

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

Subsidy Contract No. BMP1/1.3/2616/2017

Company name: Villa Arbutus

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Country/region of operation: Greece/ Region of Ionian Islands /Lefkada

Sustainability dimension: social, environmental

Description of the enterprise/initiative:

Villa Arbutus is a low-carbon, ecologically designed house with a negligible carbon footprint and solar-powered pool, located in Lefkada.

Social/ community impact:

The house was built with the aim of being as eco-friendly as possible.

Stakeholders: Guests

Approach applied:

Eco-friendly approach

Innovation applied:

This accommodation is completely off-grid, using photovoltaic panels to produce all the necessary electricity and extra solar panels to heat the water supply. The filtration of the pool also relies entirely on these PV panels. The main structure of the building has been

built in wood, this greatly reduces the energy required to build with likes of concrete and locks up carbon rather than releasing it. The area surrounding the property includes rare species, such as boar, foxes and hares as well as a pair of European eagle owls.

Top eco features:

- Off-grid electricity is produced on site through photo-voltaic panels
- Built with wood which uses less energy than conventional methods
- Solar powered hot water
- Uses eco-friendly cleaning products where possible

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, 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://villa-arbutus.co.uk/default.asp>,

<http://www.greentraveller.co.uk/places-to-stay/villa-arbutus-lefkas-greece>

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