RESOUND

GREECE

Bringing Sustainable Tourism to Poros & Troizinia-Methana

CONTENTS

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Tourism not only facilitates the enjoyment and relaxation of tourists, but also helps provide a livelihood to those involved in the sector. The industry is a large contributor to economies worldwide as it creates employment opportunities and much needed revenue. **In Greece it represents major source of foreign income as it accounts for roughly one-fifth of the economy and more than 25% of jobs.**

Here, as elsewhere, tourism shapes the communities that it touches in both positive and negative ways.

POSITIVE

- Wealth generation for the country and its citizens
- Economic progression and development of infrastructure
- Maintenance and protection of natural and cultural attractions
- Unity among people of different countries, cultures and ethnicities

NEGATIVE

- Damage to the environment through overcrowding, pollution, erosion, habitat degradation and destruction
- Exploitation of local culture, resulting in a lower quality of life
- Lack of job security and dependable income (seasonal tourism)
- Unequal infrastructure growth
- Foreign ownership (profits sent out of country)
- Neglect of other economic sectors

THE SEARCH FOR A BETTER MODEL

We are hoping to create a better tourism model, one that increases positives and lessens negatives. We believe that we can obtain this through Sustainable Tourism as it is currently practiced, promoted and encouraged around the world.

Sustainable Tourism is a way of traveling and exploring a destination while respecting its culture, environment, and people. The benefits are great: sustainable tourists tend to stay longer, spend more money and have less negative impact on the environment.

WHY FOCUS ON SUSTAINABLE TOURISM?

- It is anticipated that Global Tourism as a sector will outperform the global economy in the course of the next decade, increasing by an estimated 4% on average annually in the next 10 years.

- One person in every 10 is employed in tourism-related jobs.

- Travelers are significantly more likely to visit destinations and make purchases from travel companies based on their sustainable practices.

- Sustainable travelers are less price sensitive and spend 51% more than other travelers.

- The sustainable traveler tends to stay 7 days or longer in a destination as opposed to 3 days for other travelers.

- Destinations served by ministries of tourism, destination marketing organizations and convention and visitors bureaus are often victims of their own success. Travelers tend to arrive in increasing numbers and flock to the same locations, resulting in overcrowding, increased stress on public services and infrastructure, cultural homogenization and growing dissatisfaction from residents.

- Although tourism can be a great form of wealth distribution, often as little as 5–10% of the money tourists spend remains in the destinations they visit.

- Nearly 50% of World Heritage sites, which are recognized by UNESCO for their outstanding universal value, do not have management plans in place to prevent the negative impacts of tourism.

- The benefits of tourism can only be fully realized through an inclusive approach and collaboration between the public and private sectors and host communities.

COMPARING CURRENT TOURISM AND SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

THE SUSTAINABLE TOURIST

Enjoys the sand and sun, participates in a beach clean, Enjoys the food and drink, takes a cooking class and attends an olive oil tasting. Visits multiple villages, enjoys nature hikes and guided tours of historical sites. Participates in a yoga class, craft workshop, and other cultural activities. Stays longer and spends more money on locally-crafted products. More of the profits stay local, and there is less impact on the environment. Because they made personal connections, they plan to visit again in the future.

THE CURRENT TOURIST

Enjoys the sand and sun and food and drink for a couple of days. Purchases a few souvenirs. Much of the money spent goes out of the country, and because room turnover is high, it has greater impact on the environment.

AREAS OF TOURISM TO EXPLORE

ECOTOURISM: MOUNTAINS AND SEA

- Hiking & nature walks
- Trekking & Orienteering
- Equestrian experiences
- Cycling and mountain biking
- Kayaking
- Sailing
- Diving
- Water skiing
- Volunteering

AGROTOURISM: FARMS AND PRODUCE

- Fishing
- Herbs, plants, flowers
- Honey
- Olives
- Lemons
- Grapes

GASTRO-TOURISM: FOOD & BEVERAGES

- Olive picking & olive oil production and tasting
- Grapes & wine production and tasting
- Cooking
- Honey & honey tasting
- Cheese making and tasting
- Spirits: tsipouro & ouzo, cognac tasting
- Greek coffee making and tasting
- Greek yogurt making and tasting
- Lemonade making and tasting
- Homemade ice-cream tasting
- Traditional dessert tasting

EXPERIENTIAL TOURISM

Many tourists are looking for authentic experiences as either a primary or secondary focus of their holiday. This creates opportunities to offer hospitality and generate income. It also promotes 'slow tourism,' a philosophy and practice that emphasizes longer stays, alternative transportation (such as trains and bikes), cultural immersion, vacation rentals, and off-the-beaten-path destinations.

CULTURAL TOURISM

HISTORY
- Ancient and historical sites and stories
- Churches & monasteries
- Museums & libraries
- Astronomy & constellations
- Mythological stories

COMMUNITY & LIFESTYLE
- Local customs
- Fairs

ARTS & EXHIBITIONS
- Festivals
- Music
- Dancing
- Literature (combined with walks)
- Drawing, painting & sculpture
- Storytelling and theatre
- Cinema (movies about Greece or those shot in the area)

CRAFTS
- Felting & weaving
- Soap and beauty products
- Ceramics

STAKEHOLDERS

Individuals, groups and organizations who would be positively impacted by sustainable tourism include primary and secondary entities:

PRIMARY
- Municipality of Poros
- Municipality of Troizinia-Methana

SECONDARY
- individuals and families
- local tourism professionals
- hotels
- restaurants
- activity suppliers
- small businesses
- school students; youth (up to 30 years)
- cultural Associations
- public and private universities (examples: Nafplio; Athens)
- foundations (examples: Niarchos, Laskaridis etc.)
- cultural festivals (Saronic Chamber Music Festival; Piano Festival Poros etc.)
- archaeological museums (Poros or General)
- Municipal Library of Poros
- The Greek Church

STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

KEEP SATISFIED	**ENGAGE CLOSELY**
• Greek Tourism Board	• Chamber of Commerce (Poros, Galatas and Methana)
• Chamber of Commerce of Piraeus	• Transportation companies
• Regional administration (Attica)	• Media (local)
	• Active local individuals
	• Universities (Athens, Nafplion)
	• Foundations (for funding)
MONITOR	**KEEP INFORMED**
	• Cultural associations
	• Cultural festivals
	• Archaeological Museum of Poros
	• SETE (Hospitality Association)
	• Media (national)
	• Greek Church

HIGH

POWER

LOW — INTEREST → High

PARTNERS & PARTICIPANTS

The benefits of design can only be fully realized through a partnership between the public and private sectors, host communities and individuals working together as a team, building on and depending on each other's expertise to achieve common, shared goals and long-term solutions mutually beneficial for communities.

Good partnerships are the key to success. Project partners include Echo, Ecologists Without Borders and Project Resound. They have joined forces to plan, promote and execute this research project.

PROJECT RESOUND

Project Resound is a social design consultancy that delivers strategic and design capabilities to beneficiaries around the world. It collaborates with like-minded organizations to create solutions that are people-centered and purpose-driven.

It recruits creative volunteers from many disciplines to support social causes in exciting places around the world. This includes talented professionals and students with skills in business strategy, marketing, project management, writing, sound design, graphic design, advertising, service design, photography, illustration, sequential art, film & TV, motion media, interactive design, UX, industrial design, fashion design, interior design, architecture, and the fine arts.

Participants work as a team to visualize and map attitudes, motivations, and behaviors. Grounded in empathy and knowledge of user needs, we build an understanding of future needs, and what success looks like.

Collectively, they help communities identify the criteria that matters most. Based on a clear understanding of unmet needs, they envision, define, prototype, and test the desired future state system, experience, and design.

Transformation leads to a future state that is measurably different than today. Team members work in sync to design and deploy the organizational structures, skills, mindsets, processes, and technologies needed to get somewhere new and better.

Project Resound Colombia is an example of this. There we partnered with the students and faculty of the La Universidad de los Andes (Uniandes), and our client, Partimonio Natural, a non-profit foundation that strives to conserve the natural areas of Colombia.

Together we conducted and analyzed research on sustainable practices of agricultural production, and its value chain—articulating those that would allow it to take care of the people of the region of Montes de María, and the unique and endangered ecosystem.

Saber del Monte (The knowledge of the forest) was the result. This systemic design serves a diverse network of allies including organizations representing the natural environment, cultural heritage, farms and farmers, and marketers and buyers.

ECHO

Echo is a consortium of three entities, Katheti, Live-Bio and Odyssey. Its aim is to promote sustainable tourism in the areas of Poros, Troizinia and Methana.

Katheti is a cultural and educational center led by Fay Orfanidou, that serves the people of the Poros and the Troizinia-Methana region. We support local artisans and entrepreneurs, students, and all those who seek to expand their horizons, learn new skills, share knowledge and celebrate our culture richness. Our Vision is to share our love for Greece and our belief in its great potential. To act as an incubator for the promotion of alternative ways of thinking, living, and working on a local, national, and global level. To serve and support the success of the region by fostering the artistic and educational community in the local area. To adopt best practices from around the world and make the local area a model for sustainable growth.

Live-Bio is a guest house and a lifestyle expression of two entrepreneurs, Magdalena Iwaszko and Periklis Thivaios, who decided to drop their corporate lives for the love of nature, locally grown food and people-centered experiences. Since its inception in 2015, Live-Bio has been promoting sustainable tourism, striving to attract travelers who would like to experience an authentic, less commercial Greece. We believe traveling should be about immersing yourself in the local environment, culture and community, doing it responsibly and respectfully. We believe that mental and emotional balance is the greatest form of wealth. Live-Bio is not only a business, it's a way of life.

Odyssey is a small family business that for 25 years has been a place that respects local tradition and the community, while creating a home away from home for guests from around the world. Odyssey provides excellent accommodations in various forms and locations. It is run by Katerina Sakelliou, a Greek born on Poros, Rik her Dutch husband, their daughter Dora and their friendly and professional staff.

Odyssey has developed a number of sustainable and environmentally friendly activities that their guests can participate in, such as cooking classes, sea kayaking, wonderful walks, yoga and more. "Our mission is to let our guests not only see, but also feel, experience and love our Greece and Greek island in a comfortable home. Our Odyssey home."

ECOLOGISTS WITHOUT BORDERS

Ecologists Without Borders is made up of exceptional individuals who volunteer their time and expertise to restore, protect, and conserve natural ecosystems, in worldwide partnership with those who rely upon them.

EcoWB's network of volunteers consists of more than 500 professionals from over 40 countries around the globe. The majority of our volunteers hold advanced degrees and represent a wide variety of scientific and technical disciplines such as ecology, fisheries science, aquaculture, forestry, conservation biology, environmental science, engineering, agriculture, social science, GIS/cartography, policy, climatology, geoscience, wildlife management, resource economics, education, and more.

EcoWB volunteers have a strong desire to give back and are highly motivated to help slow detrimental environmental change, reduce poverty and strife, ensure food security, enhance livelihoods, and improve the quality of life for the earth's inhabitants. They collectively contribute tens of thousands of volunteer hours each year to further EcoWB's mission.

PARTNERS AND PARTICIPANTS WILL...

- Meaningfully engage in co-creation.

- Build appropriate, sustainable tourism models that benefit stakeholders.

