

Gastronomic offer of Gornje Podunavlje Special Nature Reserve for the purpose of authentic development of tourism

Maja Banjac, Department of Geography, Tourism and Hotel Management, Faculty of Science, University of Novi Sad, R. Serbia, maja.banjac@dgt.uns.ac.rs.

Dragan Tešanović, Department of Geography, Tourism and Hotel Management, Faculty of Science, University of Novi Sad, R. Serbia.

Bojana Kalenjук, Department of Geography, Tourism and Hotel Management, Faculty of Science, University of Novi Sad, R. Serbia.

Mirjana Nikolić, Institute for nature conservation of Serbia, Beograd, R. Serbia.

Goran Radivojević, Department of Geography, Tourism and Hotel Management, Faculty of Science, University of Novi Sad, R. Serbia.

Special Nature Reserves (SNR) represent the protected areas (PA) of intact and preserved nature. Due to their environmental value and presence of rare wild species, the protected areas are gaining more attention of tourists, so there is indication of upward trend in the number of visitors in these areas (McCool and Spenceley, 2014). It is anticipated that the high growth in the number of visitors will continue in the future. By visiting the protected areas, visitors have the opportunity to get acquainted not only with natural values, but also with cultural heritage that makes each destination more authentic and allows tourists take away unforgettable and synergetic experience.

Regardless of the reason for the visit, the food is an integral part of tourism offer and completes the experience of the destination itself. The aim of this study is to explore the gastronomic offer in restaurants that are located in the area of the selected Special Nature Reserve in order to determine the current offer in the facilities, with an emphasis on the offer of local agricultural, food and culinary products.

The survey was conducted in the Special Nature Reserve "Gornje Podunavlje" that is located in the northwest of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina and it occupies an area of 19,648 ha and presents one of the best preserved wetlands in the Danube River Basin area (www.pzzp.rs). The area extends along 70 km of river Danube course, which represents an important tourist road, but also the habitat of a large number of fish that are found on the menu of the neighboring restaurants.

Within the reserve there is a large number of authentic restaurants such as taverns and granges, typical of the Pannonia Plain and the Danube, whose offer is based on meals of fish and dishes made of wild game. For the purposes of the study only taverns were chosen and there are the following ten: "Pikec", "Velika Čarda", "Srečko", "Kod carine", "Vagon", "Zlatna kruna", "Šaran", "Štuka", "Harčac" and "Brunai". The result of the research is reached by an interview with the management of both restaurants and protected area and by personal insight into the structure of the written offer-menu, followed by an analysis and synthesis of the data collected.

During the research it was discovered that most of the taverns, which are located in the area of the Reserve, are privately owned, while the tavern "Štuka" is the property of the fishermen's association.

Since inns fall into category of restaurants that provide food and drink (Božin, 2006), research also observed that both taverns “Štuka” and “Zlatna krana” offer accommodation services with a total capacity of 40 beds .

The restaurants offer to their visitors, who are lovers of nature, both music of tambourine players and specialties such as fish soup, fish stew with dumplings and homemade noodles, smoked river fish, fish pate, fish baked or grilled on a disc harrow, goulash of pike and sturgeon, fried perch, “drunk” carp and similar dishes. However, studies have concluded that resources owned by the Special Nature Reserve are not fully utilized in order to develop genuine hospitality through gastronomy.

The taverns should primarily have on their offer dishes made of freshwater fish from this area, accompanied by local and national dishes. After examining the menus, it is noticed that the taverns offer dishes of sea fish and seafood and international specialties which are not typical for this area. This certainly raises the question of environmental protection and application of the term “food miles” which is quite well known in the world and it represents local, authentic and fresh products.

All restaurants in the area have on their menu “Jelen beer”, made by Apatin brewery, which has a label of geographic origin and represents this area in the right way, although the visitors are often served with local spirits-brandy and white wine.

By placing emphasis on wide variety of foods that are originating from the area of the Reserve and close surroundings, the offer acquires another dimension and the food can be marketed as organic, local and authentic thus following current trend throughout the world. The placement of such offers in the market sets higher standards, achieves competitiveness, and the listed items provide a greater degree of environmental protection, which directly have influence on raising environmental awareness among producers and consumers (tourists). There are a small number of destinations that can place this product on the touristic market because Gornje Podunavlje Special Nature Reserve has a rich reserve of freshwater fish, preserved nature, cultural heritage and taverns as authentic restaurants that can be better exploited for the purpose of sustainable development of tourism. Similar research could be done with a focus on wild game whose offer is quite attractive in this area.



McCool S., Spenceley A., (2014). Tourism and protected areas a growing nexus of challenge and opportunity editorial. Koedoe: African Protected Area Conservation and Science Vol 56, Issue 2, pp. 1-2.

Božin M., (2006). Card to the Danube, tourist and gastronomy guide. Tourist Organization of Novi Sad. pp. 33-34.

www.pzzp.rs