimes, the name of the route is abbreviated – RER&DWR. This Route has a Scientific Committee, as do all the other routes on the list, but it also has a specific managerial system that will be explained later, unique for this particular Route. Basic information about the Route can be found on the website of the European Institute of Cultural Routes [3].

The Route, certified by the Institute, connects five countries of the Middle and Lower Danube and partially follows, in the lower part, Roman Limes, the frontier of the Empire which in some parts geographically coincided with the Danube. However, this exciting trip, starting from the Istrian peninsula in Croatia, across Pannonia in Serbia and Hungary, then down the Danube in Bulgaria and Romania, allows viewing of archaeological remains on both sides of the Danube. The new idea is to connect this traveling experience with other, still unconnected and mainly unknown, but important archaeological sites in the region. It would imply extending the Route (its western branch), probably across Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Albania and potentially some other areas. The existing Route is presented in a special publication [23] describing its content in a standard, but unique way, and also mapping the hubs as entry/exit points for visitors, which is also specific for the RER&DWR.

Hubs are the main characteristic of this Route, as a unique idea developed over several years. They can be identified on the map. Hubs are important for two reasons. From the perspective of visitors, they can expect to be able to access the Route at these spots, collecting some

Figure 4: Roman Emperors and Danube Wine Route map



information about it and finding transport, guidance or other services there. On the other hand, hubs are the backbone of the managerial model of the Route, consisting of institutions and persons engaged in marketing and communication, and developing processes on the Route. The list of the hubs is dynamic: some new potential hubs must be developed on this itinerary and introduced in the existing Route, as well as in its extension. It is mainly expected that a hub will contribute to visitors' experience and add value to the Route.

The standard format of hub presentation was predefined during the process of Route development, although it is understandable that each hub is different and specific. However, some standard information can help travelers to manage and plan their route. The Route has two kinds of hubs, as can be seen from the name of the Route, and these are archaeological (Roman) and wine sites.

Archaeological sites communicate two kinds of contents to visitors. The first kind of content concerns archaeological remains and their interpretation with possible connection to the other sites on the RER&DWR. They offer information about: what was discovered and what is visible now; who did the excavations; discovered but still not revealed objects; the role of the site in Roman times – time period, capacity, purpose, size and type of terrain; who lived in the site; the myths and legends connected with it. This information should be supported with map(s), sketches, photos, etc. The second kind of content is related to tourist information on: transport access; travel time from surrounding cities; visiting conditions: tickets, working hours, availability of guides (in various languages); brochures, VR and other print and electronic presentations; estimate of time to be spent on site; what else to see: other attractions in the vicinity; possibilities

for room and board; closest city (population, number of tourist arrivals and overnights).

Wine sites have the same format consisting of two types of information. While the second one is the same as above, offering tourist information, the content of the first component is adapted to the wine destination. It contains data about: vineyards and grape varieties; history of that area and important families that lived there; wine cellars, castles and other important buildings; festivals and other events, particularly those connected with wine; other important information (monasteries, churches, music, etc.).

The development of the content on the Route is following three directions. First, the institutions responsible for the future development of the sites plan future activities which are listed in the abovementioned publication under the section: Recommendations for Improvement and Future Development. These recommendations can be either archaeological or tourist. Both are important for further progress of the sites around a particular hub. This internal development is happening in each hub separately. The second direction of the Route development concerns new hubs on the Route. The inclusion of Pécs, Hungary, in this first period of the Route's existence is a good example of "completing" the Route. Still, there are some extremely important sites that are not yet on the map for different reasons: some sites are not yet open for visitors, while some are not yet connected with the Route team. The third direction of the Route development was already mentioned and could be called "extension". The logical way to extend it is to examine the possibility of connecting it with some other regional sites between the Danube and the Mediterranean Sea; this process has started in early 2019.

The basic idea of this cultural route is to encourage travel from one destination to another and to provide a pleasant and comfortable experience for the traveler along the route. That is why the new website of the Route has been updated with useful information on how to travel, how to get from one hub to another, which means of transport to use, where to stay, how much time is needed from place to place, etc. Although it offers great experience to the visitors who visit individual sites on

different occasions, the Route actually tries to motivate "explorers" to undertake longer trips involving several sites in order to achieve true excitement.

