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# Tarragona Counties as a spiritual tourism destination

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## Final Degree Project

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# TARRAGONA'S COUNTIES AS A SPIRITUAL TOURISM DESTINATION

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**Abstract:** Pilgrimages, sacred spaces, natural activities and spiritual retirements are contributors to meaning and identity, but also to the individual's health and well-being. Spiritual tourism is part of cultural tourism that together with religious tourism is one of the tourism markets, which is experiencing greater growth in Spain. The study aims to demonstrate that spiritual tourism may contribute to a sustainable development for Tarragona Counties. Based on this hypothesis, the author examines some case studies that have in common a link between spiritual tourism and identity of a place. They emerge as examples of spiritual expression that have a significant spiritual base.

**Keywords:** Pilgrimages; sacred spaces; natural activities; spiritual retirements; spiritual tourism; cultural tourism; religious tourism; emergent; meaning; identity; Spain; Tarragona Counties.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

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This study, *Tarragona Counties as spiritual tourism destination* analyses the spiritual tourism in the province of Tarragona. Considering the area a touristic destination seeing the big amount of tourists in summer. This research makes specific emphasis on the small percentage of tourists that their motivations are not only seasonal and go beyond the material.

As a tourism student in URV doing the final degree project, I am interested in making the topics explained in this research clear, due to show if the spiritual tourism is a relevant issue for Tarragona Counties and if it is worth working to improve it. I will manifest the impact and positive image which spiritual tourism makes in a destination due to show the importance to carry out.

The aim of this study is to provide insight into the potential for development and management of Tarragona Counties as a spiritual tourism destination, based on its existing assets and products, the variety of motivations for visiting religious and spiritual attractions, and the current configuration of its visitor market. Like this, readers can understand better how spiritual tourism works and the capacity of the Tarragona Counties to attract more tourists. For all of this, it is necessary, apart from studying the previous investigations about this topic, know the potential attractions of Tarragona Counties.



This study considers the historical background of Tarragona, the evolution of the tourist activity, knowing that the transformation of a touristic place is defined by State policies of publicity and tourists' expectations play a significant role. (De Ortueta, 2007)

The practical use of this research is to know the attractive attractions that can appeal the traveller motivated for spiritual and religion reasons. Whether there is an existing market or a potential one that can be promoted to develop better spiritual tourism. This concerns the notion that this investigation will result a diagnosis of the extent and necessary services that are missing in this province. Perhaps, the promotion of this kind of tourism will benefit the society of Tarragona's province. In either case, I propose to find all the answers on this study. It may help us to understand better, how spirituality and religion works in this area.

The range of topics will include different aspects of spiritual and religious tourism, connections with pilgrimage as well as introduction travel motivations, the different attractions and products related to spiritual tourism, the environment of the province of Tarragona, sociodemographic profile and dimensions.

The methodology of this research is based on the analysis of representative case studies of spiritual and religious attractions in Tarragona Counties.

This project is divided into chapters, as follows:

- **Chapter 1**: current chapter in which briefly define the motivation to make this study, the research problem, the justification, objectives of the research, hypothesis brief description of how the current document is organized.
- **Chapter 2**: in this chapter there explains the conceptual approaches of this study, included the definition of the term tourism, its evolution, spiritual tourism concept, its products and destinations, its connections between other kinds of tourism, the objectives of the dissertation and the research questions
- **Chapter 3**: in this part there is the methodology and analytical framework of this study and the introduction to the case study of Tarragona Counties analysing some case studies of this destination.
- **Chapter 4**: There are explained the spiritual tourism products of this research, the comparison between them and necessary services to promote spiritual and religious tourism.



- **Chapter 5:** It is explained the results about sociodemographic profile and the results about drivers to engage in spiritual tourism in Tarragona.
- **Chapter 6:** This chapter presents the conclusions resulting from this study. There are the answers of the research questions and a proposal for the 'enhancement' of spiritual tourism products in Tarragona.
- **Chapter 7:** There will be all the fonts and bibliography that are used to make this investigation
- **Chapter 8:** Is the list of the annexes

### 1.1. Research problem

The world is in a continuous evolution and the preferences of tourism demands are changing all the time. Because of this variation, alternative tourism products are developed with the purpose of satisfying the big amount of the tourists demand. Tourists travel with the main aim of escape the everyday routine and fulfil human needs linked on self-actualization.

Tourism was born in the 19th century with a big variety of purposes. Now, tourism begins to reveal itself as the indicator of authentic quality of life.

For a destination like Catalonia, tourism means a very significant economic source. According to the tourism life cycle model of Butler (1989) each destination arrives at the point of demand's decline and then destinations have to bet for a strategy to rejuvenate their image. One of those strategies can be diversely their product in another kind of tourism promotions as a spiritual one.

Currently, the Tarragona territory is mostly betting on sun and sand tourism in Costa Daurada and sustainable and ecotourism in Terres de l'Ebre. Yet spiritual tourism strategy could be a positive element of diversification and create a new important brand for the destination.

### 1.2. Justification

New needs of the world population are causing demands on holiday destination where they can join new particular experiences. It is only in recent years that spiritual tourism is growing exponentially, since people are travelling for leisure purposes.



The premature nature of this situation means that there is not so much background information that describes or categorizes the phenomenon of Spiritual Tourism. In this sense, the study proposes to investigate a specific type of tourist demand that can be useful to work in the destination and thanks to the case studies of intangible attraction we will see if that one are already spiritual attractions, they can be potential ones, or they can help the destination creating a new positive brand.

The choice of intangible spiritual attraction was due to the possibility of having attractions that already exist and strengthen the destination attractiveness for untapped markets, and we cannot change them. We can only vary the way people are looking the destinations.

### 1.3. Objectives

#### General objective

Obtain an approach to a potential tourist modality, such as Spiritual Tourism in Tarragona Counties.

#### Specific objectives

1. Investigate the current spiritual attractions and see if tourists are visiting for this purpose.
2. Explore the potential and existing markets that can be more responsive to the development of a spiritual tourism strategy.
3. Present the assets, sites, products that have more potential to be included in a spiritual tourism strategy in Tarragona counties.

### 1.4 Hypothesis

As societies evolve, so too does the preference for tourism demands. In the last decades, the society is looking for new experiences to fulfil the maximum of satisfaction.

It is in this context that an important part of the world population feels that traditional vacations are not enough for discovery themselves and escape the daily routine. This favours the appearance of new modalities of tourism that propose a space for meditation and self-discovery such as Spiritual Tourism.



Regarding Tarragona is a potential site for spiritual tourism because of their variety of spiritual attractions and its current tourism needs a diversification offer due to satisfy all the kinds of tourism who is coming to the area.

## 2. CONCEPTUAL APPROACHES

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In this section, I introduce some notions about spiritual tourism by a literature review leading to formulate my research questions.

### 2.1. The concept of tourism

To start talking about Spiritual Tourism, an initial approach to what we understand as tourism is necessary.

It is important to understand that there is no only one definition to categorise tourism, but certainly, there are some multidisciplinary approaches. (Keoroglanian, 2018)

According to the World Tourism Organization (1995), tourism consists of those activities which humanity has initiated for a really extended time. Currently, this term has been identified as a significant social and economic phenomenon. As Manila said at the World Conference on Tourism 1980 tourism effects essentially on the social, cultural, educational and economic sectors of national societies and on their international relations.

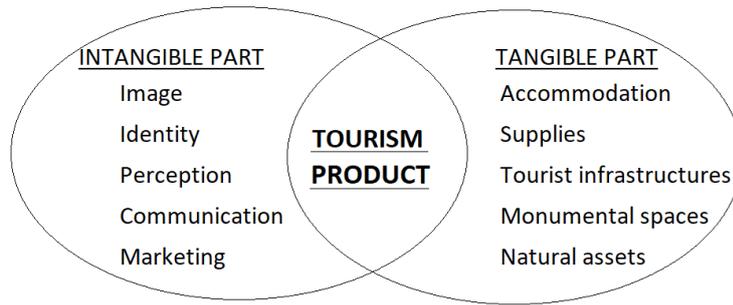
At the WTO Ottawa Conference on Travel and Tourism Statistics in 1991, tourism was defined as the activities carry out by people who travel and stay in destinies outside their usual environment, whose purposes are leisure business or others; for not more than one consecutive year.

According to World Tourism Organization (2019), a tourism destination is a physical place where a traveller can spend an overnight. It is the group of activities and experiences, products and services, which take part in the tourism value chain and an essential part of tourism analysis. It has an image and identity, the intangible part, which may influence its market competitiveness.

In the following model ([Figure 2.1.1.](#)), the tourism product is understood as a group of tangible and intangible elements that tourists use during their stays in destinations. (Middleton, 1988).



Figure 2.1.1: Concept of tourism product

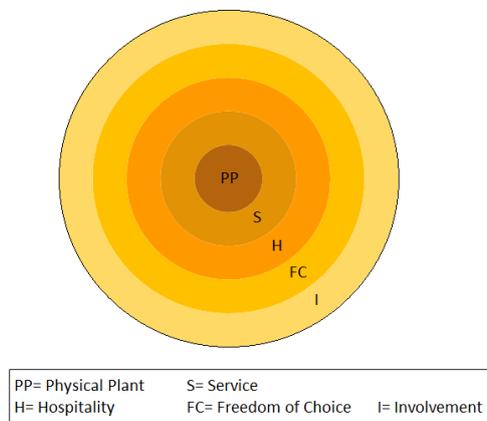


Own elaboration

Otherwise, this concept can be analysed in two different perspectives, from the seller and consumer sight (Mak, 2004). Focusing on the consumer perspective, the tourism product is based on the entire travel experience (Koutoulas 2004).

The relevance of this travel experience was contemplated in the tourism product model proposed by Smith (1994, 587) ([Figure 2.1.2.](#)).

Figure 2.1.2.: Tourism product model of Stephen Smith Approach (1994, 587)



Own elaboration from Smith (1994)

According to Smith (1994) the tourism product consists of five constituent parts, represented in concentric cycles. These segments go from the centre of the product (physical plant) to the external frame (involvement). All the product elements have to be well interconnected due to be an attractive tourism product. These parts are:



- The physical plant (PP) is the principal thing of every tourism product. This can be the location, cultural or natural resource, or the facility. Everything related to the destination and its suppliers.
- The Service (S) is the implementation of tasks needed by tourists. The quality is crucial to fulfil the customer satisfaction
- Hospitality (H) is the attitude of the service, making tourists comfortable
- Freedom of choice (FC) is the tourists' possibility to choose a range of options to have a better experience.
- Involvement (I) is the implication or participation of the traveller. This implies their feelings about the touristic activities.

## 2.2. Evolution of the tourism concept

The concept of tourism is as old as man (Gurría, 2004) and grew thanks to the development of transport and communication routes (Cárdenas, 2001).

In the Ancient Age, in classical Greece, great importance was given to leisure and free time, with trips to attend the Olympic Games and religious pilgrimages to see the oracles. During the Roman Empire, Greeks and Romans moved for health reasons to thermal and medicinal waters (Gurría, 2004).

