



Co-funded by
the European Union



PORTFOLIO OF CASE STUDIES



SUHET

CREATING AND IMPLEMENTING EDUCATION
FOR SUSTAINABLE HIGH-END TOURISM
THROUGHOUT EUROPE

Project Number: 2021-1-FI01-KA220-HED-000031996



Image source: www.yalohotel.com

Case study 1: All-round internship at Yalo Urban Boutique Hotel, Ghent, Belgium

The EhB Hospitality Management student realized her management internship at the Yalo Urban Hotel in Ghent, Belgium for a period of 16 weeks (a total amount of 608 hours). It was an all-round internship. This means that she worked in different departments (bar, meeting & events, reception, restaurant and rooftop bar). The aim here was to start working operationally and in that way get a clear picture of the relations between all these departments. In addition, after a month the student began to include management matters in her job as intern such as going over a P&L and to assist the managers of the involved departments.

Her internship at Yalo Urban Boutique Hotel had provided practical application and context to the theoretical concepts covered in the MOOC.

Practical information from the course on sustainability practices and customer insights have provided her valuable guidance and context during her internship at Yalo Urban Boutique Hotel.

There may have been a need for knowledge in areas such as specific sustainability initiatives and guest relationship management.

The internship gave her a practical application of the concepts discussed in module 1 (Introduction to high-end tourism). It's demonstrating how high-end tourism can be both luxurious and sustainable, while focusing on meeting customer expectations and creating value. What struck her is that

the staff is imbued with the hotel's vision. This starts even at recruitment, but continues through regular refresh training and the emphasis of the hotel's vision during the weekly meetings on how to serve our customers in a super personal way to achieve a maximum customer satisfaction.

According to the student, Yalo Urban Boutique Hotel meets the three pillars of sustainable high-end tourism discussed in module 2. By implementing economic, environmental, and social sustainability practices in daily operations, the hotel strives to provide luxurious experiences while minimizing negative impacts on society and the environment. There are only two hotels that received the Green Globe Certificate in Belgium and Yalo hotel is one of them (as certificate member). The hotel serves a product-minded kitchen with a strong focus on responsible produced ingredients (local, fresh, artisan and where possible organic). The student learnt that even in a luxury environment, you can not only save energy (solar panels on the roof, LED energy-saving lights and sensors and energy card in rooms), or water (the change of towels and bed linen on request or after 3 times, the water taps and showers are water-saving) but also CO₂ (the green roof, the rent of bikes and electric charging possibilities in the parking). An example of the social involvement of the company is to work only with local food and beverage supply who support the same sustainability vision.

During her internship the student was surprised to learn that the hotel paid much attention at supporting the locals. Knowing that Belgium is rather a beer than a wine producing country, in the restaurant and the bar, she had to promote the local wine made with grapes grown in Lochristi, just outside Ghent.

The concepts about customer insights in sustainable high-end tourism covered in module three would likely have influenced various aspects of her daily work within the Yalo Urban Boutique Hotel. She saw that it is important to understand customer preferences to improve the guest experience, but she realized that this is not always evident. A list with those preferences was made daily at the front desk with the preferences.

She noticed that sometimes the customers did not always think in a sustainable way. Then the staff tried to explain them in what way they also can do their bit to a better world using the care products of Grown Alchemist in dispensers free from harmful ingredients, using the environmental friendly paper and ink based on vegetable oils. To discover the city, the staff tries to convince the customers to use the bike or the electric car (offered by the hotel).

The student was not involved in the creation of marketing materials, but she knew the hotel does use various marketing strategies discussed in module 4: the hotel clearly promotes its actions for sustainability on the



hotel website and also occasionally on social media. These marketing initiatives help attract environmentally conscious high-end travellers and differentiate the hotel in the luxury tourism market. On the website the hotel even asks guests to actively contribute ideas on how to become even more eco-friendly.

