

***ENTREPRENEURIAL LEARNING EXCHANGE INITIATIVE FOR SUSTAINABLE
HOSPITALITY SMEs IN THE BALKAN-MEDITERRANEAN REGION***

Subsidy Contract No. BMP1/1.3/2616/2017

Company name: Enagron Traditional Houses

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Country/region of operation: Greece/ Region of Crete/Rethymnon

Sustainability dimension: social, economic, environmental

Description of the enterprise/initiative:

The hotel is located at an altitude of approximately 500 m, near gorges and caves, just above the springs of Mylopotamos in the village of Axos at the foothills of Mount Psiloritis. It consists of 32 apartments (35 - 80 m²), which are distributed over 12 independent buildings, and can accommodate 2 to 6 people.

Social/ community impact:

The concept of the Enagron with its special facilities is to provide a place where guests can enjoy nature all year through, either through the organisation of the guests' own activities or through the participation in the activities offered by the hotel. Taking part in the activities of the hotel, providing help to those travelling individually and to groups of visitors, the hotel provides the opportunity to get to know the area from an ecotouristic perspective.

Stakeholders: Guests

Approach applied:

Eco-tourism approach

Innovation applied:

The hotel offers indoor and outdoor activities

Indoor Activities - Ecotourism Village in Rethymno Crete

Botanical Walk

This is a two-hour wandering across the vegetation of Enagron walking through a network of botanic paths. The hotel staff and guests discover how the greenery and paths of Crete have been linked with economy, mythology, religion and medicine from the ancient times

until today. During the walk they can see, touch, smell and even taste different species of the plants that surround Enagron. At the end of the route they drink traditional herbal tea.

Traditional Bread and Cheese Making

Guests learn through simple practical instructions how to make their own traditional bread and cheese.

Traditional Cretan Cooking Classes

Through simple practical lessons guests learn how to prepare some basic dishes of the traditional Cretan diet.

Outdoor Activities - Ecotours in Crete

Excursion to the Village of Axos

The hotel staff and guests walk up to the village of Axos and get acquainted with the society, the culture and the traditional activities of the locals, explore the history, the myths, the stories and the legends.



Excursion to the Medieval Monastery of Halepa, an approximately 7km walking route (in total) within nature accompanied by donkeys and ponies toward the medieval monastery of Halepa.

Bucolic Excursion to the Shepherd's House

This is a bucolic excursion in the wild nature of Cretan mountains including a hike up in a dust path which leads up to the mountain where Panoysis,

the Shepherd, keeps his herd next to the mitato (bucolic haze stone building without joints).

Sustainability of the business model:

The eco-touristic model adopted by the hotel can help improving competitiveness and financial benefits (cost savings, marketing), competitive advantage, legitimization (complying with regulations, regulatory or social compliance), environmental responsibility and enhancing image (Margaryan & Stensland, 2017; Geerts, 2014).

Key success factors: Firm infrastructure and management, development of innovative activities, education and training (guests, staff), relations with relevant groups (including connection with local communities and resources), management of tourist attitude and behaviour, capacity for marketing activities (Lee et al, 2011).

Challenges and problems: Usual challenges are the difficulty in accessing investment capital due to seasonality, lack of development in human resources, slow response to technological change and offering more competitive products on a global market (Prince & Ioannides, 2017). Additionally, the examination of the travel experiences and the satisfaction of ecotourists is crucial for the long-term success as ecotourists usually base their preference to their personal experiences (Catsellanos-Verdugo et al, 2016).

Year when the enterprise was created: n/a

References (web-site, intent links, video, etc.):

<http://www.enagron.gr/>