During the Middle Ages, Islamic and Christians made pilgrimages to holy places for religious purposes (Gurría, 2004)

In the Modern Age, due to the maritime expeditions of ships, the fast and economic displacement of merchandise and people was allowed, awakening interest and curiosity for traveling. From the end of the 17th century to the 18th century, there was a tradition of sending children of the high bourgeoisie or nobles to travel for 2 or 3 years for educational reasons due to come back with knowledge of new cultures and civilizations (Gurría, 2004).

At this time, the foundations of modern tourism emerge due to a period of peace, free time, communications and new desires of people. At the end of the Modern Age, in the 18th century, the therapeutic attributes of the sea spread, encouragement flux towards the coasts for different reasons as recreation, socialization and wellness (Acerenza, 2001).



In the Contemporary Age, in the last years of the 19th century pleasure travel had its start, as is the case of the first oceanic pleasure cruise in 1867 (Acerenza, 2001).

The XIX century had a great economic expansion, followed by an Industrial Revolution that made tourism develop exponentially (Acerenza, 2001). With this revolution, the number of middle-class leisure travellers with new tastes and needs increased (Gurría, 2004 and Acerenza, 2001). The railroad was expanding very fast, becoming the most popular form of transport for tourists. In addition, the use of steam in navigation reduced travel time (Cárdenas, 2001).

In 1841, Thomas Cook organized the first planned trip in history without profit. He was the precursor of organized travel of travel agencies (Acerenza, 2001). Thanks for that, spontaneous mass tourism emerged. Tourism ceased to be a privilege for small wealthy groups of people, who travel for pleasure and desire to highlight in front of the society and became an accessible pleasure for big amount of people who could travel for rest and leisure (Ramírez, 2006). This tourism was characterized for having a tourist product with a standard offer (Acerenza, 2001). The main destinations were sun and beaches places. Demand was characterized for being inexperienced tourists attracted by going on to a cheaper specific destination (Díaz et al., 2006).

Due to the massive displacements towards natural and cultural resources, there were adverse effects on destinations (Poon, 1993). For that reason, from the 1980s onwards, there was a change in the lifestyle and tourists' relationship towards natural conservation and cultural environment (Hall & Weiler, 1992) based on a more sustainable destination, flexible production, and personalize consumption (Díaz et al., 2006).

Currently, tourists not only seek to escape theirs routine or go on holiday, they are searching new emotions for personal enhancement (Opaschowski, 2001). The different types of tourists are linked on their lifestyles and work relationships. Technological advances promote tourism to encourage people to meet other cultures and experiences towards cultural tourism (Briceño, 2000).

### **2.3. Definitions and motivations of spiritual tourism**

According to World Tourism Organization (2019), spiritual tourism is part of cultural tourism. The main motivation of visitors to make cultural tourism is gaining knowledge from new



experiences, find destinies and expend the tangible and intangible cultural attractions/products in a tourism destination.

Regarding spiritual tourism, it is sometimes been confused as religious tourism. They are not the same concept, because their motivations for traveling are searching different purposes.

Due to understand how spiritual tourism works we have to think about the meaning of spirituality. Spirituality is mentioned as the peak level of the Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Human Needs where humans move away from the materialistic needs and comes to the elevation of the soul; self-fulfilment, and they look for answers to search for existence's meaning. Summarizing, spirituality refers when human comes to a certain grade of the mutual connection of himself and the non-materialistic world (Mitroff and Denton, 1999). Traveling for spiritual purposes is considered as one of the major forces and reasons for traveling (Ambroz, 2011), because their practices are modestly seen as contributors to meaning, identity and positive for the individual's health and well-being. These behaviours are related to religious movements and institutions. In addition, it has been declared as a phenomenon in leisure travel and it is characterized by a self-conscious development of spiritual progress (Norman, 2014).

In the literature, India and 'The East' are the preferred destinies for this type of tourism (Norman, 2014). Other spiritual places that are currently visiting that are based on non-religious motives, are Mount Everest (Himalaya), Machu Picchu (Peru), Gizá Pyramids (Egypt) and Stonehenge (England) and local cosmological systems (Uluru) (Cheer et al., 2017).

Otherwise, religious tourism can be included in spiritual tourism because there are some activities that are in spiritual tourism.

Religious tourism includes all types of journeys which motivation is religion and faith; and the destination is a sacred place (Blackwell, 2007). It is one of the tourism markets, which is experiencing greater growth (Aulet, 2014), and, it is presumably one of the oldest forms of tourism (Sharpley and Sundaram, 2005). Nowadays, there is a remarkable difference between the past because religious tourism involves more people (Lanquar, 2007). As Taleb Rifai, the General Secretary of UNWTO in the opening Conference of UNWTO, on 5th of October 2016 in Utrecht, Netherlands, said "Religious tourism is one of the engines that unites people from different backgrounds in the same cause: the admiration and protection of intangible material and heritage" (UNWTO, 2016)

Among the activities that are carried out in religious tourism, some examples will be: pilgrimage, missionary trips, leisure as a holiday journey or a day trip, conventions, visits and stays in monasteries, shrines, religious attractions as cultural heritage or some different



religious traditions or festivities, faith camps that respond to the needs of spiritual renewal or temporary retirement, etc (Santos, 2003).

The biggest manifestation of religious tourism is The Hajj, which takes place in the al-Haram mosque in Mecca, Saudi Arabia with 2,927,717 Muslims participating in 2011; number provided by the Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia (Orcutt, 2012) and in 2030, it is expected to increase this amount of participation to 30 million annually, according to German media Deutsche Welle (Moreno,2018).

Currently, there is an important growth in spiritual and religious tourism. This increase is due to the spiritual travellers and religious devotees of distinct faiths that are looking for spiritual and religious trips. Thanks to this, there is a development of the events sector, a need for professionalization and management these destinations (Dowson, 2019).

#### 2.4. Trends in spiritual tourists

The UNWTO estimates that between 300 and 330 million tourists visit sacred places around the world every day (UNWTO, 2014) mostly are Christians, Muslims and Hindus (Jackowski,2000). Traveling for spiritual purposes is considered as one of the main flows of tourists (Ambroz, 2011).

According to Booking.com's predictions for 2019 based on more than 163 million comments, travellers want destinations with cultural exchange activities, which provide opportunities for their personal and spiritual growth, or even explore unknown territories (González, 2018).

Typically, spiritual tourism practices are coupled with those of religious movements and institutions as visiting monasteries, churches, etc., or prayer. It covers the purposes of religious tourism and includes other activities. Such as pilgrimages, meditation treats in centres of spiritual countries like Thailand or ashram stays in India, wellness tourism as spa/healing treatments and beauty cures, eco-tourism, different activities to find themselves and know more about the others as activities for tourist who wants to examine the status and value of relationships, etc (Norman, 2014).

Its main purpose for doing spiritual activities as a pilgrimage in Mecca is for changing one owns quality thanks to the physical and abstract distance from home and the everyday routines. This space also produces a more abstract vision of the world that is more apart from reality. Spiritual travellers can improve most utopian visions. There are other objectives such as acquiring



knowledge by absorbing the spiritual wisdom of destination, reflection of someone's lifestyle, subsistence and social relations (Nasritdinov, 2012).

## 2.5. Spiritual tourism and the connection with religious tourism and pilgrimage

Nowadays, religious sites have become the target for tourists motivated by pilgrimage, the hunt for religious practices, admiration of the cultural importance or by interest for sacred sites (Lanquar, 2007). The knowledge of pilgrims and believers help visitors for better understanding the importance of a sacred site, due to value and not deteriorate this site, like this it will also contribute to its conservation and a make word-of-mouth marketing, this means publicity (Vidal-Casellas, D. et al., 2019).

Spiritual travel is classified into categories like spirituality, welfare or self-discovery. Blogs create fantastic sources of self-reflection (Norman, 2014) and social networks help to make conscience about religious sites and know more about them (Vidal-Casellas, D. et al., 2019).

Pilgrimages can be explained in some blogs, such as *Blog de viajes de Pumuki*<sup>1</sup> where it is explained the experience about a pilgrimage of a family with two children walking the Camino de Santiago, they detail reflections on happiness to be all the family together and different kind of advices how to made that travel. Also, it is being reflected that knowing more pilgrims help to make this effort, they know people who do this travel for different reasons such as religious pilgrimage, spiritual experience, interior travel and, physical and mental challenge for a social experience.

Differently, we can find some videos explaining the experience of doing the way, that one help them to let go of worries, knowing more themselves, spirituality is personal and everyone has a different feeling. Every person discovers the essence of being with themselves and enjoy the path to reach their goal.

## 2.6. Destinations, products and attractions in spiritual tourism

As The secretariat of tourism of the Federal Government of Mexico (2009) explained that tourist places due to be successful in developing as spiritual tourism destinations they need

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<sup>1</sup>Based on the article *Como Organizar el Camino de Santiago con Niños*  
<https://blogdeviajesdepumuki.com/galicia/como-organizar-camino-de-santiago-con-ninos/> (accessed 29th january 2020)



conditions and resources, but much more important is a good organization to promote the destination and a way to take care the place. For that reason, it is important that communication channels should be in excellent conditions to ensure a comfortable arrival. The Public Sector takes an important role by signalling correctly the main attractions and services, the public toilets in correct conditions, the cleanliness, appearance of the destination, the access for people with disabilities, the nomenclature of streets, etc. It is important offering a variety and quality of products/services such as parking, bus stops/stations. The health sector is very significant considering that a good part of spiritual tourists are disability people or persons with illnesses who make peregrinations for their health, so the destination must count on medical and hospital services. The civil society must be concerned on the acceptance of the tourists. Restaurants and hotels of various categories are necessary to guarantee basic needs. Also is necessary to offer activities to transmit the cultural and artistic heritage as much as customs and traditions of the site. It is fundamental to emphasize the conservation and protection of cultural heritage as well as natural. The role of guides in a tourist destination is basic, training them to be specialized guides to satisfy the tourist expectations.

The integration of all the components talked above is called *tourism product* which is developed by travel operators who take a decisive role. For the integration of Spiritual Tourism products is necessarily the coordination between the church and the government, civil organizations and tourism professionals to improve their spiritual, cultural and social experience (La Secretaría de Turismo del Gobierno Federal; 2009).

As we said, India and 'The East' are the favourite destinies for spiritual tourism. (Norman, 2014). Furthermore, in Spain, there are spiritual projects where the visitors can relax and make diverse activities. Such as holistic schools as Bhakti Yoga in Salar, Granada, they offer an integrative study that combines different techniques and disciplines that show visitors how to relax soul, body and mind by thai massage, vegetarian food and silent retreats with meditation and yoga. Meditation centres as Dhamma Neru in Santa María de Palautordera, Barcelona, where it is based on Vipassana meditation, which means seeing things, as they are, an art of living. Rural farms as La Cabana in Boal, Asturias, their offer is a permaculture course, the retreat of experiential learning, with healthy food and completely self-sufficient. Agro tourism hotels as an Espandere retreat in Santa Eulalia, Ibiza that offers a variety of retreats and yoga courses personalized through a personal health assessment. Personal development centre as



Conciayoga in Puyarruego, Huesca, an eco-lodging where visitors work on personal growth and yoga retreats.<sup>2</sup>

As we can see in the projects above spiritual centres are places focused on spiritual growth and the connection of someone's interior with theirs exterior. It is necessary professionals to guide visitors on this experience.