While the student did not directly participate in operational management decisions, the lessons from module 5 (Operational management of sustainable high-end tourism) have certainly informed her about the context in which Yalo Urban Boutique Hotel operates. By recognizing the importance of performance measurement, innovation, cross-cultural considerations and service strategy, she now can contribute to the day-to-day operations of the company by aligning her actions with its goals and values.

But, in addition to the course, through constant in-service training in the various departments, through the confidence given to the student to check the cooperation with the other departments, to learn how to delegate other trainees, to serve customers, to make them enjoy a WOW-experience (a personal touch or an unexpected service for every client), ... she has learnt to look at the operations in the hotel in an even more diligent way, to work even more accurately with only one aim: to provide top service for the hotel's high-end costumers.



Image source: <https://www.martinshotels.com/>

Case study 2: Meeting & Events at Martin's Château du Lac 5*, Genval, Belgium

This EhB last-year-student did his hospitality management internship at the Martin's Château du Lac hotel, Belgium for a period of 25 weeks and a total amount of 950 hours. The student worked in the Meeting & Events department of this 5* hotel. His internship involved administrative tasks such as preparing banquets, meetings and events from A to Z, including the contacts with clients during the whole process, and on the field he welcomed the guests, did the following up of the events, had to be proactive in dealing with the client needs and requests and ensured regular contact with the clients.

The student confirmed that the online course really helped him to understand sustainability better. He found it easier to tackle assignments on sustainability, and he could contribute more after completing the course. During the courses, the GSTC criteria were discussed. He did not know these criteria before starting the online course. During his internship, he had to adhere to the standard baseline. Thanks to the GSTC guidelines, he had prior knowledge of them.

In reflecting on the course content, he thought its focus was on enhancing sustainability practices. However, he regretted missing out on the segment that delved into measuring sustainability within a company. Throughout his internship, he had come across various methodologies for this purpose. These included assessing carbon footprint, utilizing frameworks like BREEAM, and incorporating certifications such as Green Key.

The student confirmed that he often had seen the discussion in Module 1 on the historical evolution of luxury and its contemporary relevance reflected in his daily activities. It highlighted how luxury, once a symbol of elite status, had been evolved into a more accessible and experiential concept. This evolution corresponded to the hotel's approach to providing luxury experiences, which prioritised understanding diverse customers while maintaining exclusivity and quality. Important here was creating personalised experiences that resonated emotionally with customers and reflected the modern definition of luxury. Experience was as important as materiality. Therefore, he strived to meet the growing demand for personalised luxury experiences.

The student said that in response to this trend, the hotel had launched a new brochure on the hotel website about the team building offers to make the events and clients' stay even more personal and special. This initiative reflected the hotel's commitment to meet the growing demand for personalized luxury experiences.

In a nutshell, the insights from Module 1 gave the student insight into high-end tourism experiences and improved his approach to them.

The student showed the hotel's brochure of all the teambuilding experiences to give an extra dimension to the companies' meetings and to motivate their staff.

(<https://hapi.mmcreation.com/hapidam/4574ddde-c586-461f-846e-a162fbd57e0b/MCDL-TEAM-BUILDING-2024%20EN.pdf>)

Module 2 outlined the three pillars of sustainable high-end tourism: economic, social, and environmental sustainability. These pillars reflected the need to balance economic profitability, social justice, and environmental conservation in tourism activities. In the student's daily operations, he had observed the direct relevance of these pillars to practices and experiences within the company.


The student confirmed that the Meeting & Events department at the Martin's Château du Lac 5* hotel paid special attention to sustainability, offering the companies an eco-friendly way of having their events and meetings.