- Create design solutions that serve the people of the region.

- Publish a case study of prototypes and related assets to encourage sustainable and culturally appropriate tourism to the region.

- Use our talents to improve the lives of others while making friends on a multidisciplinary, international design team.

- Have an amazing time!

"

When we take a leap of faith and follow our dreams, we will be surprised where life will take us, and how we can be used for good!"

—Louis Baker

Corinth

Piraeus

Athens

Methana

Troizinia

Poros

Galatas
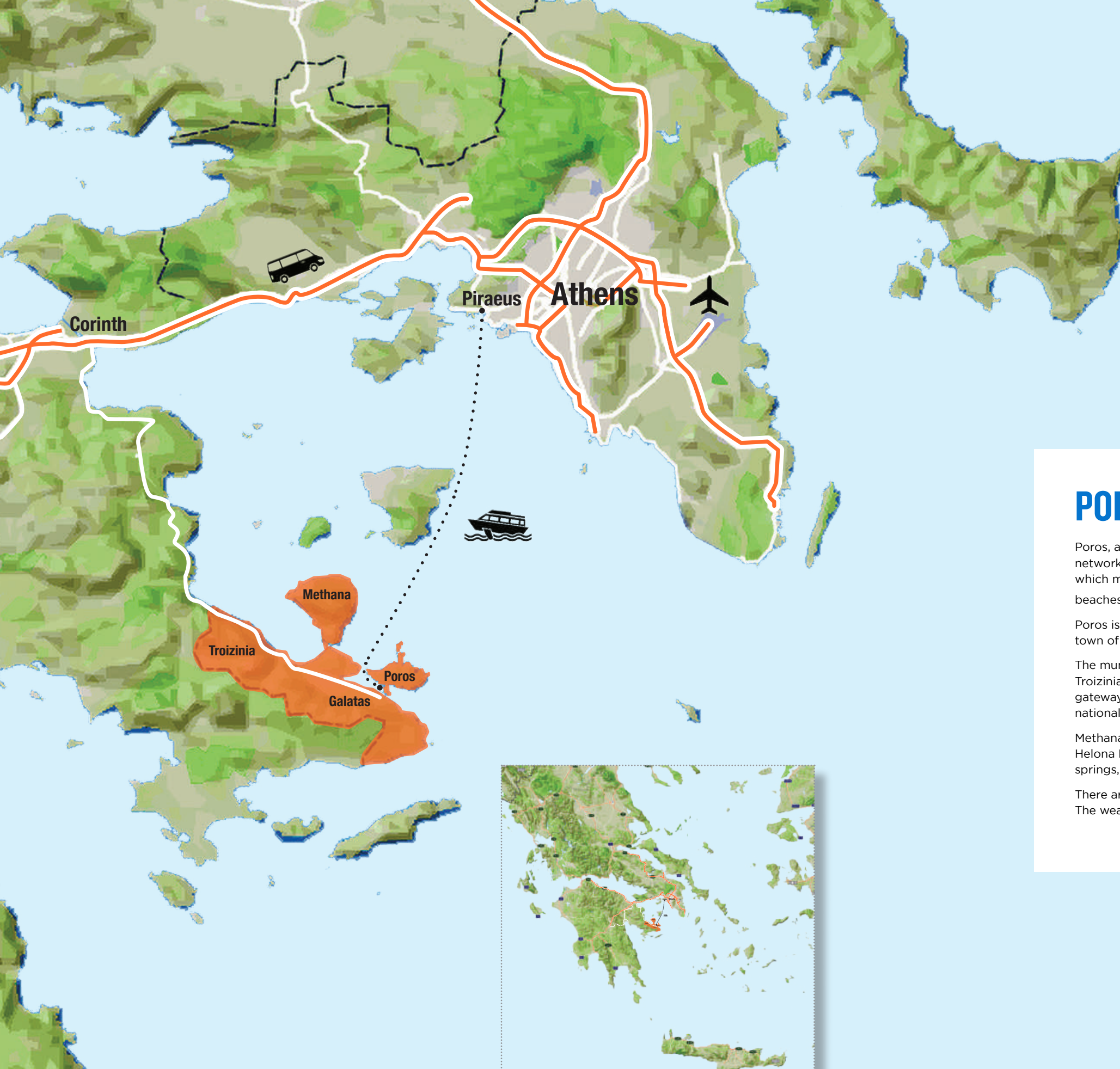
POROS & TROIZINIA-METHANA

Poros, a small Greek island-pair in the southern part of the Saronic Gulf, has a good road network and tourist infrastructure. It is 31 nautical miles south of Athens' port of Piraeus which makes it a popular weekend destination for Athenian travelers who enjoy its unique beaches and crystal-clear waters. It also plays host to international tourists and sailors.

Poros is separated from the Peloponnese by a 200 m (656 ft) wide sea channel, with the town of Galatas on the mainland across the strait.

The municipality of Troizinia-Methana was formed through the merger of Methana and Troizinia in 2011. Galatas, the seat of the municipality, is a charming town that serves as the gateway to both Poros and the Peloponnese. Lemonodasos (a forest of lemon trees), is a nationally known tourist attraction located 3km outside of town.

Methana is a town situated on a volcanic peninsula, north of Galatas. The highest point is Helona Mountain at 740 meters (2,428 feet). The landscape has lovely views and thermal springs, known since antiquity for their healing properties.

There are many hiking trails in this primarily agricultural and lightly populated region. The weather is moderate with warm summers, mild winters and modest rainfall.

METHODS & PROCESS

To produce a vibrant, successful Sustainable Tourism model, Project Resound and it's partners will follow a four-phase process:

PHASE 1: Discovery (contextual research)
PHASE 2: Definition (analysis and synthesis)
PHASE 3: Development (ideation and rapid prototyping)
PHASE 4: Delivery (documentation and plan of implementation)

PHASE I: DISCOVERY

In the Spring of 2020 our team conducted secondary research on general tourism and sustainable tourism. The purpose was to find existing data that would allow us to focus our project plans, and help us to formulate our questions more precisely.

After developing a better understanding, we began primary research and contextual inquiry by planning, conducting and recording 20 hours of in-depth ethnographic interviews of Greek stakeholders. Interviewees included private citizens, business owners and public servants. They helped us to learn more about particular expectations, experiences, services, operations, processes, and concerns, as well as about attitudes, problems, needs, ideas, and the environment surrounding the subject of tourism.

This qualitative process was managed by an interviewer and a note taker. The interviewer led conversations using a semi-structured guideline that included ice-breakers to get the participant comfortable and then became more specific with questions about general tourism, sustainable tourism, agro-tourism, gastrotourism, experiential tourism and Covid-19. The note taker recorded verbal responses and noted gestures and body language. Data points, including names of interviewees, summaries of key findings, quotes, and observations then were transcribed.

During this time we also crafted surveys that were distributed electronically to an international group of individuals. Our target demographic was experienced travelers. More than 200 responses were received. This quantitative data was filtered and data points recorded using the method described above.

"

The art of serving your people better starts with a willingness to listen, and the skills to map out the current reality."

PHASE 2: DEFINITION

During the Fall of 2020 we set out to analyze the data by creating an affinity map. This is a rigorous process of interpreting and considering the underlying significance of each data point. Those that share a similar theme or issue—or that share an affinity—are clustered together. The affinity map represents the voice of the stakeholders, our partners in design.

Out of this work, themes began to emerge about tourism in the area and beyond, the people (locals and tourists), their needs, desires, tasks, and the nature of their problems. These included:

THEME 1: The Ideal Experience of Locals (The benefits of tourism, the ingredients of success, personal and group needs, how to bring the interests of the region together, removing barriers and overcoming challenges together.)

THEME 2: The Ideal Experience of Tourists (What makes travel meaningful, ingredients of a positive experience, and research prior to travel.)

THEME 3: Categories of Tourism (The diversity of experiences in the region that can make a holiday extraordinary, unique combinations and customized experiences, and the unique essence of the region of Poros & Troizinia-Methana.)
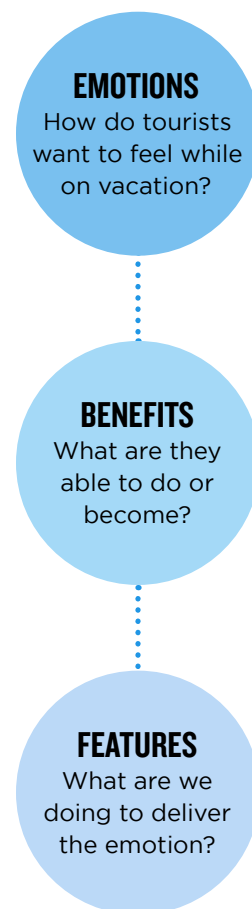
THEME 4: Sustainable Tourism (The ingredients of meaningful travel, seeking out local culture, practicing sustainability while on holiday, and feeling positive by decreasing our negative impact on a culture and environment.)

This process has allowed us to understand the *anatomy of an ideal tourism experience. To discover what people want, need, and desire—what people will find valuable. Defining what people value will allow us to design something with the potential to deliver a truly meaningful experience.

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*The Anatomy of an Experience is a process developed by Lextant, the Human Experience Firm

THE ANATOMY OF AN IDEAL TOURISM EXPERIENCE

To Ideate and design solutions with a user-centric mindset we must utilize this data as metrics for what a solution or experience must achieve; keeping us grounded in data as we design. Indeed, this research report provides visualization that is accessible and engaging. It is our primary mode of communicating these benchmarks to you, to our partners and participants.

EMOTIONS
How do tourists want to feel while on vacation?

BENEFITS
What are they able to do or become?

FEATURES
What are we doing to deliver the emotion?

PHASE 3: DEVELOPMENT

WEEK 1: June 26-July 3
WEEK 2: July 3-10

During this two-week phase, multidisciplinary teams of approximately 16 participants each will engage in teamwork, building on each other's expertise to create viable solutions through an iterative, solution-oriented approach to designing systems, experiences, and results that matter to the people of Poros & Troizinia-Methana.

Project Resound CEO Louis Baker will direct of the project. He is responsible for research, planning, marketing, and recruitment. During the project he will act as a mentor, manager and representative. Afterward he will ensure that the results are documented and disseminated.
Team Leaders will assist the Director in various aspects of project management. Each will lead teams of subject matter experts in areas such as Research, Communications, Service Design and Strategy.

Each week will be divided into 5 Sprints. Using Agile project management methodologies, projects are divided into sprints or iterations. The purpose of sprints is to break down a project into bite-sized chunks. This enables the team to plan a single sprint at a time and adapt future sprints based on the outcome of the sprints already completed.

SPRINT 1: Cultural Immersion and Team Building
SPRINT 2: Ethnographic Research
SPRINT 3: Systems and Design Thinking
SPRINT 4: Ideation and Rapid Prototyping
SPRINT 5: Presentation

PHASE 4: DELIVERY

Innovative projects, by their very nature, require us to embark on a journey of discovery, leaving behind preconceived notions about why things are the way they are, and seeing things anew from a different perspective. To be able to succeed, we must embrace the process and, through it, the opportunities it reveals.

During this phase we will work with our partners to document the project, as well as to create a plan of implementation. In many ways, this is the beginning of the project as sustainable tourism concepts must be evaluated and improved before being shared. Regional partnerships must be forged and leadership provided in order to manage the process over time, working together to garner investment and support.