The activities, which attract spiritual tourists do not, only include visiting a spiritual place (Owen 2006, 24). They include a big variety of activities, forms of engagement and participation to different rituals.

Due to make a taxonomy, we have to think about the real motivations for each activity. According to Normand (2014), the varieties of spiritual tourism can be categorised into five types: healing, experiment, quest, retreat and collective. These summarize the practices relate it to tourist experiences.

**Figure 2.6.1: Norman's taxonomy of spiritual practices**

VARIETIES	MAIN MOTIVATIONS	CORE ACTIVITIES
<i>Healing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-wellness focused on physical and psychological well-being</li> <li>- improve components of everyday life as the status and value of relationships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-pilgrimages</li> <li>-ashrams stays</li> <li>-meditation retreats</li> </ul>
<i>Experiment</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-be familiar with local cultures</li> <li>-alternatives to the tourist's everyday world activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-pilgrimages to spiritual destinations (The East)</li> <li>-yoga courses</li> <li>-ashram retreats</li> </ul>
<i>Quest</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-self discovery</li> <li>-Find purpose in their life</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Meditation</li> <li>-Travel as <i>wanderlust</i></li> <li>-Walk a route</li> </ul>

<sup>2</sup> National Geographic. Article named 5 RETIROS ESPIRITUALES EN ESPAÑA. Available at: [https://viajes.nationalgeographic.com.es/a/5-retiros-espirituales-espana\\_13024/1](https://viajes.nationalgeographic.com.es/a/5-retiros-espirituales-espana_13024/1) (accessed 24 February 2020).



<i>Retreat</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-escape from everyday routine</li> <li>-sacred time</li> <li>-ritual renewal</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-meditation retreats</li> <li>-health treatments and spas</li> <li>-eco-tourism journeys</li> <li>-visit a sacred space</li> <li>-journey to natural world resource (like a desert)</li> </ul>
<i>Collective</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Trend or others' persuasion</li> <li>-Connect memories</li> <li>-Self-improvement or self-actualisation project</li> <li>-Popularity and the offer of a destination</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Participate in a spiritual experience as pilgrimage</li> <li>-Spiritual holiday to a spiritual destination (like Rishikesh)</li> </ul>

Own elaboration from the spiritual tourism classification of Norman (2014)

## 2.7. The objectives of the dissertation: Tarragona Counties as a spiritual tourism destination?

The province of Tarragona mostly attracts for the sun and beach tourism due to the quality of its beaches and in less amount for its cultural resources (De Ortueta: 2007)

The web page of the Costa Daurada Tourism Promotion Board,<sup>3</sup> underlines especially the activities related to families with children, with Calafell, Salou, Cambrils and Pineda's beach having been boosted and branded as Family Tourism Destination. Making the destination a peaceful and ideal place to come with them. Moreover, this site shows the visitors have a diversity of options to discover Costa Daurada by going to sea, mountain, culture, leisure, wild or civilized villages. There are six regions, where tourists can find different natural and historical. These are in:

- Tarragonès, World Heritage by UNESCO. There, tourists can find some historical buildings such as Pont del Diable and Arc de Berà. Also, natural areas as Els Munts of Torredembarra and the Castells del Gaià.

<sup>3</sup> <https://costadaurada.info/es> (accessed 4th march 2020)



- Baix Camp, a modernist region with a popular drink of vermouth born in Reus. Natural hiking trails to Prades Mountains, Paisatge dels Genis, Ronda route are popular to make in this area.
- Baix Penedès, important for their beeches, artists and Xató. The coastal towns are a usual destination for vacationers who are looking for ideal places to regenerate themselves, Coma-ruga have therapeutic properties. Nature and the cultural heritage make these destinations a good option for walking and cycling routes of different levels. The most innovative agro-tourism and wine tourism projects are in this region.
- Conca de Barberà, monastery and lost villages. Multiple routes for hiking are in this region, which crosses mountains, monasteries and charming. One of the most important monasteries of the Cistercian Route, are in Conca de Barberà, the Santa Maria de Poblet Monastery, World Heritage Site by UNESCO. There are other important places as Montblanc a medieval town, the Templar castle of Conca de Barberà or l'Espluga de Francolí caverns represent some sites that tourists are interested in.
- Alt Camp, where the tradition of making human castles and eating were born. This land retains the rural part of Catalonia and modernist architecture. Tourists can visit Wine Cathedrals, the Prades and Gaià mountains which are full of mysticism and legends. The spirituality of Santes Creus Monastery which is one of the three that form the Cistercian Route.
- Priorat, where wine has a big importance. Montsant Natural Park has made the area concerned about sustainability and the Priorat Quality Denomination of Origin, Montsant Denomination of Origin and Siurana Denomination of Origin, forms part of its intangible legacy. Natural landscapes and biodiversity can be seen in Siurana and Escaladei.

According to the website of Terres de l'Ebre Tourism Promotion Board, the activities that can be carried out in the vast majority are cultural, coastal, natural, gastronomic/wine tourism, river navigation, active tourism, rural tourism and bird watching. Terres de l'Ebre is the only Natural Biosphere Reserve in the world by UNESCO, one of the 100 best sustainable tourism destinations in the world by the International Global Green Destinations Association and it is in possession of the European Charter Certificate of sustainable tourism. In this site they recommend some itineraries as:



- La Marquesa Beach to the Lighthouse of the Fangar, due to see the lighthouse and the dunes of the Delta.
- Visiting wineries between vineyards in the Terra Alta region to visit family wineries.
- Discovering the Ebre river, doing different activities such as kayaking, paddle surfing or strolling on a traditional boat called *llagut*.
- Trekking on the GR92 and coves of crystalline water from Ametlla de Mar to Ampolla.
- Author's cuisine with orchard products. Gastronomic restaurants with a variety of food from the more traditional kitchen, the author's cuisine with three chefs awarded with Michelin stars.

To sum it up, seeing the existence offer which the province of Tarragona is shown on web pages of Costa Daurada and Terres de l'Ebre, we can notice that the destination is interested to diversify their product and not depend on only from sun and sand tourism. Concretely, in the Terres de l'Ebre website shows the tourism that they are trying to develop is faced in sustainability for preserving its biodiversity. Otherwise, in Costa Daurada's website shows that the principal attraction is their beaches, but they have a big offer about other kind of tourism that tourists can do due to change the concept of sun and sand destination.

As we can see in this summery Tarragona's county are potentially attractive for spiritual tourism thanks to the improvement of communications, cheaper air transport and the greater ease of people movement. Moreover, this province has places where tourists can feel the spirituality, social and environmental responsibility, tradition and culture. Spiritual tourism offers experiences centred on self-knowledge, culture, nature and meaning of life.

Terres de l'Ebre have been separated from Costa Daurada brand at the tourist level (Farré and Duro, 2010), in the Terres de l'Ebre website, they promoted a sustainable destination. Otherwise, in Costa Daurada the main attraction for the issuing markets is the sun and the beach. (González, 2012)

A diversification strategy targeting spiritual tourists has potential to benefit Costa Daurada and Terres de l'Ebre, as we intend to argue in this dissertation. First for reducing the mass tourism influence and generate benefits for long-term business that reduce the risks of brand stability, working towards other markets products; and secondly, for continuing with a strategy consistent with sustainability. Thanks to the tendency to seek in spiritual tourism, tourists finds ways to relax and self-knowledge.



According to the ICOMOS Declaration of Xi'an of 2005, the spiritual tourism is linked to “the spirit of a place, the set of material (sites, landscapes, constructions, objects) and immaterial (memories, stories, rites, festivals, knowledge), physical and spiritual elements, that give meaning, courage, emotion and mystery to the place. It is built by humans in reply to social needs.” This spirit contributes to renew Tarragona Counties destination, make them alive and revitalize the communities to do not forget their essence.

## 2.8. Research questions

The case study of this research is the counties of Tarragona and the main objective is to know if spiritual tourism works, could work and what are the challenges as a spiritual tourism destination.

Having reviewed the literature, we can see that the destination of Tarragona has many spiritual attractions and its promotion strategy is not aimed at spiritual tourism. However, thanks to this review, the research questions that may be of interest in relation to the core objective will result in these three:

1. Is Tarragona Counties currently an attractive destination for travellers motivated for spiritual and religious reasons?
2. Which Markets (existing or potential) would be more responsive to the development of a spiritual tourism strategy/ products in Tarragona counties?
3. Which assets, sites, products have more potential to be included in a spiritual tourism strategy for the Tarragona counties?

## 3. METHODOLOGY

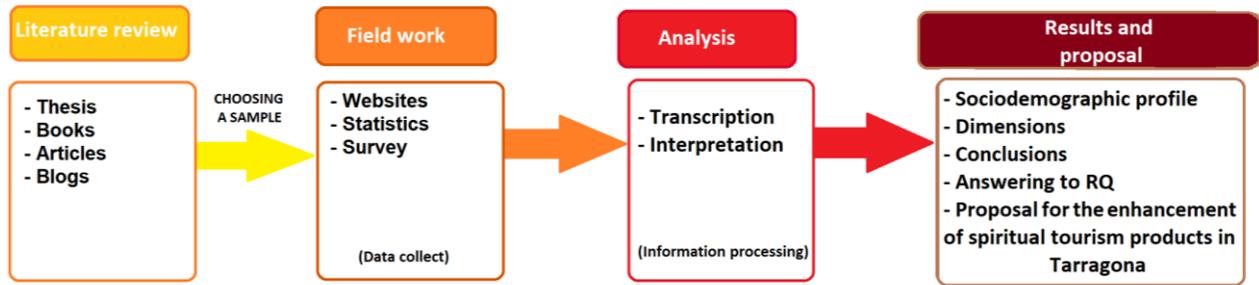
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### 3.1. Methodological and analytical framework

In order to prepare this technical document, four stages of this study were developed, which involved a literature review and fieldwork, as well as analysis, results and proposal.



Figure 3.1.1: Stages of the research.



Own elaboration

Specifically, the literature review does not allow us to answer questions; it allows us to ask new ones that have meaning and interest in this study as the three research questions asked in [section 2.8](#).

First, I generate a taxonomy based on literature review and I categorise them in five categories of spiritual tourism attractions, products and practices, which attract tourists who are spiritually motivated.