CHOOSE ECO-EFFICIENCY
Carbon Zero, Eco-Bon and Environmental
Management System: 3 added-values for your
event and the image of your company.
martinshotels.com

([https://hapi.mmcreation.com/hapidam/2d4dae51-6b2b-4fdd-b799-24bb189dd327/Martin's Chateau du Lac -- Spring Summer 2024.pdf](https://hapi.mmcreation.com/hapidam/2d4dae51-6b2b-4fdd-b799-24bb189dd327/Martin's%20Chateau%20du%20Lac%20--%20Spring%20Summer%202024.pdf))

Besides this initiative, the hotel tried to sensitize the clients as much as possible. The student was surprised to learn that within the big choice of in and outdoor teambuilding activities, the clients could even choose some

special eco-friendly activities, indicated with the logo  such as Toy Factory and Wind Farm. More explanation can be found in the brochure.

An important aspect of **economic sustainability** was boosting local prosperity through the hotel's collaboration with local businesses. The student confirmed that the Martin's Hotels chain was a good example of embracing the circular economy. In fact, their sustainable practices had already earned them several certificates and awards. They prioritised local, natural, recycled/recyclable and seasonal products, encouraged suppliers to comply with their Code of Conduct and minimised the amount of waste in their hotels. The waste they inevitably generated as a hotel company, they recycled as much as possible.

The student learned also **that Social sustainability** revolved around upholding human rights, fostering equal opportunities, and supporting local communities. A prime example of this was evident at Martin's hotels, where factors like skin colour, ethnicity, wealth, gender, or sexuality were not considered barriers.

The teambuilding activity 'Solar Buddy' was a perfect example of Social commitment. Have a look at the teambuilding brochure, p. 16. ([https://hapi.mmcreation.com/hapidam/4574ddde-c586-461f-846e-a162fbd57e0b/MCDL-TEAM-BUILDING-2024%20 EN.pdf](https://hapi.mmcreation.com/hapidam/4574ddde-c586-461f-846e-a162fbd57e0b/MCDL-TEAM-BUILDING-2024%20EN.pdf))

Environmental sustainability focused on conserving natural resources, minimizing pollution, and preserving biodiversity. During his internship, the student could see that the Martin's hotels integrated environmental management practices into the daily operations, such as waste recycling, energy efficiency measures, sustainable water use, and responsible management of natural areas. All the electricity that the hotel bought, had the green label, ensuring that it contributed to a greener environment. Other examples were the use of only glass water bottles during the meetings. If something disposable had to be used, it should be made of paper, cardboard which was easy to recycle. In every meeting room you could find special bins to sort immediately the waste.

The student admitted that food waste was another big problem in the hotel industry. At this hotel, the leftover meals and/or buffets were given to staff members so that it didn't have to be thrown away.

Recently, the plastic room cards had been replaced by sustainable wooden room cards.

Nevertheless, a lot of paper was still used and thrown away. There had been a lot of talk about reducing this and doing a lot more digitally, but it all would need a change of mind of every staff member. The student could conclude that there was still very much work to do in the hospitality sector to become more sustainable. It is still one of the most polluting sectors in the world.

Module 3 discusses the **Customer insights in sustainable high-end tourism**

The student believed that the MOOC modules often focused on luxury, but his internship experience had taught him that luxury was not only defined by the hotel's star rating. It was also about creating memorable experiences and responding to guests' needs. At the hotel where he had done his internship, they prioritised guest satisfaction through various strategies. For example, Martin's Château du Lac had a special Experience department. This department constantly received all kinds of information about customers' special preferences and wishes from the other departments such as front office, bar and restaurant, meetings and events, housekeeping, They also entered guest profiles into the Property Management System (PMS). In this way, they could ensure that the future stay for returning customers would be even more special and memorable.

The hotel also constantly reviewed feedback from various travel platforms (TPIs) to keep abreast of guests' experiences. By analysing feedback from platforms like Expedia, booking.com, and the hotel's website, they gained insight into guests' preferences. This allowed the hotel to creatively ensure that every stay was exceptional and unforgettable.

During the internship, marketing (Module 4) was not the student's responsibility because the hotel had a marketing department. However, sustainability was always on the staff's minds. They were constantly brainstorming ways to communicate their sustainability efforts to the guests. The hotel website told visitors about its sustainability practices. Moreover, whenever new sustainability initiatives were implemented, they were explained in a newsletter.