Project Resound is committed to providing continued support and services to our partners and the people of Poros & Troizinia-Methana.

OUR BRAND IS...

WHO ARE WE?

The Greek word Philoxenia, literally translated as a "friend to a stranger," is widely perceived to be synonymous to hospitality. For Greeks it is much deeper than that. It is an unspoken cultural law that shows generosity and courtesy to strangers.

We, the people of Poros & Troizinia-Methana embody the meaning of Philoxenia, it is in our very nature, instilled since childhood. This can be seen in something as simple as a smile, helping others in need, giving unexpected gifts, or opening our homes to family, friends, and strangers.

WHAT MAKES US SPECIAL?

Our friendly and unspoiled region that we call home has something amazing to offer everyone. It is surrounded by the sea and has mountains that offer breathtaking views. There are picturesque villages, hiking trails, verdant pine forests, beaches with crystal clear water, sailing and water sports, shops, restaurants and cafes offering delicious seafood and local fare, tiny chapels, churches, fantastic monasteries and museums. Nearby there are wineries and ancient archaeological sites.

If we were a brand, we would describe ourselves this way:

WE ARE BEAUTIFUL

It is objectively beautiful, calm and peaceful here; you could even describe it as a lost paradise. Surveying the sea and sky from the heights overlooking the Aegean it is impossibly blue. Here, the blues are happy, vibrant, tranquil, exhilarating, reassuring, introspective, friendly, dreamy, faithful. Contrasted with a speckling of white sails, the warm, sunny, olive greens of the trees, and the ochres of the earth, we cannot help but feel a positive energy, contentment and freedom. Our architecture includes ancient ruins, impressive neoclassical buildings, and farmhouses that coexist in timeless harmony.

WE ARE WELCOMING

Poros & Troizinia-Methana inspires a uncommon sense of belonging and home, a rare feeling in many places. It is human in scale and in spirit. Visitors are honored guests here. We are friendly, helpful, honest, reverent and accepting of others. We love to share our lives with our family, friends and guests.

WE ARE UNIQUE

Our area offers inimitable experiences. Visitors can easily combine sea and mountain, town and village, ancient and modern, within the same day. Poros is famous as an international sailing destination, where boat crews journey the Saronic Gulf and eastern coast of the Peloponnese. Lemonodasos (lemon tree forest) is a nationally known attraction and popular hiking destination located just outside of the town of Galatas. The trees add an ethereal beauty to the landscape and the blossoms provide a heavenly scent in the spring. Methana offers hot springs rich with volcanic origin sulfur that have been famous since antiquity for their healing properties. The hike up the volcano offers stunning views, and its rocky top feels like being on the moon.

Day trips offer a quick link to Nemea, where we can taste our way through one of the oldest wine-producing regions in the world. We can also visit the Bronze Age citadel of Mycenae with its famous Lion Gate, the Ancient Theatre at Epidaurus—one of the most popular archaeological sites in Greece that's renowned for its symmetry and incredible acoustics. There's also Nafplio, the capital of the First Hellenic Republic and of the Kingdom of Greece, and arguably the most romantic city in Greece.

WE ARE ACCESSIBLE

Our region is uncrowded and approachable. Due to its proximity to Athens, Poros attracts many visitors for a weekend or a few relaxing days. Transport to Athens takes 2.5 hours by car, one hour by hydrofoil & catamaran, or three hours by ship. Service is prompt and regular, as is the service to Poros Island opposite by ferry (5 minutes) and water-taxi (3 minutes).

WE ARE NATURAL

Our environment is diverse. It includes majestic mountains, productive agricultural areas and coastal wetlands. There are areas of volcanic geology near the ever-present and beautiful sea. We cherish our environment, and are always striving to keep it as pristine as possible. Our cuisine is fresh and delicious, making use of locally harvested ingredients when available, many of them organic. Our specialty products include high quality honey, citrus fruits, olives, and cheeses.

WE ARE VIBRANT

We warmly welcome our guests and enjoy the energy and excitement they bring. We are entrepreneurs who work hard and have fun. We are a powerful community with great people. Our families and friends are important to us. We celebrate together during the good times and support one another in the bad. We honor the memories of our loved ones who are no longer with us. We are the inheritors of a living language and inclusive culture with a proud history.

You are welcome: May we have the privilege and pleasure of sharing our home and our hearts with you?

LOOKING THROUGH THE LENS OF SUSTAINABILITY

Later in this report, you will find the ideal experience framework of locals and tourists. This framework uncovers the desired emotional experience surrounding tourism in Poros Troizinia-Methana and how to deliver it in the future.

In addition to identifying, or establishing the ideal experience framework, it will be important to apply the lens of sustainability. We can think of it in two steps:

STEP 01: Establish a foundation for innovation by understanding what tourists and locals need and want within the realm of tourism.

STEP 02: Prioritize sustainability as key criteria when ideating or identifying next steps and solutions in delivering the ideal experience

To apply this lens of sustainability, we first collected insights from locals and tourists in order to learn the following:

01: How they define sustainability and a sustainable tourist

02: Why sustainability matters to them

03: Their barriers to adopting sustainability in their travel, as well as potential areas of opportunity

04: How they want to do their part

It is important to note that achieving sustainable tourism must involve willingness, desire and effort on the part of all involved. It is a kind of "golden rule" of travel and tourism. Everyone will have a role, everyone will have to do their part, including individuals, local businesses and international corporations offering services such as food, lodging, transport, attractions and planning and logistics. It also will involve public advocacy groups and governmental policy makers.

The following ideas represent the collective voice of locals and tourists in this study.

WHY LOOK THROUGH THE LENS OF SUSTAINABILITY?

Even the staunchest skeptics of climate change will admit that humans can, indeed, affect the earth's environment. Part of our task is to persuade even those skeptics that adjusting their travel and tourism habits and expectations can make a huge difference in the environmental impact. That is where focusing on sustainability comes in.

As we travel for leisure, business, health, or other reasons, both tourists and service providers must be encouraged to embrace the fact that the negative effects that tourism brings to environments and communities can be mitigated.

All of us must work together, practice the "golden rule of tourism and travel" to create ideas and implement solutions that will diminish the harmful impacts of tourism while maintaining this vital economic industry.

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"

Sustainability is a great initiative for us to explore the globe without destroying it."

••

IT'S A SYMBIOTIC EXCHANGE

Our research revealed a surprising and encouraging fact: the conscientious tourist and local want the same thing. They want to build experiences that open up their understanding of the world—one that is respectful and kind. The local wants the tourist to walk away feeling as though they are family, both having shared a piece of themselves in building a global relationship. Tourists take with them an undeniably unique opportunity, and locals can continue to thrive, culturally and economically.

01. WHAT SUSTAINABILITY MEANS TO US & WHAT IS A SUSTAINABLE TOURIST?

Sustainable tourism: It is a caring tourism, a tourism that is more about "what can we learn and share" than "what do I want?" It is a balanced cycle of conscious concern, curiosity, and respect for everyone, every place, and everything. It is respect and preservation of physical, cultural, and economic worlds. The caring tourist leaves with plans to return to a place they now, in their hearts, call their own; a place where they have newfound friends and "family."

IT MEANS UNTOUCHED AND UNALTERED.

To us, sustainability involves visiting places without leaving behind a carbon footprint. It means leaving everything and every place better than how we found it— in a condition for future generations to enjoy and explore just like we have. It's making purposeful decisions that benefit today and tomorrow in an effort to meet future needs of the environment and all communities. It means we all do our part to **prepare and preserve for the future.**

Sustainability comes with responsibility and effort, but we believe it's well worth it.

"

As a visitor to any location that is not my residential home, it's important that the place be treated with the awe it deserves, left undisturbed when appropriate."

"

Tourism that doesn't alter the colour and make up of the destination and local people..."

Another side of "unaltered" is authenticity. We believe sustainable communities are ones that stay true to their culture and history. This idea even stems from the smallest of details, that when all added together, create an overall, authentic experience. An example of a small detail is using historical typography with symbolic meaning. Walking through a community and seeing this typography used on signage would convey that authenticity much more than a bright neon sign would.

> "
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> The place I am visiting does not exist solely to be visited. People live their lives here, have their customs here. It is my responsibility to respectfully partake in them when available to me and respectfully not partake when it is in poor taste to do so."

It means respect for local cultures and customs.

We connect the idea of sustainability to mindfulness. Usually, sustainability makes us think of how one treats the environment. However, it also applies to how one treats people. It's caring for both physical and cultural environments. When applied to sustainable tourism, this means tourists should respect local cultures and customs, contributing towards an enriching experience that benefits everyone and everything involved.

- Sustainable tourists are polite to locals and don't cause nuisance or trouble. They also don't cause a lot of noise or disrupt the locals' way of life.
- Sustainable tourists are respectful of local customs, even if they differ from their own beliefs or way of life. Ideally, they approach these differences with interest and curiosity.
- Sustainable tourists show consideration for locals and their culture by learning the native languages. Even basic words like "please" and "thank you" show others they care.
- Sustainable tourists always clean up after themselves.

It means taking part in the local economy.

Sustainable tourists are conscientious of where they spend money, and prefer to put it into local economies where it benefits locals most. They prefer local businesses, restaurants, hotels/stays, artists, and more over a commercialized hotel chain or souvenir shop.

> "
>
> Alternative forms of tourism are looking for something from the place we travel. We want to get a memory from a unique area in our house, not magnets and postcards of Santorini from Methana. There are many photographers in the area."

Sustainable tourists aren't the only ones who prioritize local economies. Sustainable communities do, too. Ideally, there are plenty of local options for tourists to choose from, as well as support and partnership among local businesses and municipalities. In addition to partnership, there is strategy. While communities may want to attract more tourism, it is important for tourism to not overwhelm a region and its resources.

●●●

"

First of all, we should give good examples as locals. Everywhere should be clean: our farm, our beaches, do cleanings as volunteers."

●●

It means taking responsibility for our actions, leading by example, and challenging the status quo.

Currently, sustainability is a trend, not the norm.

We believe that in order to make a meaningful shift, we must challenge the status quo and lead by example. For locals this means having an open mind to new partnerships and initiatives. It also means showing pride in their region by working hard to preserve it with care.

Although we have explored various meanings and connections of sustainability, there is no one definition. It is as much a caring, a concern, a sensibility, a commitment as it is a word. It could be something as simple as not washing towels on a daily basis to reduce use of water and other resources – or using less plastic. However, behind those small acts, there is a powerful idea of contributing to the improvement of the human condition.

02. WHY SUSTAINABLE TOURISM MATTERS TO US

It makes us feel good about our contribution and optimistic about the future.

- It's a **growing trend and movement that we support**.

- Sustainability **makes us feel good about our decisions and actions**. It **adds to our sense of purpose** and makes us feel like **we are contributing to the betterment of everyone** and everything.

- It makes us feel like we are **broadening our perspectives and horizons**, thinking and acting beyond ourselves.

* It makes me want to give back to the area I'm visiting.

* It helps ensure a positive experience for local people and tourists.

* It makes us want to return time and time again. The bond we feel with the destination encourages us to return more frequently.