Figure 3.1.2: Taxonomy of spiritual tourism attractions

CATEGORIES	CORE ACTIVITIES	MAIN EXAMPLES
<i>Way to a destination</i>	Pilgrimages	Cister's route <sup>4</sup>
		Sant Jaume's route <sup>5</sup>
		Route of the Earliest Christians of Tarraco <sup>6</sup>
	Visit to a sacred space	Monastery of Poblet <sup>7</sup>
		Tarragona's Cathedral <sup>8</sup>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.larutadelcister.info/es> (accessed 3th march 2020)

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.camidesantjaumeperatothom.cat/> (accessed 3th march 2020)

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.tarragona.cat/patrimoni/museu-historia/divulgacio-de-la-historia/ruta-dels-primers-cristians-de-tarraco> (accessed 3th march 2020)

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.poblet.cat/index.php?&&&&ZW4%3D> (accessed 5<sup>th</sup> march 2020)

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.catedraldetarragona.com/inicio/> (accessed 5th march 2020)



<i>Interaction with place</i>		Escaladei monastery <sup>9</sup>
<i>Natural encounter</i>	eco-tourism	Lo Corral d'Arnes <sup>10</sup>
		Ecocamp Vinyols <sup>11</sup>
	journey to natural world resource	Montserrat range <sup>12</sup>
	Star tourism	Sky of : Montsant, Els Ports de Tortosa, Delta del Ebre and Prades'mountains
<i>Spiritual Retirements</i>	meditation retreats	A Meditar - Mindfulness Studio सति <sup>13</sup>
	ashrams retreats	La Peral's ashram <sup>14</sup>
	spiritual retreats with indigenous remedies	Spiritual center of Chamanismo para todos <sup>15</sup>
	health treatments and spas	Hotel Balneari de Vallfogona de Riucorb <sup>16</sup>
	yoga courses	YogaOne Tarragona <sup>17</sup>
<i>Religious worship</i>	religious events	Santa Tecla <sup>18</sup>

Own elaboration

These five categories are made considering the similar purposes. The goal of such taxonomy is to offer a methodological direction that is oriented towards conceptual frameworks. Examples are select from collecting thematically similar practices together. As a result, I found a large amount of similar examples. Even so, the intention is to explain only the selection show

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.turismepriorat.org/es/que-hacer/puntos-interes/cartuja-de-escaladei>(accessed 3th april 2020)

<sup>10</sup> <https://locorraldarnes.com/es/>(accessed 4th march 2020)

<sup>11</sup> <https://ecocampvinyols.cat/>(accessed 4th march 2020)

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.catalunya.com/parc-natural-de-la-serra-de-montsant-17-17001-573527?language=es> (accessed 5th march 2020)

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.ameditar.es/>(accessed 3th april 2020)

<sup>14</sup> [https://www.meditaya.com/ashram\\_la\\_peral/](https://www.meditaya.com/ashram_la_peral/)(accessed 3th april 2020)

<sup>15</sup> <https://chamanismoparatodos.com/>(accessed 4th march 2020)

<sup>16</sup> <https://hotelbalneari.com/es/inici/> (accessed 30th march 2020)

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.yogaone.es/es/yogaone-tarragona>(accessed 3th april 2020)

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.tarragona.cat/cultura/festes-i-cultura-popular/santa-tecla> (accessed 3th april 2020)



it on (Figure 3.1.2.). This assortment has been chosen to consider the proximity and the importance in Tarragona Counties. This variety highlight that spiritual tourism takes place in different ways that can seem pretty different, and also to indicate common characteristics that makes easy to explain tourism trends. In addition, this classification is also useful to understand how spiritual projects can be initiated.

Generally, spiritual tourists do more than two practices explained below, generating the spiritual traveller a challenging topic for the analyst (Norman, 2014)

The following types present a summary of literature research as the one made in second Chapter and new sources relate to the experience of travel.

#### *Spiritual tourism as Way to a destiny*

In this category is appreciated that the important thing is the experience of a road to somewhere. As Singh and Singh (2009) said, sometimes travellers go on a trip with no purpose at all; they are travelling to discovery spiritual experiences as wanderlusts.

There are others practices as pilgrimage appears to regardless of socioeconomic differentiation with the wish of participating in a deeper journey to spiritual destinations (McIntosh. et al, 2018). This practice is more understood as heritage tourism, in which people travel with the conscience to participate in a spiritual experience. A pilgrimage can be the measure of someone's transformation like a way of self-discovery, rejuvenate themselves or make that something new happen in their life, breaking their routines (Turnbull, 1981). Also, the offer and the popularity of a place are other interests of spiritual travellers (Sheehan, 2012). It is preferred India and 'The East' for spiritual tourism like the city of Rishikesh (Norman, 2014) however, in this research, we will explain about three apparently important routes of the province of Tarragona.

#### *Spiritual tourism as interaction with place*

In this variety is recognised that the relevant item is the place and its interaction.

Due to connect with the sacred spaces there are different activities that can be carried out such as going into a spiritual place and enjoy a music festival (Robinson, 2016). As an example will be the Festival de Música Antiga de Poblet<sup>19</sup>, a festival about musical metamorphosis in which there was the possibility to contemplate the history of the Poblet monastery, spiritual

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<sup>19</sup> Based on the article *El Festival de Música Antiga de Poblet reflexiona sobre la metamorfosis musical* . Available at: <https://www.20minutos.es/noticia/3734612/0/festival-musica-antiga-poblet-reflexiona-sobre-metamorfosis-musical/> (accessed 3th april 2020)



and cultural centre, in its museum. As Dowson et al (2019) said there could be different motivation to travel to a sacred place as being part of belief and devotion to a religion, a purpose to increase strengthen in personal level, whereas some sacred places attract people for being famous for its miracles to heal.

#### *Spiritual tourism as Natural encounter*

In this type is identified that the significant thing is the experience with the nature. As Smith (2003) said some spiritual travellers are seeking for simple experiences and the own authenticity of a natural source. As is declared in Genesis 1:31 (1989), all natural resources are sacred, where it can be produced divine encounters and personal discoveries (McIntosh. et al, 2018) as the ones produced by ecotourism journeys or meeting to see the constellations.

#### *Spiritual tourism as Spiritual Retirement*

In this group is perceived that the relevant item is the retirement experience. As Norman (2014) said this retreat are characterised for giving tourist wellness experiences oriented in physical and psychological well-being. In addition, in other retreats tourists can examine their life status due to self-discover themselves and value their relationships.

#### *Spiritual tourism as religious worship*

In this category is highlighted that the pertinent thing is the religious phenomenon. As Hervieu (2000) said that spiritual and religious phenomenon help to have new memories and experiences related to the places and a perfect way discover and not lose the history and the tradition of a place.

Literature review helps to know what research methods will be used to answer each of the questions, justifying it from the point of view of what the authors I have seen in the literature did.

The study universe that was taken into account was the incipient phenomenon of Spiritual Tourism and research questions take an essential part of this study. More in detail techniques of data collection are linked to the three questions made in [section 2.8](#).

The research to be carried out below is quantitative type, whose approach strategy was carried out based on a specific case study. Concretely, due to answer the first research question about if Tarragona Counties currently an attractive destination for travellers motivated for spiritual reasons, it will be necessary to create an inventory of resources according to the taxonomy and analyse the promotion of each element diversified by type. We will discover the promotion



of public institutions and private destination managers, letting us know if they are promoting themselves as spiritual tourism assets or not, and what is their potential. In order to extract this information we will be focusing on purposes of the visits and the characteristic of their promotion, this will be based on a web analysis of their websites and their network.

The second one, about which markets would be more responsive to the development of a spiritual tourism strategy, will be answered by a survey sent it by social networks to people from the province of Tarragona and other provinces of Spain. By that, we will know if the current tourism needs to make a strategy focus into a spiritual dimension to attract more tourists.

The third question, about which assets, sites, products have more potential to be included in a spiritual tourism strategy of this destination; will be developed by me as a strategy that takes into account what I have learned in points one and two. It will be configured as a package, or route, or network, with a well-defined brand and logo, which can be promoted from the territory by public institutions to value spiritual potential that now has not fully exploited the resources that I have analysed.

In fact, I had to change my previous work plan for all the information mentioned above because some fieldwork research as creating new surveys of tourists I will not be able to do it. Because, currently, in Spain we are fighting against coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), an infectious disease caused by SARS-CoV-2<sup>20</sup>. Spain and other countries have established some measures to prevent its infection. In the province of Tarragona as being in the autonomous community of Catalonia, some barriers have been created to prevent access and the exit. Even if I wanted to perform statistics, I could not do it because there are no tourists right now. Spanish citizens have to stay locked up in their homes, only they can leave the house for basic needs such as buying food in supermarkets, throwing out the rubbish or walking the dog. Frequent recommendation is going out with masks and gloves, and disinfect their hands with alcohol.

This disease is a worldwide problem and many companies have been affected with big monetary losses. For that reason, from nineteenth of March, people who have been in China or Italy the fourteen days prior to this date cannot travel to a dozen countries, other countries have restrictions to people who are or travelled to Europe the 30 days prior to thirteen of March

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<sup>20</sup> World Health Organization. (2019). *Naming the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and the virus that causes it*. Available at: [https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/technical-guidance/naming-the-coronavirus-disease-\(covid-2019\)-and-the-virus-that-causes-it](https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/technical-guidance/naming-the-coronavirus-disease-(covid-2019)-and-the-virus-that-causes-it) (accessed 20 th march 2020)



as the United States.<sup>21</sup> This isolation measures are done to prevent the risks of more infections and spreads.

My spiritual tourism proposal is also going to be focus on helping the province of Tarragona to recover loses bet on spiritual tourism strategy.

### 3.2. Introduction to case study Tarragona Counties

Figure 3.2.1: (a): map showing the location of Tarragona; (b): map showing the location of Spain; (c) map showing the province case of study of Tarragona



Own elaboration from (a) the Catalonia's province of d-maps<sup>22</sup>; (b) Spain's province map of d-maps<sup>23</sup>; (c) Map of regional and municipal division, Tarragona, 1999 of Research gate<sup>24</sup>

<sup>21</sup> ABC. *Qué países tienen restricciones de viaje por coronavirus*. Available at :

[https://www.abc.es/viajar/noticias/abci-paises-tienen-restricciones-viaje-coronavirus-202002281941\\_noticia.html](https://www.abc.es/viajar/noticias/abci-paises-tienen-restricciones-viaje-coronavirus-202002281941_noticia.html) (accessed 20th march 2020)

<sup>22</sup> [https://d-maps.com/carte.php?num\\_car=28632&lang=es](https://d-maps.com/carte.php?num_car=28632&lang=es) (accessed 16<sup>th</sup> march 2020)

<sup>23</sup> [https://d-maps.com/carte.php?num\\_car=13222&lang=es](https://d-maps.com/carte.php?num_car=13222&lang=es) (accessed 16<sup>th</sup> march 2020)

<sup>24</sup> [https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Figura-32-Mapa-de-division-comarcal-y-municipal-y-capitales-comarcales-Tarragona-1999\\_fig4\\_46775887](https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Figura-32-Mapa-de-division-comarcal-y-municipal-y-capitales-comarcales-Tarragona-1999_fig4_46775887) (accessed 16<sup>th</sup> march 2020)



The province of Tarragona, located in south-eastern Catalonia, Spain ([Fig. 3.2.1 a](#)) is the case study of spiritual tourism research. The investigation identifies ten different regions in Tarragona ([Fig. 3.2.1 c](#)) with two different tourist brands: Costa Daurada and Terres de l'Ebre ([Fig. 3.2.1 b](#)).

Both brands have diverse qualities due to the characteristics of each destination.