The hotel had a green key. This label was obviously used by marketing (mentioned on the website) to show its sustainability.

Operational management of sustainable high-end tourism (Module 5)

The key question of this module was : "How can we effectively measure and enforce quality standards in the hospitality industry?". Given the intangible nature of the products, employee involvement was extremely important. Therefore, every staff member was given the opportunity to attend 3 times a year a special out-service training.

The student confirmed that after the check-in of the guest and during his stay, the staff members always had to recognise him/her and address him/her by or family name (or with sir/madam) each time when meeting in the hotel.

Each staff member had a mobile phone to constantly exchange information with each other about possible problems and or customer requirements.

In addition, significant investment in technology and a commitment to continuous innovation management were extremely important. Balancing these elements within the company posed a great challenge.

Martin's hotels highly valued guests' feedback and reviews on platforms such as booking.com and Expedia. Every negative comment was taken seriously and the hotel tried to proactively rectify or resolve (potential) problems as quickly as possible. Regular market research included visiting competing hotels to compare the hotel's performance and identify areas for improvement. Despite the resistance to change, the Martin's Château du Lac hotel recognised its necessity to remain competitive and provide an exceptional customer experience.



Image Source: www.cucumbi.com

Case Study 3: Integrating Sustainable High-End Tourism Practices: A Case Study of an Internship at Cucumbi Farm

During an internship at Cucumbi Farm, a local accommodation in the Alentejo region (Portugal), the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona's student was immersed in various departments during three months. This cross-training experience provided a unique perspective on the practical applications of sustainable high-end tourism, as outlined in the MOOC on Sustainable High-End Tourism.

One of the most significant revelations for the intern was the modern evolution of luxury. The MOOC emphasized that contemporary luxury is less about owning rare items and more about offering personalized, emotional experiences. At Cucumbi, this shift was evident in daily operations. Personalized service was paramount, with staff meticulously trained to understand and cater to guests' individual needs. This included customized itineraries, private yoga sessions, and cooking classes with locally sourced ingredients. The emphasis on human interaction and continuous staff training greatly enhanced guest satisfaction, reinforcing the course's teachings on the importance of personalized service in high-end tourism.

Sustainability was another critical aspect of the intern's learning. Cucumbi Farm seamlessly integrated sustainable practices into its operations, providing practical examples of the three pillars of sustainable high-end

tourism: economic, social, and environmental sustainability. Economically, the farm supported local businesses by sourcing goods and services locally, creating jobs, and reinvesting income into the community. Socially, it upheld fair labor practices and engaged the local community, ensuring that the benefits of tourism were widely shared. Environmentally, Cucumbi employed organic farming, waste reduction strategies, and renewable energy sources, demonstrating a strong commitment to reducing its ecological footprint.

The intern observed practical applications of these sustainable practices in daily operations. For instance, the farm's pool water was climatized using heat from the air conditioning system, showcasing an innovative approach to energy conservation. Guests were engaged in sustainability through activities like composting and organic gardening, which not only educated them about sustainable practices but also involved them in the farm's eco-friendly initiatives.

Understanding customer insights was crucial in tailoring experiences to meet their expectations. Cucumbi meticulously collected and analyzed customer data, enabling them to offer highly personalized experiences. This ranged from customized farm tours and private dining experiences to tailored wellness programs. The farm's commitment to authenticity and sustainability resonated deeply with guests, many of whom valued these aspects and became loyal advocates, highlighting the importance of building strong customer relationships based on understanding and meeting their needs.

Marketing strategies at Cucumbi were aligned with sustainable principles. The farm's products, such as eco-friendly accommodations and organic produce, were designed with sustainability at the forefront. Their pricing strategy reflected the premium quality and sustainability of their offerings, attracting customers willing to invest in high-end, eco-conscious experiences. Marketing efforts emphasized the farm's commitment to sustainability, using storytelling, visual content, and interactive social media to engage and educate the public.