> Longer stays lead to a larger economic base, one that supports greater, more stable job opportunities for people and places, that ultimately, support a robust cycle of tourism. Longer stays also equate to less travel and use of transportation, shorter distances for deliveries and, ultimately, a smaller footprint on this earth.

• As a sustainable tourist, we often research organizations, businesses, and restaurants, looking for ones that are conscientious of sustainability. If it is an important part of their ethos or mission, we feel much more encouraged to support and plan our travel around them. We look for things like: Are they paying fair wages and supporting their employees? Are they integrating sustainable practices into their production? Are they reducing their waste? Are they doing their best to eliminate single-use plastics or provide recyclable options? Are they contributing to the local economy instead of outsourcing or choosing mass-production?

"

I always try to be in the area for at least 7–10 days, and from there, to move around the area. To be stable in one place and to support the surrounding area. If done correctly one can really help the area."

We develop deeper connections with meaningful, sustainable experiences. Ultimately, these connections make us eager to lengthen our stay, return time and time again, and bring our loved ones back with us.

This mindset encourages us to spend more time getting to know an area and its community. We are open to communicating with locals and curious to learn from them.

We are concerned about our footprint on this earth, especially when it comes to waste.

• We know we must reduce our waste and avoid single-use plastics in both our everyday life and travel. (e.g., plastic bags, plastic bottles) In addition to individual tourists, both small and large-scale organizations currently utilize single-use plastics too much, most which cannot be recycled or reused.

• We want to recycle. It is important for local communities to have adequate, accessible recycling options, especially in crowded areas or along the beaches. In addition to accessible waste collection touchpoints, more education on how to properly and effectively recycle will help us take ownership in our part.

• A great way to get involved would be through beach cleaning or garbage pickup in various places that are impacted by overcrowding, pollution from watercraft, or just needing extra preservation efforts.

• It is also important for sustainable communities to properly manage water waste to ensure future generations have adequate drinking water.

03. BARRIERS TO ADOPTING SUSTAINABILITY IN OUR TRAVEL & POTENTIAL AREAS OF OPPORTUNITY

"

I think that it will take a major shift in mindset to achieve, but places like Portugal, that lead the way, almost get it right by styling interactions with many types of locals, utilizing community centers, engaging the elderly and youth, sharing family recipes, music etc. It's not high end or necessarily aesthetically "beautiful" but it resonates long after."

Effective sustainability requires a shift in mindset.

For many, sustainable practices and tourism require a shift in mindset. This shift in mindset must also be paired with committed practice, building everyday changes and decisions around what's best for the community and environment. If done right, all will feel a sense of ownership.

When we look at how to make this shift happen, we must start with the individual. As more and more individuals begin implementing sustainability into their daily lives and travel, more ideals of sustainability will make it into policy and collective thinking.

Sustainability is not the norm, but it should be.

Currently, sustainability is a trend, not yet the normal way of life or travel for all of society. We believe it should be a major goal of tourism moving forward. Our hope is that sustainability becomes a driving factor in everyone's lives.

"

I think it's a great movement and hope it continues to grow."

"

Sustainable tourism is not something I've thought extensively about before. I'm guessing it's low impact traveling, like do as the locals do... no special resorts or attractions."

We, and others, need to know more about sustainable tourism.

Just as sustainable tourism is currently considered a trend, it can also be perceived as hyped-up terminology. This means it is currently ambiguous to a lot of tourists and locals, not yet clearly defined and truly actionable. In addition to defining sustainability, it is important to make resources accessible to more people within communities. This will elevate sustainable tourism from hyped-up terminology to an active way of life.

Accessible resources we wish we had when traveling include:

• Ample options to recycle, such as nearby recycling bins in the most-needed locations

   If there are certain activities offered for us tourists, there should also be collection bins or at least collection bags in those locations.

• Dog litter bags available on the streets of Poros. Seeing these helps us understand what is expected of us so that we can respect the community.

Sustainability can be scary, so we need help finding ways to make it easier to adopt into our travel.

In addition to not knowing a lot about sustainable tourism, some of us feel it would be too difficult to actually put into practice. While we appreciate the principle and goals of sustainable tourism, we worry that integrating it into our actual lifestyles and travel is easier said than done.

Another piece to adopting sustainability into our travel is trusting that the effort we are making to do the right thing, is actually making a difference. We must be totally convinced that recycling is actually taking place, not just dumped with the rest.

"

It sounds like something that is definitely great in principle but would be difficult to be on top of ostensibly: I feel in general that the minutiae of the actions we take every day is hard to ascertain."

Here are some ideas of what may help us find sustainable tourism easier to adopt:

• Seeing hotels, taverns, restaurants, and other organizations do their part to integrate sustainability into their operations helps us stay committed to sustainable tourism throughout our travel. We also tend to favor organizations that practice sustainability over organizations that don't.

• We need more information and education about sustainabile tourism. This education can come in many different forms. It can be hands-on, like learning about sustainable tourism while participating in a beach clean. Or it can be a part of our initial research while trip planning. Currently, there is not a singular or trusted source for information like this. Usually, it's tourist-oriented. What we are really looking for is that unfiltered and open, honest information about a destination's sustainable practices and its people.

"

I participated in a project in the Caribbean where we informed boaters on eco ways of boat life."

• In addition to education, we must lead by example so that others will follow. We must also be understanding that we can't change the system overnight. However, we will not allow the effort to go unacknowledged or allow ourselves to be discouraged when it doesn't change immediately.

Sustainable travel should be more than just a personal choice, it should be promoted and managed by communities.

For more effective change, there should be more rules and regulations in place to prioritize sustainable practices. To be truly effective and respected by all, these regulations are ideally supported and promoted by everyone, from local shops or museums to local governments. For example, the museum in the Poros Library has special declarations about the environment and pollution. Ideally, more people and places should adopt this museum's effort and dedication in promoting sustainability.

"

It's necessary to demystify this and it is important that a nation has its own approach/policies/campaigns and practices are aligned—this will also force or encourage tourists to take pride in their destination."

04. HOW WE WANT TO DO OUR PART

BELOW ARE SOME IDEAS OF HOW WE SEE OURSELVES DOING OUR PART WHEN IT COMES TO SUSTAINABLE TOURISM.

Mindful of transportation practices and carbon footprint

- Cycle instead of using a vehicle to commute around the area
- Utilize public transportation
- Eliminate pollution when visiting by boat
- Use the least amount of air travel
- Walk instead of drive for short distances

**Other ways we want to be sustainable when traveling include:**

- Supporting the local community by buying local products or donating to local organizations

  Avoiding consumption of single-use plastics, like plastic packaging or bottles

  Optimizing our water and electricity use, trying not to use too much

  Recycling and cleaning up after ourselves

  Choosing local art or products over mass-produced souvenirs

  Participating in beach cleans

- Respecting locals and adapting to the culture and characteristics of the environment

- Eat foods local to that region

"

Nature cannot take care of itself any more. We need to protect it. If everybody was picking up garbage, we would have cleaner beaches."

We look for destinations that...

• Have renewable energy options and are conscious of carbon footprint

• Source products locally, like restaurants that cook with food from that region or offers seasonal options

• Prioritize progressive waste management, like recycling, providing locals and tourists with accessible means of recycling, restaurants that avoid excessive food waste

• Offer incentives, like airlines with carbon credits for flights

• Does not overuse single-use products or plastics

• Provides transportation options to help us minimize our carbon footprint, like bikes, electric scooters, electric cabs

• Are walkable, so that we can minimize our travel

• Optimizes electricity use and avoids excess, like limiting excessive laundry in an Airbnb or hotel

• Actively protects its local nature and environment

• Use recycled and recyclable products
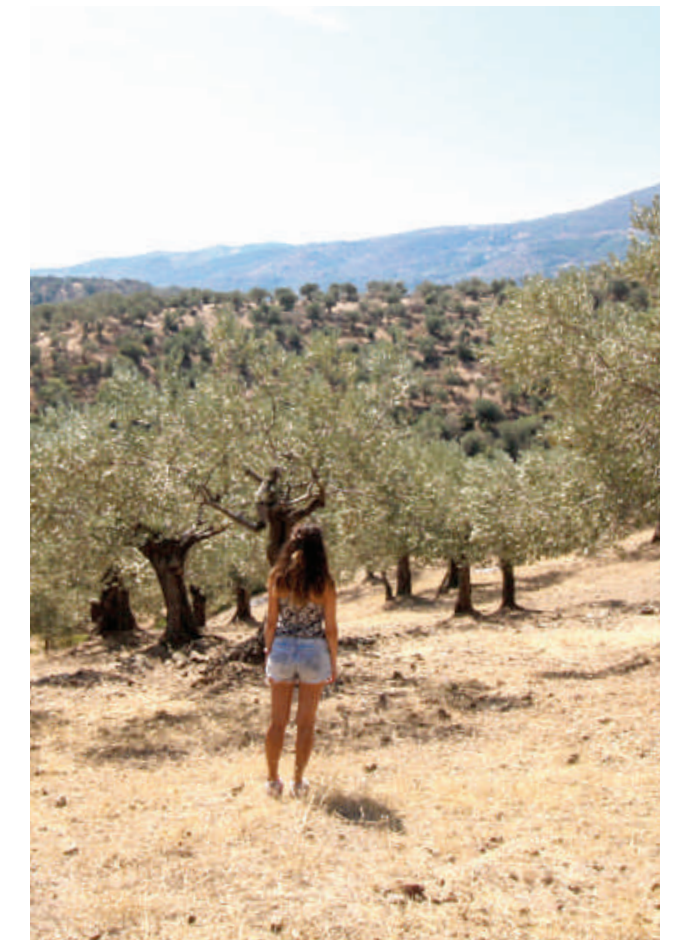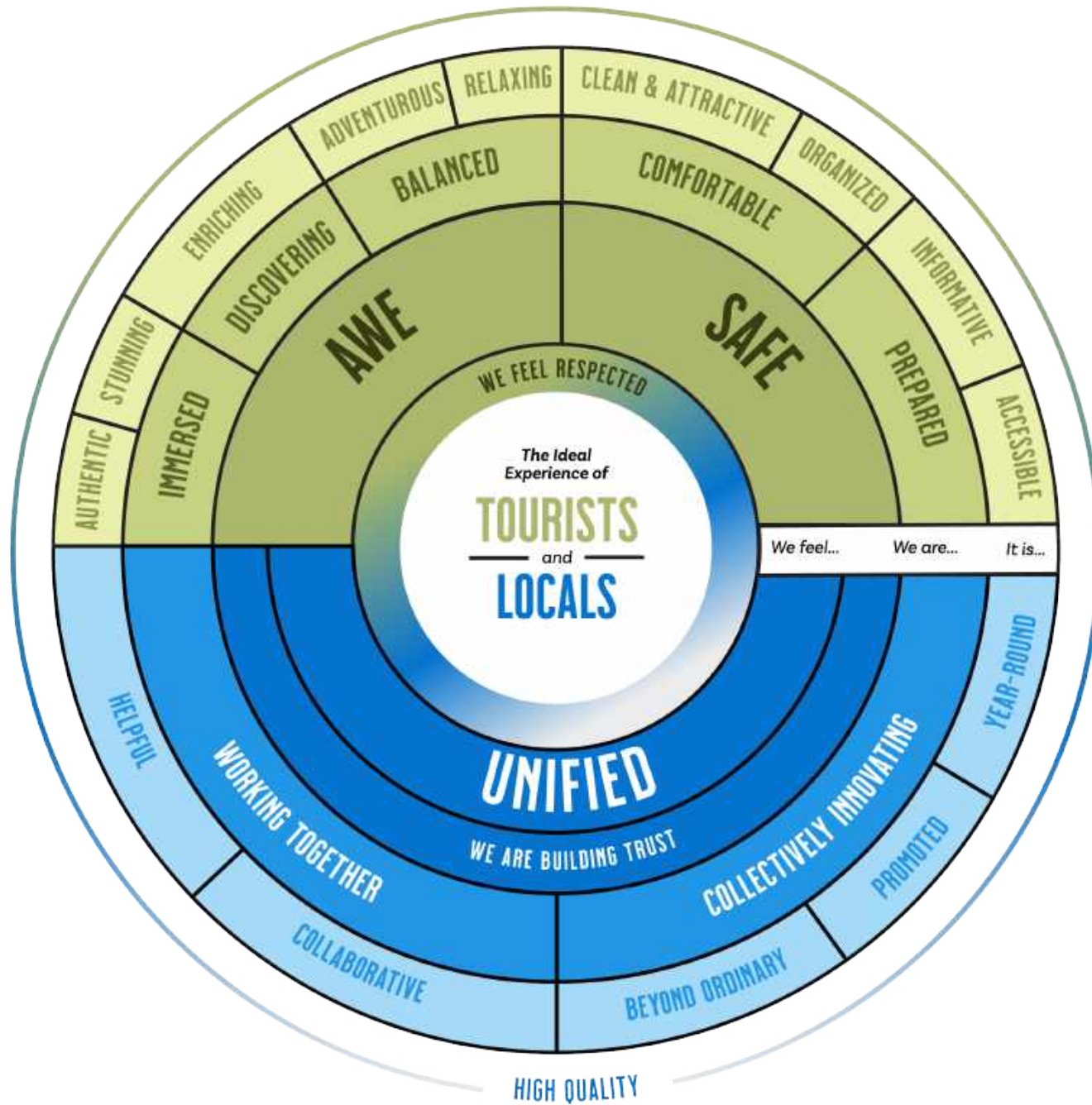
This model outlines the desired experience that tourists and locals want to have when it comes to tourism in Poros and Troizinia-Methana. There are varying levels of the experience, all stemming from their desired emotional experience (**Tourists feeling Awe and Safe**, **Locals feeling Unified**). To understand what the experience must be like in order to deliver those ideal emotions, we can then explore the additional levels and connections.