According to Pla d'Actuació Terres de l'Ebre, 2018, it can be seen that Terres de l'Ebre strategy to increase the recognition of its brand is focused on its attributes with special attention to the biosphere reserve and the spaces of private/public collaboration. Their tactics are based on increasing the overnight stays of international markets by micro segmentation promotion, intensifying the tools and instruments to diffuse their brand and promoting intelligence projects at the service of tourism.

Regarding Pla d'Actuació Costa Daurada 2019, it can be perceived that their strategy is focuses on Costa Daurada brand as family tourism destination. Otherwise, there is a special emphasis on a responsible tourism plan. Their tactics are based on collaborating with the public and private sectors for promoting new products by networks, achieving the consolidation of some tactical markets and diversifying their product for one more concentrate to natural resources and markets with a special awareness for the environment.

It can be noticed that there is a common motivation to have Costa Daurada and Terres de l'Ebre a strategy to preserve their environment and nature.

Due to correctly introduce the case study of Tarragona Counties we will explain some relevant practices and spiritual centres that are in Tarragona region. Later on, in another chapter, we will focus on methodological taxonomy and explain its varieties deeper.

In the province of Tarragona, there are not so much spiritual centres. Otherwise, in Tarragona diocese there is the Royal Abbey of Santa Maria de Poblet a Cistercian monastery and the shrine of Our Lady of Loreto. In Tortosa, there is Tortosa Spiritual Home or better known as San Enrique de Ossó Center is a house surrounded by gardens where visitors can find themselves with the silence and the orations for praying, inside the house there are four oratories, one chapel and hostel is outside Jesús-Tortosa.<sup>25</sup> There visitors can relax and find themselves thanks for the peaceful environment.

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<sup>25</sup>Centers found on Ciberiglesia, the article called Casas y centros de espiritualidad y retiro. Available at : [http://www.ciberiglesia.net/red/casas\\_espiritualidad.htm](http://www.ciberiglesia.net/red/casas_espiritualidad.htm) (accessed 25th february 2020)



About spiritual meditation centres, there is a non-profit organization called the International Foundation for Spiritual Unfoldment (IFSU), born from an initiative of the Spanish Society of Meditation that have two centres in the province of Tarragona. One of them is in Riudoms, where visitors can practice ashram, the teaching of meditation with different activities. The other is in Cambrils where guests can do courses based on meditation and mindfulness. The School of Creative Meditation does spiritual/rural retirements about mindfulness with the goal to recover energy, peace of their mind and discover the potential creative.<sup>26</sup> The ashram is a place of meditation and Hindu teaching, connect religion and culture, in which students coexist under the same roof as their teachers, it is not necessary to be a religious person to make these meditations because it is more about concentrating attention on a thought or one's own consciousness. Another meditation centres could be the mindfulness studio A Meditar in Tarragona<sup>27</sup> where people can have individual and group sessions of different types of meditation such as mindfulness, yoga styles such as synergy, rocket, yin and vinyasa that combine different techniques. There are a small variety of centres more specialise in different varieties of yoga where the participants want to find the balance of their lives as an example, we find YogaOne in Tarragona.<sup>28</sup>

There exist retreats dedicated exclusively to finding themselves and know more about the others as activities for tourist who wants to examine the status and value of relationships. In Tarragona there is a spiritual centre called Chamanismo para todos<sup>29</sup> that makes spiritual retreats for couples, marriage, close friends, family, etc.; private consultations, shamanic trips to Peru, Colombia and Mexico, etc. For retreats, they use a traditional indigenous drink from the Amazonian peoples of the tropical and subtropical areas of South America called Ayahuasca, the consumption of this drink generates hallucinogenic effects due to the presence of natural DMT from plants.

About artistic and religious monuments and attractions, there are plenty in the province of Tarragona. Concretely, in Tarragona Counties there are abundantly of shrines like *Santuari del Sagrat Cor*, chapels as *Sant Magí del Portal del Carro*, churches as *Església de Nazareth*, monasteries as *Monasteri de Poblet*, hermitages as *Ermita de Mare de Déu de la Roca*, parishes as *Parròquia de Sant Francesc d'Assís* and cathedrals as *Catedral de Tarragona*.

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<sup>26</sup> Based on information of Meditaya. Available at: <https://www.meditaya.com/> (accessed 25th February 2020)

<sup>27</sup> Based on information of A Meditar. Available at: <https://www.ameditar.es/> (accessed 3th april 2020)

<sup>28</sup> Based on information of YogaOne. Available at: <https://www.yogaone.es/es/yogaone-tarragona> (accessed 3th april 2020)

<sup>29</sup> <https://chamanismoparatodos.com/> (accessed 4th march 2020)



Most of them are really well located in order to attract more people and others are situated in peaceful places, which attract people who search disconnection, relax and find themselves.

Concerning religious events, there is a big amount of them, some of them are: Sant Fèlix on 30<sup>th</sup> of august Vilafranca del Penedes, Santa Tecla on 23rd of September in Tarragona, Santa Úrsula on 21st of October in Valls which recall the medieval traditions about each city.

Regarding tourists and religious routes there are four routes that can be considered potential attractions for visitors The Genus Route,<sup>30</sup> Cister's route,<sup>31</sup> Sant Jaume's route<sup>32</sup> and Route of the first Christians of Tarraco<sup>33</sup>. All these cases have in common the relation between religious heritage and tourism.

About wellness tourism as spa/healing treatments and beauty cures, there are hotels spa such as Hotel Balneari de Vallfogona de Riucorb<sup>34</sup> where water has an ideal medicinal property for treating diseases such as rheumatism, arthritis or asthma, as well as anti-stress therapies. For integral well-being or wellness, there are establishments that offer water treatments. Which relieve chronic rheumatism, dermatological and respiratory diseases, and also for anti-stress therapies or weight loss treatments such as: Hotel Termes Montbrió in Montbrió del Camp<sup>35</sup> or Aquum Spa&Wellness in La Pineda<sup>36</sup> where have different treatments for take care of yourself, relax, leave behind tiredness and stress.

In the desert of Cardó, had a convent and a 17th-century Carmelite hermitage that became a spa in the 19th century for their medicinal water resort. Nowadays is abandoned and in ruins, but can be visited for historical review and his legends.<sup>37</sup>

In spiritual tourism, we can find eco-tourism accommodations as Lo Corral d'Arnes, a shared town house located in Arnes, next to the almond groves in the Natural Park of Els Ports. There, tourists have a variety of cultural and natural activities such as hiking, mountain crossings, canyoning, cycling along the Via Verda or doing different craft activities as tapestry workshops, natural tints, candle courses, etc.<sup>38</sup> Eco-campsites as Ecocamp Vinyols in Vinyols dels Arcs

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<sup>30</sup> <https://www.tresc.cat/f/38748/ruta-del-paisatge-dels-genis-picasso-miro-gaudi-casals/>(accessed 3th march 2020)

<sup>31</sup> <https://www.larutadelcister.info/es>(accessed 3th march 2020)

<sup>32</sup> <https://www.pilgrim.es/cami-de-sant-jaume-camino-catalan/>(accessed 3th march 2020)

<sup>33</sup> <https://www.tarragona.cat/patrimoni/museu-historia/divulgacio-de-la-historia/ruta-dels-primers-cristians-de-tarraco>(accessed 3th march 2020)

<sup>34</sup> <https://hotelbalneari.com/es/inici/>(accessed 4th march 2020)

<sup>35</sup> <https://www.termesmontbrio.com/>(accessed 4th march 2020)

<sup>36</sup> <https://aquum.es/es/>(accessed 4th march 2020)

<sup>37</sup> <https://terresdelebre.travel/es/experiencias/el-balneario-en-el-desierto-de-cardo>(accessed 4th march 2020)

<sup>38</sup> <https://locorraldarnes.com/es/>(accessed 4th march 2020)



where the owners share values through games and activities to take care of farm animals, trees and garden, showing the contact with the rural environment, also they have an ecological restaurant with elaboration of 100% homemade dishes and slowfood-km0 badge. At this campsite is a place to disconnect and enjoy the rural world with the possibility to do different water activities as fishing, windsurfing; aerial activities as ultralight; motor activities as 4x4 routes, Quads or land activities as mountain biking, climbing, etc.<sup>39</sup>

About natural assets, the significance one is Montsant range,<sup>40</sup> a small spiritual mountain chain considered a place full of mysticism. It is considered a holy mountain, for the heritage values and the natural interest. Moreover, the area was declared a natural park by the Generalitat de Catalunya.<sup>41</sup> The most representative religious and spiritual ruins are the remains of the ancient Carthusian monastery of Scala Dei. Tourists can visit the three cloisters, the church and the refectory, as well as the reconstructed cell. Due to well understand the origins of the Priorat and the spirituality of the place, tourists visit this hermitage.<sup>42</sup>

Another kind of tourism that takes place in Spain due to its good astronomical observation is Star tourism. Concretely, Montsec's mountain has been declared UNESCO has declared one of the world's six Starlight Tourist Destinations for the exceptional views of its night sky.<sup>43</sup> Otherwise, in Tarragona counties there is one of the most important astronomical observatories in Spain, Observatori de l'Ebre<sup>44</sup> (Roquetes, Tarragona). Their offer includes guided tours of its old facilities where visitors can see the instruments of the early twentieth century and their researches; outreach activities as astronomical observations, courses, etc. and talks about the Universe, space meteorology, Antarctica, etc.<sup>45</sup>

Otherwise, on this study I will manifest the positive image which spiritual tourism makes in a destination due to unite both brands in order to benefit them. Due to formulate possible solutions to unite them, we will show the statistics of some selected attractions and offer a possible product that combine all of them.

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<sup>39</sup> <http://ecocampvinyols.cat/> (accessed 4th march 2020)

<sup>40</sup> <http://www.catalunyasud.net/activitats/montsant-mistic/> (accessed 5th march 2020)

<sup>41</sup> <http://parcsnaturals.gencat.cat/es/serra-montsant> (accessed 5th march 2020)

<sup>42</sup> <https://www.monestirs.cat/monst/priorat/cpr15esca.htm> (accessed 5th march 2020)

<sup>43</sup> Catalan News (2019). Catalan Montsec mountain range declared one of the world's six Starlight Destinations for its clear sky. Available at: <https://www.catalannews.com/life-style/item/catalan-montsec-mountain-range-declared-one-of-the-worlds-six-starlight-destinations-for-its-clear-sky> (accessed 5th march 2020)

<sup>44</sup> National Geographic. Article named Turismo Estelar. Available at: [https://viajes.nationalgeographic.com.es/a/turismo-estelar\\_8092/4](https://viajes.nationalgeographic.com.es/a/turismo-estelar_8092/4) (accessed 4th march 2020)

<sup>45</sup> <http://www.obsebre.es/es/> (accessed 4th march 2020)



## 4. ANALYSIS OF SPIRITUAL TOURISM PRODUCTS IN TARRAGONA REGION

In this chapter, I will introduce the possible spiritual core products as a result of the previous taxonomy. The analysis will be looking into the main page of each single case to see which communication strategy and their products. Finally, we will see their mentions and comments on Internet by online travel company as TripAdvisor, Booking or in social networking as Facebook which users generate reviews of their travel experiences.