Operational management at Cucumbi focused on maintaining high standards of service quality and efficiency. Standard operating procedures ensured consistency in service delivery, while customer feedback was actively sought and used to drive continuous improvement. The integration of local culture and traditions into the guest experience added a unique, authentic dimension to their stay. Innovation was embraced through the adoption of eco-friendly technologies, and employee satisfaction was prioritized, recognizing that a motivated team is essential for delivering exceptional guest experiences.



In conclusion, the internship at Cucumbi Farm provided invaluable insights into the practical implementation of sustainable high-end tourism principles. The blend of personalized service, sustainable practices, customer insights, effective marketing, and operational excellence illustrated how these concepts are not just theoretical but essential for creating memorable, luxurious, and sustainable tourism experiences. This hands-on experience solidified the intern's understanding of the MOOC content, demonstrating its relevance and applicability in the real world.



Image Source: www.melia.com

Case Study 4: Embracing Luxury and Sustainability: A Student's Journey Through High-End Tourism at ME Barcelona

This case study is based on the experience of a student from Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona who completed a three-month internship at ME Barcelona, a prestigious 5-star hotel under the Melia International Hotel chain. Positioned near Plaça de Catalunya, ME Barcelona epitomizes the blend of luxury and sustainability, a focus that became the crux of the student's practical learning experience.

During the internship, the student was immersed in the dynamic environments of two key departments: Reception and Guest Experience Line. In the Reception department, the student managed essential operations such as check-ins and check-outs, addressed client inquiries, and coordinated seamlessly with other departments. Meanwhile, the Guest Experience department, dedicated to crafting unique and memorable guest experiences, offered a deeper insight into the nuances of high-end tourism.

The internship significantly reshaped the student's perspective on the content of the MOOC on Sustainable High-End Tourism. Initially perceived as a general overview, the course's concepts took on a new dimension of specificity and depth through practical application. The student realized

that high-end tourism demands a profound understanding of creating unique and unforgettable experiences, far beyond mere luxury amenities.

One of the most pivotal lessons from the course was the new luxury concept, which emphasizes personalized and unique experiences. This idea was vividly brought to life at ME Barcelona, where guests, particularly from the USA and Europe, sought distinctive experiences that went beyond the standard tourist itinerary. They desired to discover Barcelona in a special way, looking for exceptional restaurants and hidden gems rather than just famous landmarks. In contrast, guests from Dubai or India often preferred the opulence of luxurious rooms and exquisite breakfasts, highlighting the varied expectations based on cultural backgrounds.

Sustainability, a cornerstone of the MOOC, was exemplified in the hotel's operations. ME Barcelona implemented numerous eco-friendly practices, such as using the heat from air conditioning to climatize the pool and installing solar panels. The hotel also embraced social inclusivity, proudly positioning itself as queer-friendly. These practices demonstrated a commitment to balancing economic, environmental, and social development, aligning with the three pillars of sustainable high-end tourism.

The importance of understanding customer insights was another key lesson from the course. At ME Barcelona, this translated into creating a distinct and memorable ambiance. The hotel used a signature scent to evoke lasting memories for guests and provided special amenities to VIP clients, ensuring their stay was marked by luxury and personal attention.

Marketing strategies played a crucial role in the hotel's success, reflecting principles from the course. ME Barcelona leveraged its prime location, social media presence, influencer collaborations, and eco-friendly reputation to attract a diverse clientele. Events such as yoga sessions and a strong online presence further enhanced the hotel's appeal, while collaborations with brands like AMEX added to its prestige.

Operational management in the hotel was marked by a continuous drive for improvement. The hotel emphasized the standardization of services and regularly gathered feedback from both clients and employees. Technological advancements, such as using tablets for check-ins and smart room controls, were integrated to enhance the guest experience without compromising the luxury feel. The hotel also catered to cultural preferences, ensuring inclusivity by adjusting amenities to the clients' profile, and offering extensive vegan options.