We feel...
RESPECTED

Our ideal experience is **a symbiotic cycle of respect**—respect for each other, the land, locals, visitors, wildlife, cultures, history, and more. It's an experience that cultivates a "We are in this together" mindset for the desire to preserve the region for future generations to come.

The Ideal
TOURIST EXPERIENCE

We feel...
AWE

Our ideal experience evokes a true feeling of awe. It's made of **memorable moments that are breath-taking and treasured for years to come.** It's like the feeling we get when standing in front of the Grand Canyon, experiencing something that is bigger than ourselves and unlike anything we come across in our day-to-day lives. We leave feeling like **we've opened our minds and horizons and gained new perspectives.**

SAFE

To feel safe, our ideal experience is organized and clean. We may be traveling alone or with friends and family. Either way, we want everyone to feel **safe both mentally and physically.** There is a lot of behind the scenes **effort that we want taken off our plate so that our minds are free to enjoy the beauty** around us and make the most of each day.

We are...
IMMERSED IN LOCAL CULTURE
DISCOVERING NEW THINGS
BALANCED IN ACTIVITY

COMFORTABLE
PREPARED

The Ideal
LOCAL EXPERIENCE

We feel...
UNIFIED

To feel unified, we strive to build support and trust throughout our community. We aim to bring people together to share resources and cultivate a collective voice.

We are...
BUILDING TRUST

Building trust within the community is a big step in feeling unified. Through engagement and education, we strive to cultivate confidence in our community to invest in tourism.

WORKING TOGETHER
COLLECTIVELY INNOVATING

It is...
HIGH-QUALITY

As tourists, we want high-quality experiences that are accommodating to all types of different people, budgets, and needs. As locals, we strive to understand and listen to tourists' needs with a service-oriented mindset and "open-door" attitude.

We feel
RESPECTED

As tourists, we feel respected when locals are...

WELCOMING

As visitors to the region, we are surrounded by a lot of new unknowns. We hope our hosts and the locals will empathize with this and create a welcoming environment.

APPROACHABLE & KIND

Ideally, hosts and locals are approachable. **We can communicate with them**, ask questions, and learn. From engaging with them, we leave feeling like we have learned more and even made friends.

TRUSTWORTHY

We hope for **hassle-free experiences.** To feel safe and respected, we want to know we can trust our hosts and the locals.

As locals, we feel respected when tourists are...

MINDFUL

Even though we are happy to share our land and culture with tourists, it is our home. As tourism grows, it's important to encourage tourists to be mindful of....

OUR HISTORICAL SITES

We enjoy the curiosity tourists bring to our historical sites. We hope they treat sites with care and respect.

OUR LAWS

Ideally, tourists show respect by being mindful of our local laws and customs.

OUR NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

We work hard to care for our natural treasures and expect our visitors to, as well. This means they are **mindful of our land and wildlife.**

"

I think there are two categories of tourism... the one that comes as a mass, that goes to the beach at the hotel and does not care about the environment. The difference is with the 2nd species. He is interested in nature. He is bothered by animal abuse, bags, and garbage. We collect the garbage with bags on the paths because we want to find them clean when we come back."

OUR TRADITIONS

Our region is full of culture and traditions. Our way of life may be different than it is for tourists. Ideally, they embrace these differences with curiosity.

● **I AM A TOURIST.**
● **I AM A LOCAL.**

The Ideal
TOURIST
EXPERIENCE
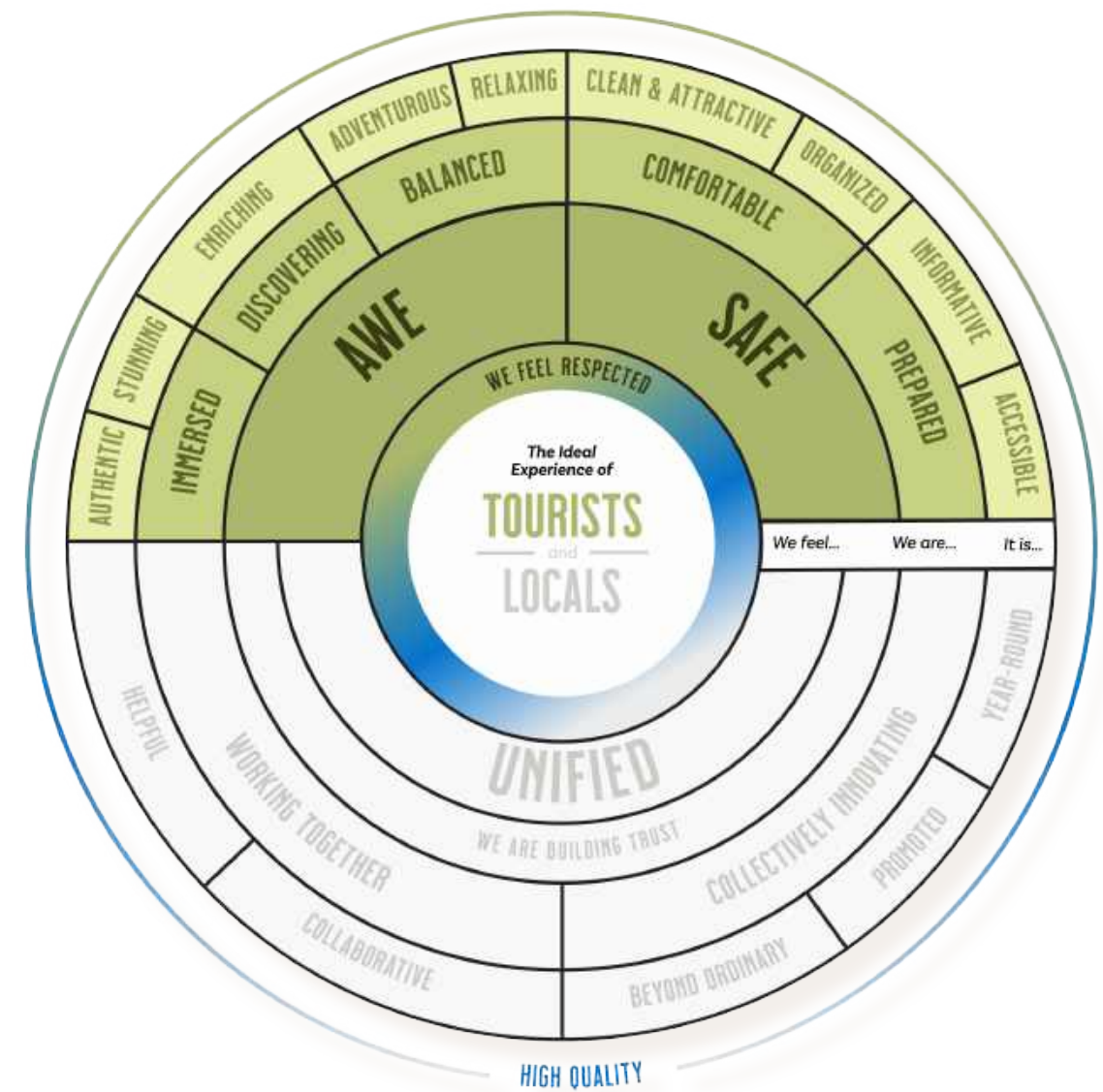
The Ideal Experience of **TOURISTS** *and* **LOCALS**

We feel respected

We feel... We are... It is...

AWE · SAFE · UNIFIED · HIGH QUALITY

We are building trust

Relaxing · Clean & Attractive · Adventurous · Organized · Balanced · Comfortable · Enriching · Informative · Discovering · Prepared · Stunning · Accessible · Authentic · Immersed · Helpful · Year-round · Working Together · Collectively Innovating · Collaborative · Promoted · Beyond Ordinary

We feel
AWE

Our ideal experience evokes a true feeling of awe. It's made of memorable moments that are breath-taking and treasured for years to come. It's like the feeling we get when standing in front of the Grand 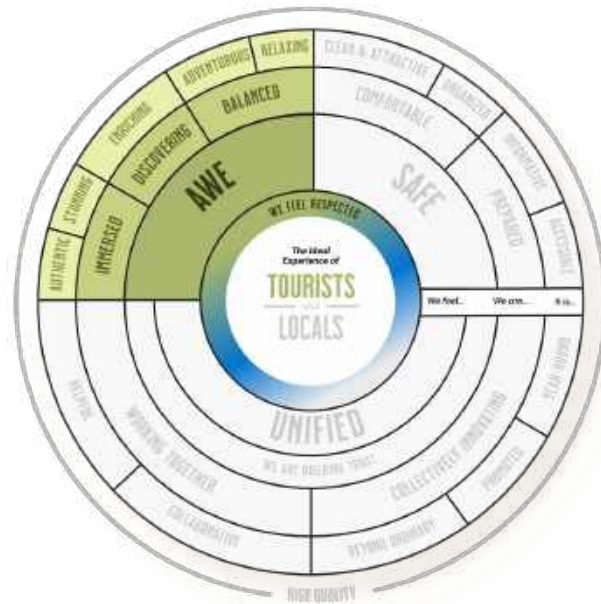Canyon, experiencing something that is bigger than ourselves and unlike anything we come across in our day-to-day lives. We leave feeling like we've opened our minds and horizons and gained new perspectives.