### 4.1 The routes, spaces and festivities of historical and religious interest

#### 4.1.1. The Spiritual roads in Tarragona Counties: from the origins to their reality

Spiritual seekers have been taking part in pilgrimages for ages. Only, in recent years, this social phenomenon has emerged the concert of researchers and academics who carry out their studies into the analysis of this huge cyclical movement of millions of people all around the world (Martínez, 2011).

#### Case Study #1: Way of Saint James

Description of Way of Saint James
The most popular tourism brand at national and European level is the Road to Santiago (Graham and Murray, 1997; Santos, 2006). Its origins are in the ninth century, when the remains of St. James the Greater were identified. This recognition conducted a later passionate pilgrimage from all over Europe (Tilson, 2005; Lois and Lopez, 2012). The route converted, strengthen through medieval history and now, the principal and the most well-known route is the French one, originating in Saint Jean Pied de Port (France). Nevertheless, there are some diverse routes that have obtained fame; most of them have their origin in Spain (Cànoves, et. Al., 2012) Concretely, in this study we will study the Way of Saint James, in Catalonia, which is connected to the Camino de Santiago.
Communication offer of the Way of Saint James
Saint James' way in Catalonia was done with the purpose of several Catalan associations of pilgrims as "Associació d'Amics del Camí de Sant Jaume" <sup>46</sup> to mark and protect a Catalan route to be connected with the main one to Compostela.

<sup>46</sup> <http://www.camisantjaume.com/> (accessed 16th april 2020)



In the guise of the Catalonia's tourism official page classified the Way of Saint James, in Catalonia as a historic, natural and a cultural itinerary; which can be done on foot, by bicycle or by horse. The level of difficulty is initiated and it can be achieved during all year. The current administrator of the route is the Agència Catalana de Turisme and it is promoted thanks to some certain Catalan tourism offices, town halls, etc.<sup>47</sup>

#### Products of the Way of Saint James

It is a Catalan route that unites with the French route to Santiago de Compostela of all the cities, villages and hermitages that the pilgrims pass through. As we can see in (Figure 4.1.1.1.), there are two secondary routes in the province of Tarragona where visitors pass to unite to the main one to Compostela:

- The Way of Saint James from Tarragona to Lleida. Highlights the fact of passing through the three great royal monasteries of the Cistercian route.
- The Way of Saint James from Tortosa to Batea, popularly known as Camino del Ebro. Underline that the itinerary coincides with the GR-99 path, which take the courses of the Ebre's river. It usually starts in the Ebre Delta but the signalling is not complete until Tortosa.

Figure 4.1.1.1.: Way of Saint James, in Catalonia



Own elaboration by the platform Instamaps <sup>48</sup>

<sup>47</sup> <http://www.catalunya.com/cami-de-sant-jaume-24-1-61?language=ca> (accessed 16 th april 2020)

<sup>48</sup> Available in Instamaps at

<https://www.instamaps.cat/visor.html?businessid=e3bcf5eb9288c48e16c46599409fff3a&3D=false> Based on: <https://deandar.com/post/camidesantjaume> (accessed 13<sup>th</sup> april 2020)



#### Mentions and comments on the Internet of the Way of Saint James

The Catalan route is a relatively new route and little frequented compared to the others. On TripAdvisor there are 1106 comments about the Camino de Santiago, most of the mentions of the secondary routes refer to the Portuguese and Aragon way, among other variants. There are no comments regarding the Catalan way<sup>49</sup>

On YouTube, there are several videos about pilgrims who have travelled by bike or on foot. They show that it is not until they reach the Galicia area that pilgrims begin to meet. Some of them add that there are enough accommodations.

### Case Study #2: Cistercian route

#### Description of the Cistercian Route

An increasing amount of sacred sites is becoming multi-functional areas, where there is the possibility to do leisure activities, linked to nature and culture (Cànoves, et. al., 2012). Such as the Cistercian Route, structured by connecting three Cistercian monasteries: Santa Maria de Vallbona (in Urgell), Poblet (in Conca de Barberà) and Santes Creus (in Alt Camp). Their name was conceived in 1989 with the purpose of promoting these three counties.<sup>50</sup>

#### Communication offer of the Cistercian Route

On the official page of the Cistercian route they show you 25 proposals to do on the Cistercian route, including visiting the Vimbodí Glass Museum; holding a workshop to make an alabaster piece in Sarral, visiting the medieval town of Guimerà, visiting Verdú, a town declared an artisan interest in ceramics, etc.

They also offer the opportunity to join gastronomic routes and more proposals to do with family.<sup>51</sup>

#### Products of the Cistercian Route

The product is a route, which links three Cistercian monasteries, during the way travellers pass through some towns, hermitages and shrines. Regarding the itinerary, it can be seen in (Figure 4.1.1.2.) that there are different stops to take a break and get fresh water to drink and some other stops are religious buildings.

<sup>49</sup> [https://www.tripadvisor.es/Attraction\\_Review-g187508-d500410-Reviews-or15-Camino\\_de\\_Santiago-Santiago\\_de\\_Compostela\\_Province\\_of\\_A\\_Coruna\\_Galicia.html#REVIEWS](https://www.tripadvisor.es/Attraction_Review-g187508-d500410-Reviews-or15-Camino_de_Santiago-Santiago_de_Compostela_Province_of_A_Coruna_Galicia.html#REVIEWS) (accessed 26<sup>th</sup> april 2020)

<sup>50</sup> <https://www.larutadelcister.info/es/la-historia-del-gr175-la-ruta-del-cister> (accessed 7<sup>th</sup> april 2020)

<sup>51</sup> <https://www.larutadelcister.info/es> (accessed 26<sup>th</sup> april 2020)



Figure 4.1.1.2. The itinerary of Cistercian route by bike or on foot



Own elaboration by the platform Instamaps<sup>52</sup>

The itinerary follows the trajectory of the GR 175, which is part of the Network of Signposted Trails in Europe. It is a circular route with 105 kilometres and 108 kilometres for cyclists with four variants, suitable for people used to hike. Users will be able to enjoy different experiences related to nature as visiting Prades Mountains, spiritual and religious as participating in the vespers' prayer, listening the monks singing, and others related to the gastronomy and culture of its monastery villages. As the Way of Saint James, it can be realized on foot as well as by bicycle.<sup>53</sup>

Its origins were in the middle of the 12th Century when the Count of Barcelona conquered the last Muslim fortification. The new stronghold possession was in a rich and desolated area in the southern part of the current Catalonia. At that moment of the history, there was an expansion of a new monastic order called the Cistercian Order and a re-population of the deserted land. The new order discovered a rich land to cultivate, to build and to live. Three monasteries were built and were converted by the Crown in royal pantheons. The strong belief of the Cistercian Order created

<sup>52</sup> Own elaboration map. Available in Instamaps at:

<https://www.instamaps.cat/visor.html?businessid=b49a3148b2ff3ed545e911bc58050eea&3D=false>

Based on <https://www.larutadelcister.info/es/presentaci%C3%B3n-gr-175> (accessed 13 th april 2020)

<sup>53</sup> <https://www.larutadelcister.info/es/presentaci%C3%B3n-gr-175> (accessed 7th april 2020)



spirituality which travellers visit the monasteries and make the Cistercian route to appreciate it.<sup>54</sup>

The three monasteries are:

- The Monastery of Santa Maria de Vallbona, located in the region of Urgell, is the smallest monastery and the only monastery on the Cistercian route, populated only by nuns. Since its construction in 1153, it has had a good reputation due to the better preservation of the monastery and the good treatment received, it's a place where the guests can enjoy the art and calmness of the place.<sup>55 56</sup>
- The Monastery of Santa Maria de Santes Creus, located in the Alt Camp region, began its construction in 1160, suffering a partial destruction during the 19th century, in 1921, it was declared a national monument and it was restored. It is the only monasteries on the Cistercian route that has no monastic life. This allows the visitors the exploration of all the corners.<sup>57 58</sup>
- Royal Abbey of Santa Maria del Poblet, located in the region of La Conca de Barberà, founded in 1150. It is the biggest monastery of the Cistercian route and it has been recognized by being the only monastery inhabited solely by male Cistercian monks, who have been living in it since its foundation. Its popularity and its majesty took importance when the Counts of Barcelona declared their royal pantheon. It was also declared a World Heritage by UNESCO for its religious architecture.<sup>59 60</sup>

#### Mentions and comments on the Internet of the Cistercian Route

On TripAdvisor there are 5 reviews, all of them positive.

It is an itinerary appreciated for enjoying the architecture rather than for religious or spiritual meaning for its travellers. Otherwise, they highlight its good option to disconnect.<sup>61</sup>

<sup>54</sup> <http://www.catvisit.com/en/the-cistercian-route/> (accessed 8<sup>th</sup> april 2020)

<sup>55</sup> <https://www.femturisme.cat/ca/rutes/ruta-del-cister-i-vallbona-de-les-monges> (accessed 7th april 2020)

<sup>56</sup> <http://www.catvisit.com/en/the-cistercian-route/> (accessed 8th april 2020)

<sup>57</sup> <https://www.femturisme.cat/ca/rutes/ruta-del-cister-ii-cultura-fauna-flora-al-voltant-de-santes-creus> (accessed 7th april 2020)

<sup>58</sup> <http://www.catvisit.com/en/the-cistercian-route/> (accessed 8th april 2020)

<sup>59</sup> <https://www.femturisme.cat/ca/rutes/ruta-del-cister-iii-monestir-poblet-historia-actualitat> (accessed 8th april 2020)

<sup>60</sup> <http://www.catvisit.com/en/the-cistercian-route/> (accessed 8th april 2020)

<sup>61</sup> [https://www.tripadvisor.es/Attraction\\_Review-g663590-d11873805-Reviews-Rutal\\_del\\_Cister\\_GR175-Aiguamurcia\\_Alt\\_Camp\\_Costa\\_Dorada\\_Province\\_of\\_Tarragona\\_C.html](https://www.tripadvisor.es/Attraction_Review-g663590-d11873805-Reviews-Rutal_del_Cister_GR175-Aiguamurcia_Alt_Camp_Costa_Dorada_Province_of_Tarragona_C.html) (accessed 26th april 2020)



### Case Study #3: Route of the Earliest Christians of Tarraco

#### Description of the Route of the Earliest Christians of Tarraco

Another path that conserves and appreciate its heritage is the route of the Earliest Christians of Tarraco. This one shows how Tarragona's heritage survived the passage of the years preserving its artistic and archaeological Paleo-Christian patrimony. Making the heritage of Tarragona, the most remarkable in Spain.<sup>62</sup>