In conclusion, the internship at ME Barcelona provided the student with a profound and practical understanding of the principles of sustainable high-end tourism. The experience bridged the gap between theoretical knowledge and real-world application, illustrating the complexity of luxury

tourism, the importance of personalized guest experiences, and the implementation of sustainable practices. This immersive journey not only enriched the student's learning but also underscored the evolving landscape of high-end tourism in today's world.



Image source: [SantaPark Rovaniemi - Discovering Finland](#)

Case Study 5: SUHET and Santa Park, an internship opportunity with luxury and sustainability.

A case study developed by LUAS student Aneeq

Aneeq, a student at Lapland University of Applied Sciences embarked on an enriching journey that seamlessly integrated theoretical knowledge gained from the High-End Sustainable Tourism MOOC, with a practical experience during his internship.

At Santa Park Rovaniemi in Lapland, Finland, Aneeq joined the Hospitality & Guest Services department, adopting the persona of an Elf. Over the course of 80 hours, he delved into the intricacies of luxury travel and guest services.

Aneeq's time at Santa Park profoundly influenced his perspective on luxury sustainable travel. By actively participating in eco-friendly initiatives and community engagement, he learned to incorporate sustainable practices into guest services. Notably, Aneeq championed the use of eco-friendly materials for decorations and orchestrated charity events to support local education efforts.

Drawing from Module 1's teachings, Aneeq focused on delivering authentic Lapland experiences, prioritizing environmental responsibility, supporting the local community, and ensuring a customer-centric approach. He facilitated genuine encounters such as meetings with Santa and cave

explorations, while also promoting eco-friendly practices and collaborating with local artisans.

In Module 2, Aneeq gained insights into the economic, social, and environmental pillars of sustainable tourism. At Santa Park, he witnessed first-hand the company's commitment to local employment, fair working conditions, and environmental conservation through waste management and sustainable energy practices.

Aneeq adeptly applied Module 3's principles by gathering customer feedback to tailor experiences, thereby enhancing guest satisfaction and aligning services with their preferences.

Utilizing his language skills and digital marketing tools, Aneeq implemented sustainable marketing strategies to communicate Santa Park's eco-friendly practices and engage guests through social media platforms.

Aneeq's understanding of operational management from Module 5 enabled him to develop service concepts, optimize processes, and foster innovation to ensure Santa Park's continuous improvement.

Aneeq's synthesis of theoretical knowledge with practical experience at Santa Park Rovaniemi exemplifies the application of sustainable high-end tourism principles. By prioritizing authenticity, environmental responsibility, and customer satisfaction, Aneeq contributes to creating memorable and sustainable experiences for guests while supporting local communities and preserving cultural heritage. Through his dedication to continuous improvement and innovation, Aneeq ensures that Santa Park remains at the forefront of the luxury travel industry, delivering exceptional value to all stakeholders.



Image source: [SantaPark Rovaniemi - Discovering Finland](#)

Case Study 6: SUHET offers insight that increases the value of on the job training and internships.

A case study developed by LUAS student.

Prapassorn, a student from Lapland completed an internship at SantaPark in Rovaniemi, Finland, a Christmas theme park known as the home cavern of Santa Claus. She worked in the Customer Services department as an Elf for 80 hours from November to December 2023.

Before her internship, Prapassorn had little knowledge of "Sustainable High-End Tourism." However, studying this course through a MOOC was transformative. The engaging content and innovative teaching methods motivated her to complete the course quickly. The concurrent timing of her internship allowed her to observe and apply sustainable management practices in real-time, enhancing her learning experience.

The internship provided direct applications of several course concepts, including the history and significance of sustainable high-end tourism, the three pillars of sustainability, customer insights, marketing, and operational management. However, she felt a deeper understanding of green branding versus greenwashing would have been beneficial.