We feel awe when we are...

IMMERSED IN LOCAL CULTURE

We feel awe when we are immersed in local culture. We may have read about the area or have seen it on a travel show, but our ideal experience goes beyond just seeing how the locals live. **We want to live as they do.** This motivates us to stay longer and return often with those we love because, over time, we feel less like the usual visitor and more like an authentic friend to the locals.

We are immersed in local culture when it is...

AUTHENTIC & UNIQUE

We are immersed in local culture when our experience is authentic and unique.

It is off the beaten path and unlike most touristy hot spots, making us feel like curious explorers discovering gems and new stories. Of course we will want to experience the must-see spots in the area, but ideally, we are also able to retreat and get away from the noise.

> **"**
>
> **No matter how many times you visit, it remains unexplored."**

It is locally-owned. Whether it is a local Airbnb, hotel, or business, we are immersed in local culture when we feel like we are supporting it. Traditional, chain-like hotels or businesses can feel too common and elitist.

It is visually-unique and special to the local culture. This means whatever we see during our ideal experience looks authentic and unlike anything we're able to see at home.

It is modest and treasures its timeless charm and history. It is free from extensive development or commercialization. For example, many beaches and tourist sites in the world can lose authenticity when they become overdeveloped.

> **"**
>
> **Greece has not sold its beaches. They are not all highly-developed like the beaches in Spain."**

We are immersed in local culture when it is...

AUTHENTIC & UNIQUE

When it comes to our ideal experience, it is especially important to experience authentic and unique people, architecture, food, and history.

AUTHENTIC & UNIQUE
PEOPLE

My ideal experience is authentic and unique when **it is easy to meet and get to know people**, specifically locals or other tourists from around the world. We are curious about their lives.

It fosters friendships, and **motivates us to form lasting relationships with those we meet.** Our friendships don't end when our trip does. Instead, we look forward to keeping up with our new friends via social media and future visits.

It is evident that **the locals exude pride and love for their culture**, land, and heritage.

AUTHENTIC & UNIQUE
ARCHITECTURE

My ideal experience **highlights its beautiful, special architecture**.

Experiencing **true craftsmanship of past generations** is unique and awe-inspiring.

AUTHENTIC & UNIQUE
HISTORY

It exposes me to authentic history through **unique storytelling and timeless cultural experiences**.

AUTHENTIC & UNIQUE
FOOD

It exposes me to **authentic food that I don't normally get to eat** in my day-to-day life.

Enjoying authentic food **when in the company of great friends** makes us feel immersed in the local culture.

It **offers entire excursions** around experiencing authentic food.

"

Tzatziki without garlic is not Greece."

We are immersed in local culture when it is...

STUNNING

We are immersed in local culture when our experience is visually stunning or packed with historical meaning. We truly feel awe when experiencing natural and historical treasures.

It incorporates beautiful, local nature and scenery, such as the sea, mountains, and volcano.

"

Nature...It is a volcanic island. There is a crack in the earth's crust from which energy is exhaled. Everything that exists is maximized there."

Its historical buildings and architecture are inspiring to see and incredible when imagining the life they have lived. It's awe-inspiring to learn when and why they were built and how they are preserved and utilized today.

We feel awe when we are...

DISCOVERING NEW THINGS

Our ideal experience allows us to discover new things along our journey. We are discovering things about ourselves, other people, other perspectives, and more. This means our experience is truly enriching and awe-inspiring.

We are discovering new things when it is...

ENRICHING

Our ideal experience is enriching, helping us widen our horizons and perspectives. This makes us feel like true explorers. The key here is to truly discover—to see new sights, learn new facts, and taste new things.

It teaches us about the local area and people.

It helps us see sights we've never seen before.

It provides opportunities to taste new foods, spices, or drinks.

Meeting new people is enriching in our ideal experience.

We feel awe when we are...

BALANCED

In our ideal experience, we are balanced when we have choices. We can choose to be adventurous one day and relax the next. Achieving this balance gives us that feeling of awe for our journey since it's so different from our usual day-to-day routines.

We are balanced when it is...

ADVENTUROUS

Our ideal experience is adventurous. When we are able to explore and discover, to enjoy activities, we can achieve a perfectly balanced trip. Ultimately, this contributes to the feeling of awe for the unforgettable experiences and the memories we are making. It is as though we are breaking the routine of our everyday, and getting the most of our days and lives.

There are **opportunities to be active.**

It's like **a break from reality, a faster pace of life** compared to my usual day-to-day life. I have a

chance to live crazy for a few days.

I can **see and do things that are not normally easy to find or access,** making me feel like I'm exploring new worlds.

We are balanced when it is...

RELAXING & PEACEFUL

In addition to being adventurous, our ideal experience allows us to relax and find peace in our surroundings. This helps us enjoy a more authentic cultural experience, less crowds and more relaxing spaces to wind down. Another piece to breaking our usual day-to-day routine is the ability to relax, worry-free. It's another way we are able to make the most of our days.

It's free from large crowds of other people. There's not a lot of hustle and bustle happening, allowing us to really bask in the authentic Greek culture.

Photo by Tree Bench Films

Even though we are tourists, we are **able to live like a local.** The places we visit or activities we do are not overly-commercialized or tourist-feeling. This is our chance to take a break from our own culture and experience another.

> "
> Freedom from bloody cruise ships and the places they love. Of course, Venice and Santrorini are spectacular, wonderful places, but I have no desire to be there with thousands of others."

It is quiet and tranquil.

> "
> I expect these places to be less crowded and have a nicer kind of small-scaled tourism. I try to avoid very touristic places."

We feel
SAFE

To feel safe, our ideal experience is organized and clean. We may be traveling alone or with friends and family. Either way, we want everyone to feel safe both mentally and physically. There is a lot of behind the scenes effort that we hope is taken off our plate so that our minds are free to enjoy the beauty around us and we can make the most of each day.

We feel safe when we are...

COMFORTABLE

Our ideal experience makes us comfortable throughout our journey. When there is organization and cleanliness, we are able to focus on making memories with friends or family. We don't have to worry or stress about having access to information, guides, and clean accommodations.

We are comfortable when it is...

ORGANIZED

To feel safe and be comfortable, our ideal experience is organized. This means we have access to trained and experienced guides during certain activities and clear wayfinding along our journey to minimize extra effort on our part. Organized plans and activities make us feel like we truly experienced it all. We don't want to miss out on a single thing.

We have access to **trained and experienced guides** who can lead us through certain activities, especially if it involves visiting an obscure location like a cave or volcano. Guides should also be knowledgeable in safety, emergency proceedure and first aid.

Large, clear signage and wayfinding is placed along my travel at key locations to ensure I have adequate information and don't have to do too much research on the spot by myself.

"

In Germany, you cannot get lost because everything is in the right place at the right time. As the tourist disembarks, I would like the pier-to-buses-port to have a big sign with information so that I do not waste time. I spent so much money to come, so I don't want to leave with the feeling that I had to do a lot more to catch up."

We are comfortable when it is...

CLEAN & ATTRACTIVE

To feel safe during our ideal experience, our surroundings and accommodations must be clean and attractive. We want to be a part of maintaining the environment's cleanliness and attractiveness and are comfortable doing so when we are provided cleaning tools and have adequate access to waste/recycle bins. Engaging education also motivates us to do our part.

To be comfortable, we expect **beautiful and clean places** with minimal blight. Whether traveling alone or with those we love most, we want to ensure the environment is safe and clean.

We like **being a part of maintaining the environment's cleanliness.** Seeing engaging, educational information about things like recycling and sustainable efforts motivates us.

In addition to our surroundings, it's important to have clean and comfortable accomodations to retreat to and enjoy each day.

**We feel
safe when
we are...**

PREPARED

We feel safe when we are prepared for our journey. Prior to traveling to our destination, we like having the ability to research and book packages of experiences that we will enjoy before, during, and after our holiday.

**We are
prepared
when it is...**

INFORMATIVE

In order to be prepared, our research and sources must be informative, specifically giving us local recommendations, honest reviews, and plenty of options to find what we are looking for.

We like **having options.**

• It's nice being able to book or build our own experience packages before traveling to the region.

• Since we do so much research online, it's helpful and informative when we can access one site with one click and find all of our options for local activities, accommodations, and more.

• Having options makes us feel like we are getting the most out of our experience. It's important to feel fulfilled every day, avoiding boredom.

We're looking for **local recommendations** since it's so important to experience authentic Greek culture.

• We want recommendations for things like the best day trips or places to eat local food. We also look for recommendations on how to be safe in our new surroundings.

• It's nice when recommendations come from locals. This makes us feel like we are closer to experiencing authentic culture.

• Knowing everything there is to know about the location I'm visiting motivates me to stay longer or visit again. I can leave with a feeling I experienced all that I could.

We're also looking for **honest, reliable reviews** when preparing for our travel.

• We usually look on the internet for reviews, especially of hotels we may stay in.

• We like seeing reviews for excursions we are considering booking, like day trips or hikes.

We are prepared when it is...

ACCESSIBLE

We feel safe and are able to be prepared when destinations and information is accessible. This removes a layer of worry and stress that we don't want to have in our ideal experience.

The destinations and activities are accessible.

• It's easy for us to travel while there. With information on transportation methods and costs, we are prepared when it comes to traveling from one place to the next. Whether the best way to travel is by car, boat, or bike— we want to be informed of it.

• Ideally, it's accessible when it's affordable to travel from one place to the next.

• It's nearby other locations, like Athens.

....

"

Athens is extremely close by, and the drive to Poros is beautiful."

....

The digital experience is accessible.

• We want easy access to information, both before traveling to our destination and after arriving.