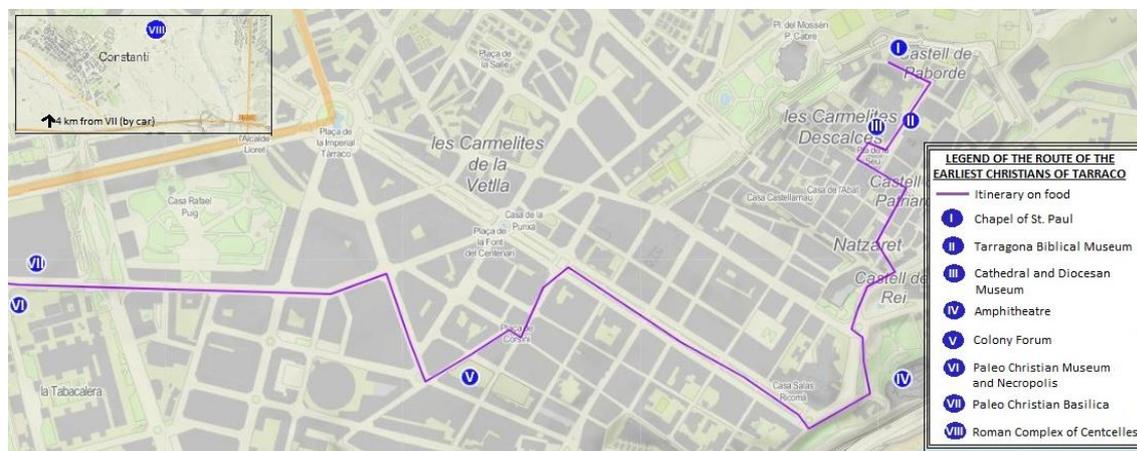
#### Communication offer of the Route of the Earliest Christians of Tarraco

The route of the first Christians of Tarraco is an itinerary promoted by the Municipal Tourism Board of Tarragona. Its communication is designed to guide visitors to learn about the process of birth and development of Christianity in Tarragona. A card has been created for the price of one euro, through which they enjoy discounts on access to the eight attractions. In this way each place is promoted jointly through this route. The goal is to make the museum facilities known.<sup>63</sup>

#### Products of the Route of the Earliest Christians of Tarraco

The product the recognition of the eight preserved spaces, where the implantation of Christianity in Spanish-Roman society of Tarragona took place as it can be seen in (Figure 4.1.1.3).<sup>64</sup>

Figure 4.1.1.3. The itinerary of the route of the Earliest Christians of Tarraco



Own elaboration by the platform Instamaps<sup>65</sup>

<sup>62</sup> <https://www.tarragonaturisme.cat/en/routes/route-earliest-christians-tarraco> (accessed 8th april 2020)

<sup>63</sup> <https://www.tarragonaturisme.cat/es/rutas/la-ruta-de-los-primeros-cristianos-de-tarraco> (accessed 26th april)

<sup>64</sup> <https://www.tarragona.cat/patrimoni/museu-historia/divulgacio-de-la-historia/ruta-dels-primers-cristians-de-tarraco> (accessed 8th april 2020)

<sup>65</sup> Own elaboration map. Available in Instamaps at:

<https://www.instamaps.cat/visor.html?businessid=a42bac05b31824e5ed296b8f368faa53&3D=false>

Based <https://www.tarragonaturisme.cat/es/rutas/la-ruta-de-los-primeros-cristianos-de-tarraco> (accessed 14 th april 2020)



The itinerary is composed by eight different museum facilities, which are:

- I. Chapel of St. Paul. The Tarragona's Seminary was built in the 19th century and it is situated at the highest site in Tarragona. It is remarkable because of the pious tradition mentioned that Saint Paul preached from one rock on which this building was constructed.<sup>66</sup>
- II. Tarragona Biblical Museum. Founded in 1930. This museum helps the visitors to understand the Bible's Foundation within a historical and Judaeo-Christian cultural context of the Earliest Christians. In addition, they will comprehend its transcendent values.<sup>67</sup>
- III. Cathedral and Diocesan Museum. During Roman ages, the cathedral was a temple dedicated to the Imperial Cult. After the 5th century, it was transformed into a Christian place. One of the chapels is dedicated to Saint Fructuosus and his clergymen. Moreover, in the Diocesan Museum visitors can find archaeological elements from the first eras of Christianity.<sup>68</sup>
- IV. Amphitheatre. Built at the beginning of the 2nd century. It was used for gladiator spectacles with a total capacity for 12,000 viewers. During the ages, the amphitheatre had diverse variations, such as the construction of a basilica in memory of the martyrs, dedicated to St Mary of the Miraculus.<sup>69</sup>
- V. Colony Forum. It was the core of social and political life in the city. Some legends explained that the apostle Paul makes his public missionary activities during his visits to Tarraco. As Pious tradition describes that the Saint Fructuosus' house was situated there.<sup>70</sup>
- VI. Paleo-Christian Museum and Necropolis. Both places show Roman funerary practices and some types of antiquity graves. In this place, it was used to the adulation of the martyrs and a centre of pilgrimage until the beginning of the Visigoth period. Because of that, the believer's present interest in being buried close to the martyrs.' relics. The Museum has the biggest assortment of art and Paleo-Christian archaeology in Spain.<sup>71</sup>

<sup>66</sup> <https://www.tarragonaturisme.cat/en/route-point/chapel-st-paul> (accessed 8th april 2020)

<sup>67</sup> <https://www.tarragonaturisme.cat/en/route-point/tarragona-biblical-museum> (accessed 8th april 2020)

<sup>68</sup> <https://www.tarragonaturisme.cat/en/route-point/cathedral-and-diocesan-museum> (accessed 8th april 2020)

<sup>69</sup> <https://www.tarragonaturisme.cat/en/route-point/amphitheatre-0> (accessed 8th april 2020)

<sup>70</sup> <https://www.tarragonaturisme.cat/en/route-point/local-or-colony-forum> (accessed 8th april 2020)

<sup>71</sup> <https://www.tarragonaturisme.cat/en/route-point/paleochristian-museum-and-necropolis> (accessed 8th april 2020)



<p>VII. Paleo-Christian Basilica. It is from the first half of the 5th century. It is the sole representation of Paleo-Christian funerary basilica architecture found in Tarragona. There, visitors can understand the customs and adoration buildings of the early Christianity. There was found an epigraph dedicated to the beatified Egyptian virgin called Thecla.<sup>72</sup></p> <p>VIII. Roman Complex of Centcelles. This artistic built was constructed between the 4th and 5th centuries (first centuries of Christianity). The main space is ornamented with mosaic scenes from the Old and New Testaments and exalted different figures.<sup>73</sup></p> <p>This route link the heritage of Tarragona and Constantí.</p>
Mentions and comments on the Internet of the Route of the Earliest Christians of Tarraco
Any user comments about the route.

#### Case Study #4: Route of Estels del Sud

Description of the Route of Estels del Sud
<p>The route is a circular journey of different itineraries used by hikers to explore the Ports and discover its rich natural landscape and its cultural heritage.<sup>74</sup></p> <p>The route is on initial level of difficulty, the complete journey is designed to be done in five days. The signalling of the route is enough and the mark is a blue star. In detours, information is available on small posts about the hiking route.<sup>75</sup></p>
Communication offer of the Route of Estels del Sud
<p>To make the route you must register through the official website of Estels del Sud. There, interested people have to fill out a form and the managers of the route contact them to inform all the details and formalize the reservation. Pilgrims are required to have insurance to carry out the route as FEEC, FEDME or equivalent recognized by the UIAA. If they are not in possession of these insurance, they can request it for the activity and specific days from Estels del Sud.<sup>76</sup></p>
Products of the Route of Estels del Sud
<p>The route links five rural lodgings that function as the beginning-end of the stage. The itinerary can be carried out interchangeably in both directions.</p>

<sup>72</sup> <https://www.tarragonaturisme.cat/en/route-point/basilica-parc-central> (accessed 8th april 2020)

<sup>73</sup> <https://www.tarragonaturisme.cat/en/route-point/late-roman-complex-centcelles> (accessed 8th april 2020)

<sup>74</sup> <https://estelsdelsud.com/travesia/> (accessed 29th april 2020)

<sup>75</sup> <http://www.casiaventurilla.com/estels-del-sud-introduccion-y-datos-tecnicos> (accessed 29th april 2020)

<sup>76</sup> <https://estelsdelsud.com/> (accessed 29th april 2020)



The stages and accommodations of this route are (Figure 4.1.1.4.):

- Ferrera's refuge to Fábrika de Solfa Hotel (Beseit)  
Route: 19.1 km. Approximate time: 7 - 8 h.
- Fábrika de Solfa Hotel (Beseit) to Lo Corral d'Arnes (Arnes)  
Route: 23.01 km. Approximate time: 8 - 9 h.
- Lo Corral d'Arnes (Arnes) to Ca les Barberes (Paüls)  
Route: 21.99 km. Approximate time: 8 - 9 h.
- Ca les Barberes (Paüls) to Caro's refuge  
Route: 21.57 km. Approximate time: 8-9 h.
- Refuge Expensive to Refugio Font Ferrera  
Route: 18.15 km. Approximate time: 7 - 8 h.

Figure 4.1.1.4. The itinerary of the route of Estels del Sud



Own elaboration by the platform Instamaps<sup>77</sup>

They also offer various services and products:

- Baggage transfers so that visitors do not carry their luggage
- Split journey. To have the possibility of making the journey in several batches in case visitors do not have five days in a row free.
- Guided tour. Pilgrims can make the journey accompanied by a Mountain Guide

<sup>77</sup> Own elaboration map. Available in Instamaps at:

<https://www.instamaps.cat/visor.html?businessid=936aa4fdb4fda244684414a1f25b0c16&3D=false>

Based <https://estelsdelsud.com/travesia/etapas/> (accessed 18 th may 2020)



- Morralet. A pack of products that includes a pass card, an Estels del Sud map, an exclusive Estels del Sud t-shirt at the end of the journey. This pack is delivered to the first establishment where the participants overnight.
- Trekking guide where the five-stage journey is described in both directions, alternatives to do it climbing peaks and variants to be able to make crossings in less than five days.<sup>78</sup>

#### Mentions and comments on the Internet of the Route of Estels del Sud

On Google, there are 10 reviews, all of which are positive. Highlighting the nature of the Els Ports mountain range, the beauty of the landscape and the cleanness and the good food of the accommodations.

#### 4.1.2. Sacred spaces of Tarragona Counties as spiritual feedback

People live surrounded by meaningful places (Relph, 1976). Recently, there has been an increase to research the affection to places (Low & Altman, 1992). The result of some studies told that significant spaces provide safety, stability (Brown & Perkins, 1992) and the collective feelings is to protect the spaces for preserving them (Firey, 1945/1961).

Religious buildings have a deep connection with people's relations to a place (Mazumdar and Mazumdar, 2004). Concretely, in sacred spaces, believers look for participating in rites and interactions with priests, religious community and others (Mead, 1934).