The course emphasized that luxury is about creating unique, memorable experiences. At SantaPark, this philosophy was evident in daily operations, where the goal was to make guests feel welcome and ensure unforgettable experiences. Special packages like the VEP (Very Elfish Person) ensured guests felt valued.

SantaPark's operations mirrored the three pillars of sustainable high-end tourism. Environmentally, the park promoted sustainable transportation, carpooling, and electric vehicle charging stations. Waste management focused on recycling and conservation. Socially, the park treated employees as family, ensured fair pay, and created a multicultural work environment. Accessibility was prioritized for guests with disabilities, and facilities like lost and found services were maintained. Economically, SantaPark supported local employment and collaborated with local businesses and suppliers, bolstering the local economy.

Understanding guests' needs and desires allowed SantaPark to tailor experiences that met their expectations, leading to positive feedback and repeat visits. Effective international communication and IT tools were crucial for marketing, allowing guests to access information, purchase tickets, and provide feedback easily.

Operational management principles from the course were directly applicable to SantaPark's daily functioning. Thorough training sessions prepared employees for various situations, ensuring a joyful and memorable atmosphere for guests. Continuous feedback collection helped maintain high service standards, and online marketing was vital in reaching and engaging with customers.

Prapassorn's experience at SantaPark highlighted the practical application of sustainable high-end tourism principles, demonstrating how sustainability, customer satisfaction, and operational excellence can coexist in the luxury travel industry.



Image by [StartupStockPhotos](#) from [Pixabay](#)

Case Study 7: Navigating Luxury Tourism Operations: Insights from an Intern at Happy tours DMC

In a transformative journey from theory to practice, a student transitioned from theoretical knowledge gained through the Sustainable High-End Tourism course to practical application during an internship at a Happy Tours DMC. Working within the Overseas department, the student navigated the intricacies of luxury tourism, seeking to align industry realities with sustainable practices.

The student's internship spanned five months, with a focus on the Boutique Slovenia project for the initial three months, followed by operational responsibilities for groups in the subsequent two months. Despite encountering challenges, the internship provided invaluable insights into the dynamics of luxury tourism operations. The internship experience broadened the student's understanding of luxury tourism beyond theoretical constructs. While the MOOC laid a strong foundation, practical exposure highlighted nuances and complexities inherent in catering to diverse customer segments, particularly those seeking bespoke travel experiences.

Drawing from course concepts, the student identified opportunities to enhance customer experiences through personalized touches and unique offerings. Examples such as surprise destination tours for American guests and tailored itineraries for French travellers underscored the importance of

aligning theoretical knowledge with practical application. Reflecting on the internship, the student acknowledged the comprehensive coverage of the course content. However, there was recognition of the need for greater emphasis on crisis management, particularly in the context of luxury tourism, where expectations are high, and experiences are meticulously curated.

The student's experiences mirrored the principles of sustainable high-end tourism outlined in Module 2, albeit with operational constraints. While striving to promote sustainability, operational realities often necessitated compromises, highlighting the need for a balanced approach to meet both guest expectations and sustainability goals. Module 3's focus on understanding customer preferences resonated with the student's daily interactions with guests. The diverse needs and expectations of luxury travellers reinforced the importance of personalized service and attention to detail in delivering exceptional experiences. The student's involvement in developing marketing materials, such as the Boutique Slovenia brochure, exemplified the practical application of Module 4's principles. The brochure served as a strategic tool to showcase luxury offerings in Slovenia, contributing to the promotion of sustainable high-end tourism.

While aspiring to prioritize sustainability in operations, the student recognized the need to strike a balance between business viability and sustainability objectives. Looking ahead, the student envisaged a future where sustainability would be central to the company's ethos, driving efforts to attract luxury guests while fostering environmental stewardship.