• Having a variety of information in one place is ideal because we get to it with just a few clicks.
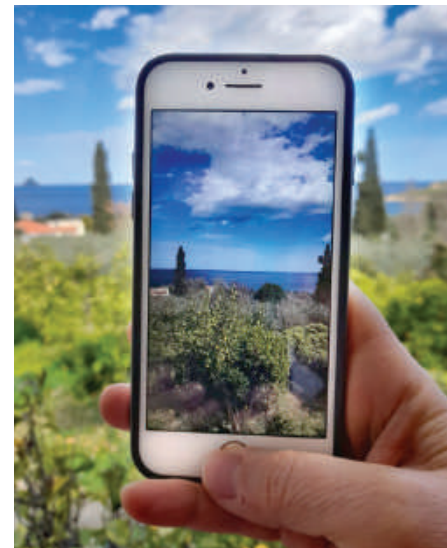
● I AM A TOURIST.
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The Ideal
LOCAL
EXPERIENCE
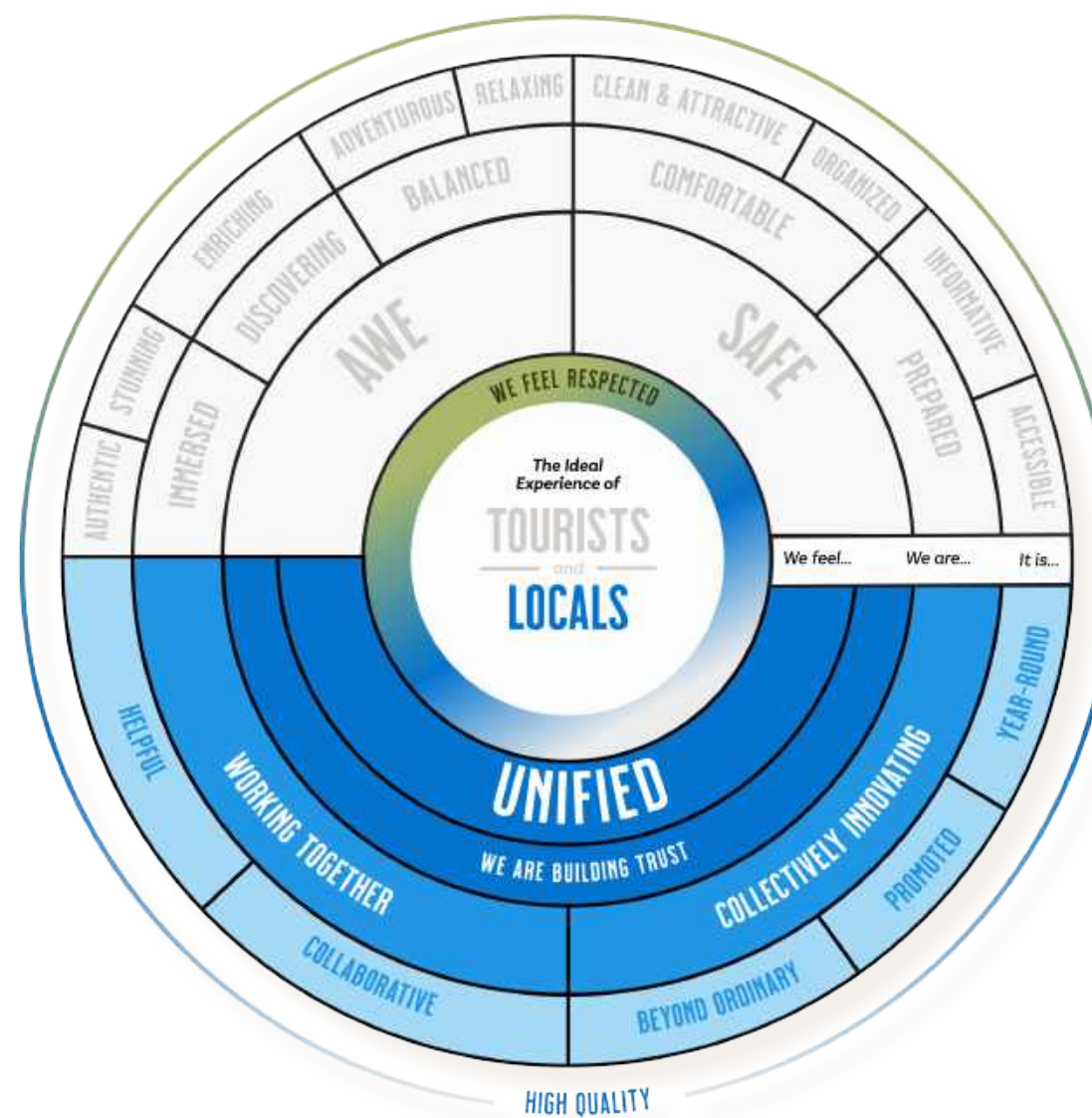
The Ideal
Experience of
TOURISTS
and
LOCALS

WE FEEL RESPECTED

We feel...   We are...   It is...

AWE

STUNNING
IMMERSED
AUTHENTIC
ENRICHING
DISCOVERING
ADVENTUROUS
BALANCED
RELAXING

SAFE

CLEAN & ATTRACTIVE
COMFORTABLE
ORGANIZED
INFORMATIVE
PREPARED
ACCESSIBLE

UNIFIED
WE ARE BUILDING TRUST

HELPFUL
WORKING TOGETHER
COLLABORATIVE
BEYOND ORDINARY
COLLECTIVELY INNOVATING
PROMOTED
YEAR-ROUND

HIGH QUALITY

We feel
UNIFIED

To feel unified, we strive to build support and trust throughout our community.
We aim to bring people together to share resources and cultivate a collective voice. To do this, we aim to build support within the local community, as well as our surrounding local governments.

We feel unified when we are...

BUILDING TRUST

Building trust within the community is a big step in feeling unified. Through engagement and education, we strive to cultivate confidence in our community to invest in tourism.

We are building trust when it is...

EDUCATIONAL

As the information spreads, we hope more locals will become engaged and encouraged to participate.

Detailed plans that educate locals of our goals and capabilities will help build trust in collective effort.

In addition to detailed plans, we must also **convey the bigger picture of what's possible.** A summarizing roadmap of ideas and steps may help them see and appreciate the potential.

Education surrounding innovation and **change-oriented mindsets** would also benefit our community.

> **"**
> It's very important when you do something, that the community is with you, not against you."

We are building trust when we are...

BEYOND ORDINARY TOURISM & COLLECTIVELY INNOVATING

WORKING TOGETHER

We feel unified when we are...

Locals, government municipalities, business owners, and tourists must all work together. Instead of seeing each other as competition, we must benefit from sharing resources instead.

"

There is not enough collaboration between professionals and the local community, either for joint advertising or for ideas that arise. We live on an island where everyone wants to excel, yet there is no mentality for a common path."

We are working together when it is...

HELPFUL

In our ideal experience, our local municipalities take ownership and participate in the development of tourism throughout our region. To gain their support and confidence, we must think about what will **open their minds and encourage a helping hand.**

HELPFUL
LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Ideally, the local government approaches our goal of sustainable tourism with a "How can we help?" mindset, one that makes important steps easier, not more difficult. An example of this would be to consider tax incentives or collaborative forums.

"

Many political decisions about tourism don't support a co-creation approach. Taxes are very high, people are paying too much on accountants, taxes, etc. Governments don't help enough."

HELPFUL
LOCAL COMMUNITY

We must also cultivate a helpful community by building trust between business owners and organizations. We must share resources and knowledge so that the local community will feel more confident investing in tourism.

"

We need more businesses to come together, think together, and act together."

We feel unified when we are...

COLLECTIVELY INNOVATING

To feel united, we must collectively innovate. Innovating with a change-oriented mindset provides the momentum we need to come together and instill confidence in others to join us.

"

Collective effort is important. Coordination of many individuals and practices. We must open our horizons, not just go for easy gains."

We are collectively innovating when it is...

BEYOND ORDINARY TOURISM

We understand tourists are looking for places and experiences that are different from their everyday lives. To do this, we must provide options for diverse types of people with varying interests and expectations. We must also come together to understand our uniqueness compared to other regions in Greece and across the world.

Ultimately, by going beyond ordinary tourism, we strive to attract new visitors and also build friendships that will encourage them to return again.

"

Our hope is that our visitors will return again and again."

BEYOND ORDINARY MEANS IT IS
DIVERSE

To collectively innovate and offer tourism that is beyond ordinary, we must first have a comprehensive understanding of diversity, specifically when it comes to activities we offer and opportunities for the various market segments (age, price, interests) of our visitors. Ultimately, we strive to provide ideal experiences for all, not a one-size-fits-all solution.

DIVERSE
ACTIVITIES

Our ideal experience offers diverse activities for our guests. While we want to offer more innovative experiences, we also don't want to forget to ensure and raise the quality of more common expectations tourists have when traveling, such as the beaches and nightlife.

DIVERSE
AGES

We want our offerings to interest various age groups. We understand their age may impact what they desire or are looking for in their ideal experience.

DIVERSE
PRICE RANGES

We want to show that our region is a place for tourists to enjoy what is unique. We want to offer high-quality experiences across a spectrum of price ranges, like artisan cooking classes at varying price points. Doing this ensures we accommodate those who are looking to splurge and those looking for something simple, moderately-priced.

No matter the price, we strive to never sacrifice quality. Therefore, it is important to understand what quality means to tourists and how we can achieve it at multiple price points.

DIVERSE
PURPOSE OF TRAVEL

Understanding the differing purposes our visitors have when traveling to our region will help us offer thoughtful experiences that meet their needs. *See Categories of Tourism section for more on various purposes of traveling.

"

The upscale target of tourists are more conscious of why they come here. Upscale does not mean wealth, but rather in consciousness and attitude."

We are collectively innovating when it is...

BEYOND ORDINARY TOURISM

BEYOND ORDINARY MEANS IT IS
UNIQUE

To collectively innovate and offer tourism that is beyond ordinary, we want to really understand and promote what makes us unique. We do not want to just copy activities from other places, but instead collectively advocate what sets us apart.

"

We began copying activities from other places, like triathlons, so we are the 50th in a row of islands who do the same thing. Instead, we need unique experiences."

We are collectively innovating when it is...

PROMOTED

To collectively innovate, we must come together and promote ourselves—our stories, lives, history, offerings, products, and more. Creating a collective brand is key in promoting ourselves in a meaningful and powerful way.

"

By being branded, we exist across the world. Otherwise, nobody will know about us."

It is important to build trust across our community that will **make us feel confident and engaged** in a shared voice of our region.

By creating great experiences for visitors and collecting positive feedback, we hope **more locals will be encouraged to invest in advertising the region.**

We also want to **encourage word-of-mouth promotion and sharing on social media.** To do this, we should deliver ideal experiences for tourists, ones they would be proud and eager to share with others.

PROMOTING OUR
STORY, HISTORY, & DAILY LIFE

We can tell our story and history through our collective branding.

We can also promote the famous artists who have visited our region throughout history and today.

We have local products that are rooted in our history and story, as well. Our branding should bring those stories to life and entice visitors to take part in history.

"

Now, we are going to renovate the old mill. It will be like a museum. Their olive oil is the first Greek oil to be awarded internationally in the Paris Expo in 1900. It will be great to bring people to see how it is produced."

We are collectively innovating when it is...

PROMOTED

PROMOTING OUR
OFFERINGS & PRODUCTS

We have a lot to offer when it comes to experiences and products. We must promote this and give prominence to our nature, culture, and quality local products.

One way to promote our offerings and products is through online journalism in forums focused towards certain groups of people with specific interests. For example, we can publish creative writing about our local foods to groups who follow culinary experiences.

"

Christof and Nimi continue journalism on the internet, and they bring people here, taking them on culinary trips. They cook together, making breakfast and more."

We are collectively innovating when it is...

YEAR-ROUND

There is more we can do year-round. To truly thrive, we need to create more tourism outside of the summer months-- during the winter, autumn and spring.

In addition to creating more tourism, we must also **take advantage of the seasons when there is not much tourism.** For example, we can be searching for ways to optimize that time by strategically planning and preparing for upcoming, busy summer months.

