

VESURT Meeting 6 – Pontevedra, Spain

2014 February 28th to March 3th

Report by Spanish partner

Allariz: a town which was honored by the European Community, authentic paradigm in recovering of traditions and developing of sustainable rural tourism.

During this meeting, we have visited Allariz, a traditional rural town of 5000 inhabitants. This place had suffered a significant depopulation in recent decades. For this reason, the Municipal Government made the decision to transform the town, respecting : architecture, nature, history and traditions. Finally, the town was declared "Exceptional city en Galicia".

Its historic center currently has an excellent condition thanks to the restoration works in homes, businesses and museums. Allariz received the "European Prize for Urban Planning Project".

Under the slogan "*Allariz, a place to live*", the neighbors took the reins of change, through sustainable solutions and friendly with the environment. It also they perform an important outreach and public awareness regarding the care of the natural environment.

Together, Municipal Governance and neighbors, are developing sustainable economic activities that improve the quality of life, using energy saving policies or waste management, coupled with a strong revitalization of the local tourism potential as a hub of economic activity .

The touristic offer in Allariz is varied: its historic center, its river, its ethnographic museum or rehabilitated mills, are some of the many elements of high tourist value that Allariz gives to whoever visit it. The "International Festival of Landscapes" puts its focus on the visual beauty of the environment as a motor of tourism. This festival is establishing itself as an event of national and international scope.

Thanks to the implementation of these initiatives they have got to halt the depopulation , giving rise to a new generation of entrepreneurs and expanding labor supply .

Allariz was declared by UNESCO in 2005, "Biosphere Reserve", which places it among the most attractive tourist destinations in Galicia.

<http://www.allariz.com/>

<http://www.interempresas.net/Jardineria/Articulos/111019-El-Festival-Internacional-de-Jardines-de-Allariz-crea-paisajes-de-ensueno.html>

<http://www.allariz.com/turismo/cs/turismo.asp?op=578&id=585>

<http://www.allariz.com/recursos/folletos/MuseosAllarizCastb.pdf>

Sustainable Green Market

We visited a sustainable market for organic food, crafts, drinks and design objects. As in the old fairs, are the producers who sell their goods. This can significantly reduce the price of products, as intermediaries are avoided.

Organic markets are part of a conception of consumption, more responsible, and allow us access to more fresh and natural foods. They also promote the development of local production and responsible use of natural resources .

Producers respect ecological and sustainable standards, avoiding the use of pesticides and pollutants.

Honey, sweet, organic eggs, chicken, fruits and vegetables, breads, preserves, jams, cheese, craft beer, warehouse products, oils, natural soaps, biodegradable cleaning products , textile products, are some of the many examples of products available in these markets.

It is very interesting also the link established between the vendor and client, allowing a more humane and direct relationship.

Such markets integrate "sustainability" and "production ", helping at the same time, to preserve rural habitats endangered .

<https://www.facebook.com/ECOagricultores/posts/442156562516886>

<http://www.laregion.es/articulo/allariz/mercado-productos-autoctonos-abrira-dia-17/20120303172326193421.html>

Andreas Association – San Salvador dos Penedos. Orense / Assisted therapy with donkeys

We went to meet the "Andrea Association", a clear example of nature conservation and a new way of promoting sustainable development in rural areas. "Andrea" is located in a small village recovered and restored in the heart of the Biosphere Reserve within the area of Allariz, town of Orense, Galicia.

Its members conduct activities through innovative actions on Donkeys Assisted Therapy for disadvantaged groups and families. This is a pioneering project in Spain and aims to improve the quality of life of people with disabilities.

Currently the situation and assessment of the donkey is complex, due to the apparent loss of income as a pack animal. However, "Andreas Association" show us every day that the amazing results achieved through assisted therapy with donkeys .

The actions of this association are valued and recognized as a good social and environmental practices. They are helping to improve the quality of life of many people, while contributing to the protection and conservation of this species, so closely linked to humans.

Another of the many activities that can be performed are: vacationing in their cottages; sharing activities in a group or family; participating in campings; wagon rides; developing of natural soap with donkey milk; sponsoring a donkey, etc.

<http://andreaasociacion.org/>

<http://www.elcorreogallego.es/tendencias/ecg/elaboran-jabones-leche-burra-reserva-biosfera-allariz/idEdicion-2013-12-09/idNoticia-841438/>

Retrieval and dissemination of traditional and ancestral carnival of Maceda. Orense

During the visit to the town of Maceda, we saw the rural show, "Os Felos ", one of the best carnivals in Galicia.

"Os Felos " are typical characters of the old carnival. Its origin has an important historical significance as it is linked to the rebellion of the vassal against the Counts of Maceda.

Both residents and municipal authorities have, for years, a campaign for recovery of this ancient tradition.

Historian James Prol received us, and then we discussed the characteristics of this carnival and the strategies used by the city to attract tourists during this time.

Many people come to Maceda to see the carnival. The festive activities throughout the week make this festival more attractive.

The origin of this carnival dates back to the twelfth century, and is one of the oldest in Spain.

"Os Felos " act alone and nobody can see their faces, they are always hidden behind a wooden mask that shows a wry smile and an animal of the Serra de São Mamede.

They wear black socks with shoes, and carry a cane with which they lift the skirts of women. The costumes are very valuable, can cost up to 3000 € .

"Os Felos " represent anarchic and rebellious spirits. Instill fear to anyone who approaches them, and this is one of their attractions. The Felo is the "authority" during the week of Carnival, so they can break the rules. The mask represents virility.

Is important to highlight the rich cuisine that unfolds around this carnival, which helps boost the local economy.

Many dealers participate in this tour party, thus increasing their income and achieving greater dissemination.

<http://www.concellodemaceda.org/ca/web/index.php?dep=3&mod=inf&idc=16>

http://www.galeon.com/carnaval_ourense/felos.htm

"Furancho" and "Taberna Rural" Ponte Caldelas. Pontevedra

"Eicho de dar queridiña " and "Furancho de Ernesto"

In southern Galicia there is great interest in this type of business, that are located within the house. They are usually located in the cellars, where these small businesses offer products harvesting, all natural and made by the very own families.

The popular "furanchos" are authentic wineries located in the lower parts of the houses, surrounded by barrels and cubs. The decor is completely rustic and with an old fireplace to heat the room .

The overproduction of crops came in Galicia gave birth to these taverns, distinguished by the hospitality of its owners . They are only open during the period required to sell the wine (one to three months).

Currently many of these "furanchos" have become places to go to drink wine and eat for a very acequible price. The most common is to take pork, chicken , vegetables, or eggs. Also they bright up the night singing popular ballads or playing traditional Galician music.

The "furanchos" or "Loureiros" currently have an undeniable attractive and even gourmet . The government of Galicia has designed a new legal regulation for these premises, exempting them from general taxes that they apply to restaurants and bars. The aim is to adapt activities and traditional systems today, but always keeping the principle of sustainability and sale of food products produced and processed in the same family home, promoting, at the same time, the rural entrepreneurship. The hub of all these activities is the respect for the environment, equity and sustainable local development.

The "Tabernas Rurales" are also a great tourist attraction. They offer to their customers products made by themselves. The "Tabernas Rurales" are open all year.

These two forms of sustainable rural business, "Furancho" and "Taberna Rural", share the same attraction for tourists from big cities, offering " Nature", "Traditions " and "Hospitality".

<http://www.defuranchos.com/es/mapa-de-furanchos/>

<http://salirdetapas.blogspot.com.es/2008/11/heicho-de-dar-queridia.html>