This kind of route is attractive to different types of visitors with their own specific expectations:

- Visitors who are specifically interested in visiting cultural attractions are probably most likely to follow the Route. According to the Atlas Project [13, p. 5], this was the second ranked motive to visit cultural sites, after opting for such an activity due to already being on holiday in that area. Since the Route invites people to "follow the story", it is not their first choice of a side activity on holiday. However, travelers who are particularly interested in culture are very interested in such content. According to the cited research, their primary goal is to visit specific cultural attractions (related to heritage, art, manifestations), which are available as archaeological sites and events (like gladiator spectacles) on this Route.
- Visitors on holidays interested in cultural attractions. According to the previous research, these could be visitors with higher education, occupying high positions. According to UNWTO, these visitors search for diversity, "...tending to raise the cultural level of the individual and giving rise to new knowledge..." [19, p. 121]. This Route, among other things, can provide an insight into the manner in which a large empire like the Roman could function as an efficient organization or how often the emperors changed their place of residence. Different levels of interest among members of this category led to an estimate that around 40% of all tourist trips are connected with culture [10, p. 21]. The RER&DWR relies on knowledge from general education, expanded by numerous contents of popular culture (films, comics, and games) offering a new experience of traveling through space and time.
- Young people travel for different reasons than their parents, basically encouraged by one of the following three reasons [12, p. 3]: to learn about new cultures (83%), to feel excitement (74%) and to increase their knowledge (69%). The RER&DWR offers insight into five new, partly undiscovered, but friendly and safe

countries along the Danube. In a relatively small region, young visitors can get familiar with different cultures, from Mediterranean, to Central European in the Pannonian plain, to different communities in the Balkans and Black Sea region. Excitement is guaranteed, either in urban environments (Pula, Pécs, Belgrade, Sofia, and Bucharest) or in nature: the Slavonian wetlands, the Đerdap Gorge or the Danube delta.

- Cruising passengers are traveling as an independent group, embarking on an adventure and visiting several destinations in a well-organized and elegant way [16, pp. 65-69]. Passengers from cruising ships can disembark in many places on the Danube, from Budapest to the Danube delta, and make a round trip to experience Roman heritage. It is even more exciting to be in a position to see a part of the Roman navy (port of sixty patrol ships – Sexaginta Prista) in Ruse. While cruising down the Danube, modern nomads, cyclers, can create their own “itinerarium Romanum”.
- Business guests can be the most driving segment for RER&DWR, since the Route meets its two emerging demands: to decrease costs of events and to provide a new, unknown experience [9, pp. 703-712]. Floating conferences, conferences in new exciting destinations, like Pécs, Alba Iulia or Kladovo, offer access to unique ancient sites, within reach of major European transport hubs, at moderate prices and with specific local gastronomic and wine tasting experiences.

The Roman Emperors and Danube Wine Route is a travel to experience. It offers more than just a travel to a destination. It is a tour which enables visits to a series of destinations and gaining new experience [2]. Gastronomic and wine tasting experience along the Danube is supported by a diversity of specific wines, indigenous grape varieties and history of wine and civilization in this region. A rising number of travelers adopted orientation toward pleasures of food and wine as a lifestyle [7, p. 33]. In this journey down the Danube, they follow Roman, as well as wine trails, searching for a wine culture that was preserved to this day.

Conclusion

In the forthcoming period, the region needs to be prepared to put additional effort into achieving concrete cooperation in the most efficient manner, by linking public and private sectors in order to attain the best possible results, especially when it comes to overseas, long-haul outbound markets (China, Japan, India, South Korea and others). It is necessary to create and maintain the identity and image of the region, making it recognizable and interesting on the global level. The region should be prepared to use the opportunity to take over part of the tourists concentrated in certain European areas (which are overcrowded and interested to decrease their number of visitors) and redirect the tourist demand to itself.

It is necessary to define specific tourist products that will be the subject matter of joint and incorporated promotion, based on carefully studied habits and preferences of tourists from the target markets. Special attention should be focused on defining and establishing realistic goals, making projections of the anticipated number and structure of tourists that will visit the region in the forthcoming period, as well as the length of their stay. The new tourism platform should also attract and animate successful private companies, especially tour operators, to establish cooperation. This could be achieved through organizing direct business meetings to define and establish the framework and instruments for attaining realistically set goals. Regional cooperation should be deepened, because the countries of the region are not each other's competitors. On the contrary, most of them have complementary tourist offers. It is necessary to remove all the barriers from the region for it to acquire a visible spot on the international map of tourism.

One of the basic assumptions for obtaining good results in regional cooperation is certainly the facilitation of a simplified, easy journey, because modern tourists do not have time for complicated procedures and complex paperwork, but create their own itinerary on the internet. The most important element of that process is visa regime. It represents a barrier not only for travelers, but also for the increase of tourist receipts, creating new jobs, free trade. High prices, complicated administrative procedure and long entrance time to certain countries are discouraging

potential tourists that decide to go and spend their money in some other destinations. Facilitation of travel will not only open new employment opportunities that will encourage traveling, but will also represent an impetus for the overall economic development of the region.

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