During mid-summer months, such as July and August, the region can become very busy. Therefore, in addition to creating year-round tourism, we also want to **ensure our locals and private business owners feel prepared and confident** to sustain the busy mid-summer months.

"

During summer, there is agony on how to sustain businesses. It can be difficult for private businesses. People don't even have time to sleep during July and August. It's easier in early summer or autumn."

It is
HIGH QUALITY

As tourists, we expect high quality experiences that are...

INCLUSIVE & UNIQUE

Our ideal experience is high-quality when it is inclusive of all types of people, budgets, and interests. Also, when it doesn't feel overly commercialized.

ACCOMMODATING TO ALL BUDGETS

Even though we hope for affordable experiences, we don't want to sacrifice on quality. Our ideal experience is inclusive by offering options for all budgets and purposes of travel.

NON-COMMERCIAL EXPERIENCES

Our ideal experience should not feel overly commercialized. Instead, it feels authentic and unique to the region. This means it's not overly crowded or overly-marketed like some over-crowded beaches or destinations are.

As locals, we can deliver high quality experiences by being...

SERVICE-ORIENTED

To deliver high-quality experiences, we want to listen to the needs and desires of our guests. We also want to adapt an "open-door" attitude among locals so that all tourists feel welcome and encouraged to walk into our lives and see how we live and what we have to offer.

SMALLER, INTIMATE GROUPS

By offering experiences in smaller, more intimate groups, we can better ensure quality, safety, and authenticity. In order to offer smaller groups with more frequency, locals must work together on planning and implentation.

A COMBINATION OF EXPERIENCES

By partnering together, we can offer high-quality combinations of experiences. For example, a small group of tourists can combine experiences like olive picking, making fresh olive oil, and making soap from olives. Or tourists can pick local foods to use in a later cooking course.
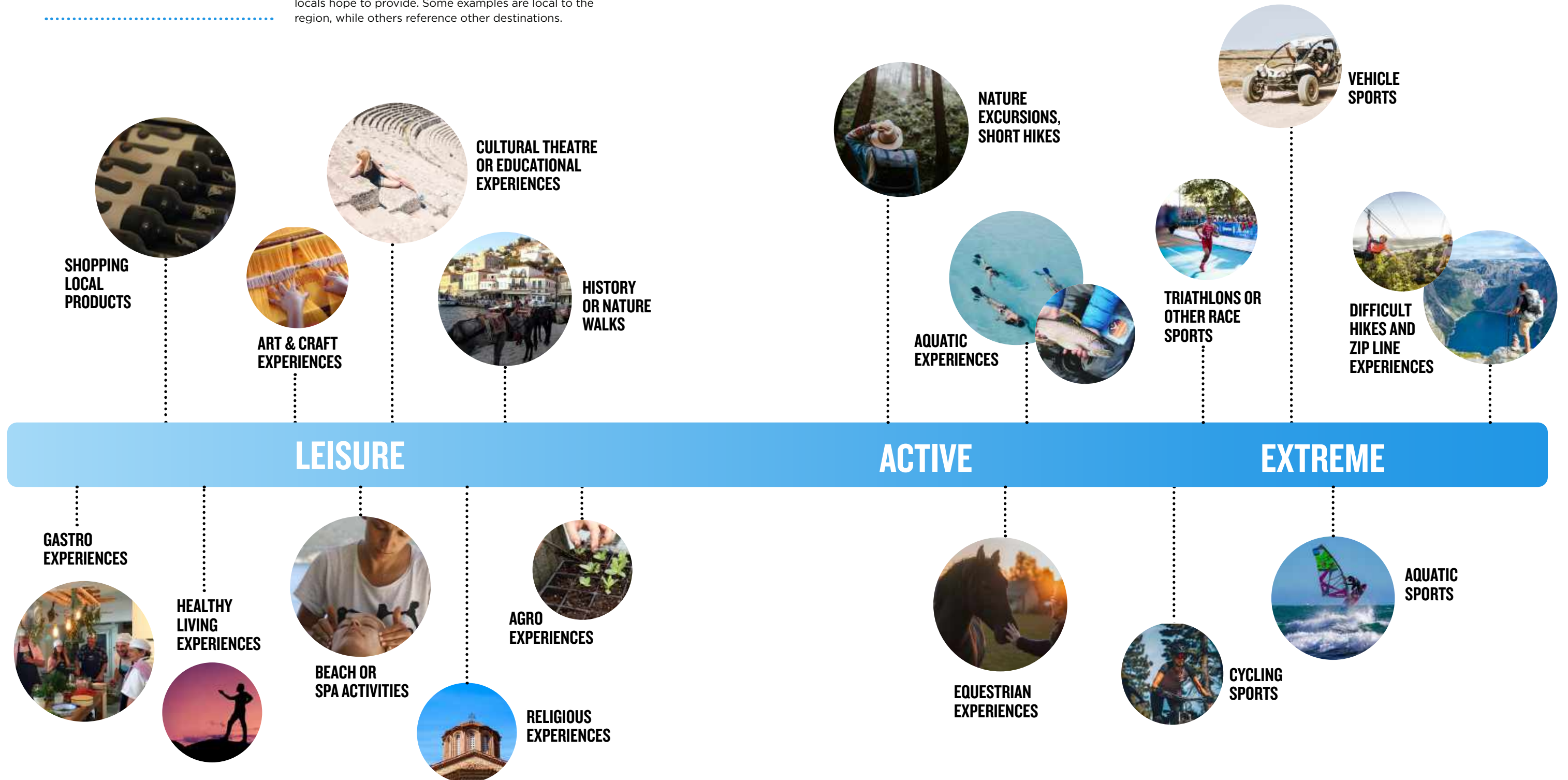
> "
> We try to combine things so that guests have a beautiful experience, with music, wine, and food from local products."

EXPERIENCE BREAKDOWN

WHAT EXPERIENCES AROUND THE WORLD ARE MEANINGFUL TO YOU?

These examples serve as a foundation for understanding the variety in activity tourists hope to experience and locals hope to provide. Some examples are local to the region, while others reference other destinations.

CULTURAL THEATRE OR EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES

NATURE EXCURSIONS, SHORT HIKES

VEHICLE SPORTS

SHOPPING LOCAL PRODUCTS

HISTORY OR NATURE WALKS

ART & CRAFT EXPERIENCES

AQUATIC EXPERIENCES

TRIATHLONS OR OTHER RACE SPORTS

DIFFICULT HIKES AND ZIP LINE EXPERIENCES

LEISURE

ACTIVE

EXTREME

GASTRO EXPERIENCES

HEALTHY LIVING EXPERIENCES

BEACH OR SPA ACTIVITIES

AGRO EXPERIENCES

RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCES

EQUESTRIAN EXPERIENCES

CYCLING SPORTS

AQUATIC SPORTS

LEISURE | **ACTIVE** | **EXTREME**

LEISURE
LOW EXERTION

CULTURAL THEATRE OR EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES

Examples mentioned in research:

• Easy language course

• Learn how to make wine

• Traditional dance lessons, folk costume

• Theater and art performances

• Guided tours of local museums

• A Greek night of an older era

....

"

One idea is to make a Greek night of an older era and to highlight the Greek culture."

....

SHOPPING LOCAL PRODUCTS

Examples mentioned in research:

• Visiting local wineries

• Collecting olives

• Having lemonades from Galatas

• Finding local meats, herbs, and jams

....

"

When I enter a tourist shop wherever it is in Greece and I see magnets with photos or fabrics that are the same everywhere, they do not tell me anything. I want something authentic. The lemonades from Galatas, jams with a label from the area, something with the volcano stone, products with the meat or the herbs that you produce. A specialty, something that only exists in this place."

....

HISTORY OR NATURE WALKS

Examples mentioned in research:

• Nature walks

• Historic walking paths

BEACH OR SPA ACTIVITIES

Examples mentioned in research:

• Visiting Karlovy Vary, natural spring spa town

• Beach yoga

GASTRO EXPERIENCES

COOKING CLASSES

Examples mentioned in research:

• Prepare traditional Greek dishes

• Cooking classes/ lessons

• Collect local products for tasting

• Honey making

....

"

Katerina's cooking classes are very appealing especially because they are more real, not commercial."

....

LEISURE · ACTIVE · EXTREME

LEISURE
LOW EXERTION

ART & CRAFT EXPERIENCES

Examples mentioned in research:

• Weaving

• Felt Making

• Soap Making

• Painting class

"

It's motivation to increase the length of stay: Diversity of doing different, multiple things. To connect nicely with the environment and have things to do, like painting. Peaceful activities that would interact more with the environment."

AGRO EXPERIENCES

Examples mentioned in research:

• Collecting seeds, picking grapes or lemons

• Cultivating soil, Planting local crops, olive trees, or vegetables

• Visiting local farms

"

The visitor has the opportunity to live the experience of nature and farmers in combination with alternative elements, setting up his tent and staying inside the estate."

RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCES

Examples mentioned in research:

• Participation in an Orthodox ceremony

• Visiting well-preserved sanctuary of the ancient diocese

• Visiting Byzantine churches

• Visiting Diavologefiro or Temple of Poseidon

HEALTHY LIVING EXPERIENCES

Examples mentioned in research:
• Tai Chi

• Beach yoga or meditation

• Beach cleans

LEISURE   ACTIVE   EXTREME

ACTIVE
MEDIUM EXERTION

NATURE EXCURSIONS, SHORT HIKES

EQUESTRIAN EXPERIENCES

AQUATIC EXPERIENCES

Examples mentioned in research:

• Underground cave exploration

• Natural tours of special places like Diavologefiro or Methana's volcano, hot springs

• Photographing rare birds

• Photography lessons

• Geological tour

....

"

Eating a sandwich, made by me and local friends on a top of a cliff, after crossing a jungle for hours is an authentic experience.

....

Examples mentioned in research:

• Horse riding

• Visiting local horse farms

Examples mentioned in research:

• Kayaking

• Sailing

• Fishing Trips

• Snorkeling in bat caves

LEISURE   ACTIVE   EXTREME

EXTREME
HIGH EXERTION

VEHICLE SPORTS

Example mentioned in research:

• 4x4 all-terrain vehicle experiences, off-roading

CYCLING SPORTS

Examples mentioned in research:

• Mountain biking

• Road cycling, long distance

• Dirt biking

• Gravel endurance biking

TRIATHLON OR OTHER RACE SPORTS

DIFFICULT HIKES AND ZIP LINE EXPERIENCES

Examples mentioned in research:

• Zip lining in the jungle

• Hiking Devil's Bridge

• Trekking

• Rock Climbing

• Canyoning

AQUATIC SPORTS

Examples mentioned in research:

• Scuba diving

• Wind surfing

• Water skiing

"

Thailand is the go-to dive spot because it's accessible, cheap, and they have large quantities of fish. There's some places where there's been like a reef conversion...artificial reefs made from sinking man-made objects or different scuba diving parks where they'll put all this kind of underwater amusement park."

THANK YOU TO OUR TEAM & PARTNERS!

....

Louis Baker
CEO, Project Resound
Professor, Graphic Design & Visual Experience
and Service Design

Eric Shumate
Professor, Graphic Design & Visual Experience
Creative Lead, Project Resound

Lindsay Courtney
Design Research & Insight Translation
Lextant, The Human Experience Firm
Design Research Lead, Project Resound

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