The internship journey exemplifies the dynamic interplay between theoretical knowledge and practical application in the realm of luxury tourism. Despite encountering challenges and constraints, the student's experiences underscore the potential for aligning industry practices with sustainable principles to deliver unparalleled guest experiences. Through reflection and adaptation, the student emerges not only as a conscientious practitioner but also as a champion for sustainability in the ever-evolving landscape of luxury tourism.



Image by [ivabalk](#) from [Pixabay](#)

Case Study 8: Harmonizing Theory and Practice in Sustainable High-End Tourism – Case study Tourism Bohinj

Embarking on the Sustainable High-End Tourism course marked the beginning of a transformative journey for a student. This course, crafted through collaboration within an Erasmus+ project spanning European institutions, offered a comprehensive exploration of high-end tourism and its symbiotic relationship with sustainability. However, it was the student's internship at Tourism Bohinj, Slovenia, that provided tangible insights into the application of sustainable principles within the industry.

Nestled amidst the breathtaking vistas and pristine landscapes of Bohinj, Slovenia, Tourism Bohinj emerges as a beacon of luxury and sustainability in the realm of high-end tourism. Throughout a 400-hour internship at this prestigious destination, the student found themselves immersed in the epitome of luxury hospitality, where sustainability seamlessly intertwines with opulence.

Within the confines of Tourism Bohinj, the student discerned a profound dedication to sustainable principles that transcended mere environmental consciousness; it became a hallmark of luxury. From the meticulously curated experiences to the lavish accommodations, every facet of the guest experience was imbued with a commitment to sustainability. The student's duties encompassed a spectrum of tasks, from providing

concierge services that catered to the discerning tastes of high-end clientele to orchestrating exclusive events against the backdrop of Bohinj's majestic scenery. Each interaction underscored the company's unwavering dedication to not only meet but exceed the expectations of luxury travellers while treading lightly on the environment. Amidst this atmosphere of refined luxury, the student marvelled at the culinary ethos adopted by Tourism Bohinj. Here, gastronomy transcended mere sustenance; it became an art form that celebrated the rich tapestry of Slovenian cuisine while championing sustainability. Locally sourced, seasonal ingredients took centre stage, tantalizing the taste buds of guests and fostering a deeper connection to the region's cultural heritage.

Moreover, the student encountered innovative initiatives aimed at elevating the guest experience while minimizing environmental impact. The Julian Alps: Bohinj card, a hallmark of exclusivity, not only granted access to a plethora of premium amenities but also promoted sustainable practices such as complimentary public transport, further enhancing the allure of Bohinj as a luxury destination. As the student transitioned from intern to employee, they carried forth invaluable insights garnered from their experiential learning journey. Armed with a nuanced understanding of luxury hospitality and sustainability, they are poised to become trailblazers in the realm of high-end tourism, shaping a future where luxury and sustainability are not mutually exclusive but intrinsically intertwined.

This case study epitomizes the transformative potential of bridging theory with practice in sustainable high-end tourism. The student's journey underscores the pivotal role of experiential learning in shaping conscientious tourism professionals. As Tourism Bohinj continues to set the standard for luxury hospitality, it serves as a beacon of inspiration for destinations worldwide, proving that indulgence and sustainability can coexist harmoniously in the realm of high-end tourism.

Project Partnership:

LAPIN AMK⁷
Lapland University of Applied Sciences

www.lapinamk.fi

UAB
Universitat Autònoma
de Barcelona

www.uab.cat



erasmus
HOGESCHOOL BRUSSEL

www.erasmushogeschool.be



University of Maribor

www.um.si



ECQ
European Center for Quality
from the idea to the result

www.ecq-bg.com



Co-funded by
the European Union



SUHET

Creating and Implementing Education
for Sustainable High-End Tourism
throughout Europe

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This communication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

**“CREATING AND IMPLEMENTING EDUCATION FOR
SUSTAINABLE HIGH-END TOURISM THROUGHOUT
EUROPE - SUHET”**

Project Number: 2021-1-FI01-KA220-HED-000031996

www.suhet.eu