#### Case Study #5: The Royal Monastery of Santa Maria of Poblet

##### Description of the Royal Monastery of Santa Maria of Poblet

It is a Cistercian monastery located in the municipality of Vimbodí i Poblet. According to Saloustros (2013) the Royal Monastery of Santa Maria of Poblet was built in the 12th century and it is one of the most considerable monasteries in Spain. As the page of Unesco said the Poblet Monastery is one of the most relevant Cistercian monasteries for that reason in 1921, it was declared a national monument and a World Heritage Site in 1991.<sup>79</sup>

##### Communication offer of the Royal Monastery of Santa Maria of Poblet

<sup>79</sup> <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/518/> (accessed 8th april 2020)

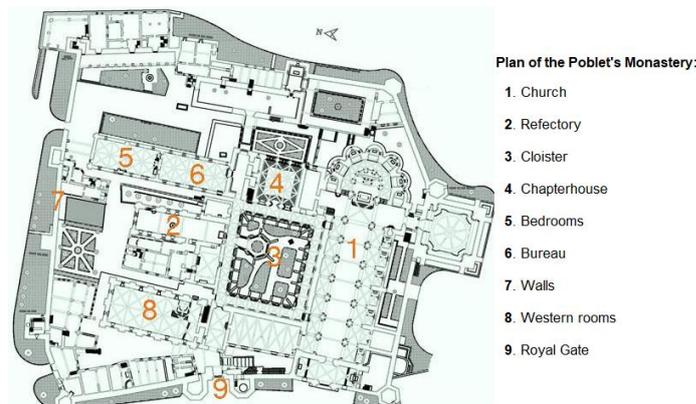


The general management of the monastery is accomplished by the Territorial Cultural Heritage Commission of Tarragona, Trustees Board of Poblet and it integrates the State, Autonomous Community and local levels. Considering tourism management and the public use, they worked considering the monastic community who lives in the Monastery and the Cistercian Route take part in the management of the monastery. It has a Master Plan, promoted by the monastic community for the conservation and restoration of this construction. The Catalonia Government and Trustees Board of Poblet make sure that this plan is being implemented and it is effective. The financial resources needed for this Master Plan are accomplished by the income from the entrance tickets, the Government of Catalonia and other sources.<sup>80</sup>

#### Products of the Royal Monastery of Santa Maria of Poblet

Since the 12th century this monastery had many modifications, being used as pantheon, royal residence, military facilities and monastery (Saloustros, 2013). It is really significant for being part in the exploitation of agriculture and the population of the Catalonia in times of the Aragon Crown. Currently, it is very relevant for the big amount of tourists who appreciate the art, culture, history and the spirituality of this construction. Concretely, as it can be seen in (Figure 4.1.1.5.) the monastery is designed in three closures, enveloped by a protective wall. The first one has edifices from the 16th century; there is a golden door, which connects to the second enclosure. This one has the Main Square encircled by the remains of the poor hospital, the treasury and the Santa Caterina chapel. The last one has the monastic rooms, the church and the cloister everything in a fortified enclosure.<sup>81</sup>

**Figure 4.1.1.5. Plan of the Royal Monastery of Santa Maria of Poblet**



Translated from the blog km369<sup>82</sup>

<sup>80</sup> <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/518/> (accessed 10<sup>th</sup> april 2020)

<sup>81</sup> <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/518/> (accessed 8<sup>th</sup> april 2020)

<sup>82</sup> <http://km369.blogspot.com/2008/02/el-monestir-de-poblet-ii.html> (accessed 16 th may 2020)



#### Mentions and comments on the Internet of the Royal Monastery of Santa Maria of Poblet

On TripAdvisor, there are 721 comments from this monastery, of which 90% are positive, 4% are negative and 6% are neutral.

- Positive comments: Reference to the excellent experience of the visitor who is fascinated by the architecture of the place, its good conservation and accessibility of spaces.
- Negative comments: Related to the price for visiting the construction that is considered excessive regarding the lack of content in the explanations with guidance and the speed in which the facilities are visited.<sup>83</sup>

### Case Study #6: The Carthusian Monastery of Scala Dei

#### Description of the Carthusian Monastery of Scala Dei

It was a Carthusian monastery located in the municipality of La Morera de Montsant, in the northwest of the Priory region. Founded in the 12th century by Alfonso el Casto, it is considered the first Charterhouse in Spain.<sup>84</sup> The idea to construct it there was because of is where a pastor had dreamed of angels going up to heaven by a ladder, this gives the place name of Scala Dei (staircase of God).<sup>85</sup>

#### Communication offer of the Carthusian Monastery of Scala Dei

Because of its abandonment in 1835, there are currently only ruins that belong to the Museum of the History of Catalonia.<sup>86</sup> Through the official website of Patrimoni de la Generalitat de Catalunya, the Charterhouse of Santa María of Scala Dei catalogue the ruins as architecture, artistic, renaissance, baroque and counter-reform religious monument. It is considered one of the most important medieval and modern monasteries in Catalonia.<sup>87</sup>

#### Products of the Carthusian Monastery of Scala Dei

For several centuries, monks from Carthusian Order used the monastery to populate fields, built mills and spread the cultivation of the vine. Concluding by forcibly

<sup>83</sup> [https://www.tripadvisor.es/Attraction\\_Review-g7093057-d1942357-Reviews-Real\\_Monasterio\\_de\\_Santa\\_Maria\\_de\\_Poblet-Poblet\\_Province\\_of\\_Tarragona\\_Catalo.html#REVIEWS](https://www.tripadvisor.es/Attraction_Review-g7093057-d1942357-Reviews-Real_Monasterio_de_Santa_Maria_de_Poblet-Poblet_Province_of_Tarragona_Catalo.html#REVIEWS) (accessed 16<sup>th</sup> april 2020)

<sup>84</sup> <https://www.turismepriorat.org/es/comarca/municipios/escaladei> (accessed 17th april 2020)

<sup>85</sup> <https://www.turismepriorat.org/es/que-hacer/puntos-interes/cartuja-de-escaladei> (accessed 17th april 2020)

<sup>86</sup> <https://www.turismepriorat.org/es/comarca/municipios/escaladei> (accessed 17th april 2020)

<sup>87</sup> <http://patrimoni.gencat.cat/es/coleccion/cartuja-de-escaladei> (accessed 7th may 2020)



abandoning it and finally it was destroyed due to constant looting.<sup>88</sup> Currently, the structures are preserved as a romantic ruin with six hundred years of history. There are organized visit tours to the 3 cloisters (one of them rebuilt), the church, the refectory and a rebuilt cell. Vine and oil crops are spread, leading to the commercial revitalization of the entire region.<sup>89</sup>

#### Mentions and comments on the Internet of the Carthusian Monastery of Scala Dei

On TripAdvisor, there is a total of 218 reviews, 91% of which are positive, 8% normal and 1% bad.

- Positive comments: highlight the good impression that the ruins give, that the guided tours are very worthwhile because they make you imagine how the place was in the past.
- Negative comments: refer to criticizing the guides and one comment states that the ruins have no interest.<sup>90</sup>

### Case Study #7: Tarragona's Cathedral

#### Description of Tarragona's Cathedral

It is located in Tarragona, a World Heritage City by UNESCO and a Historic Artistic Site since 1966. This cathedral is considered an Artistic, Historical Monument since 1905 (Garcia-Vallès, 2002). As it can be seen in the official page of Tarragona's cathedral, there are historical memories and art works that visitors can appreciate. Considering the solidity of its materials is seen as the first cathedral of Catalonia.<sup>91</sup>

#### Communication offer of Tarragona's Cathedral

The official web page of the cathedral promotes the building as a space full of spirituality to pray.<sup>92</sup>

#### Products of Tarragona's Cathedral

The building was made in the 13<sup>th</sup> century with a calcarenite, but only the facade was done by different kind of rocks due to make the structure stronger as the lower part of that one, which was made of marble. The style is Gothic excluding the cloister and two side doors on the facade that are Romanesque (Garcia-Valles, 1997). In times of

<sup>88</sup> <https://www.turismepriorat.org/es/que-hacer/puntos-interes/cartuja-de-escaladei> (accessed 17th april 2020)

<sup>89</sup> <http://patrimoni.gencat.cat/es/coleccion/cartuja-de-escaladei> (accessed 7th may 2020)

<sup>90</sup> [https://www.tripadvisor.es/Attraction\\_Review-g7681144-d4752038-Reviews-Cartuja de Scala Dei-Escaladei Province of Tarragona Catalonia.html](https://www.tripadvisor.es/Attraction_Review-g7681144-d4752038-Reviews-Cartuja_de_Scala_Dei-Escaladei_Province_of_Tarragona_Catalonia.html) (accessed 17th april 2020)

<sup>91</sup> <https://www.catedraldetarragona.com/catedral/> (accessed 11 th april 2020)

<sup>92</sup> <https://www.catedraldetarragona.com/catedral/> (accessed 11 th april 2020)



Roman Imperial, this building was the temple of Emperor Augustus, a place for worship.<sup>93</sup> Currently, it is used as a place where visitors can find themselves and meet God's love, at the same time as asking forgiveness for their sins.<sup>94</sup>

Figure 4.1.7.

#### Mentions and comments on the Internet of Tarragona's Cathedral

On TripAdvisor, the Cathedral of Tarragona has a total of 1593 opinions, of which 92% are positive, 2% negative and 7% neutral.

- Positive comments: regard the good lighting of the structure at night, the complete visit, the well-preserve structure and the good impression that the visitors feel when they visit the cathedral.
- Negative comments: visitors consider that it is unfair that believers had to pay the entrance, the Director of Cathedral's Public Relations replied this comment explaining that the cathedral facilitates entry for those who only want to enter for praying and defended that the entrance price is only for the maintenance and restoration of the building.<sup>95</sup>

#### 4.1.3. Religious worship events

Religious tourism events can help to support local culture and its traditions. This festivity represent a big attraction for spiritual tourists and for those more captivated in the cultural attributes of the religious event (Cerutti and Piva, 2015).

#### Case Study #8: Santa Tecla's festivity

##### Description of Santa Tecla's festivity

It is the set of festive and religious activities, take place in September in Tarragona to celebrate the patron saint of the City.<sup>96</sup>

##### Communication offer of Santa Tecla's festivity

These festivities have received various awards, among them: the National Tourist Interest Festival, granted by the Spanish Government in 2010; the National Interest Heritage Festival, granted by the Generalitat de Catalunya in 2002 and the ARC Prize

<sup>93</sup> <https://www.catedraldetarragona.com/> (accessed 11th april 2020)

<sup>94</sup> <https://www.catedraldetarragona.com/catedral/> (accessed 11 th april 2020)

<sup>95</sup> [https://www.tripadvisor.es/Attraction\\_Review-g187503-d244229-Reviews-Catedral\\_Basilica\\_Metropolitana\\_Primada\\_de\\_Tarragona-Tarragona\\_Costa\\_Dorada\\_P.html#REVIEWS](https://www.tripadvisor.es/Attraction_Review-g187503-d244229-Reviews-Catedral_Basilica_Metropolitana_Primada_de_Tarragona-Tarragona_Costa_Dorada_P.html#REVIEWS) (accessed 16<sup>th</sup> april 2020)

<sup>96</sup> <https://www.tarragona.cat/cultura/festes-i-cultura-popular/santa-tecla/descobreix-la-festa/guia> (accessed 21th april 2020)



for the best festival program, awarded by the Associació Professional de Representants, Promotors i Màangers of Catalonia in 2013. <sup>97</sup>
<b>Products of the Santa Tecla's festivity</b>
The event program is composed about 500 activities promoted by the City Council and different entities of the territory. During this celebration there are three performances of human castles and gastronomic events such as Braç de Santa Tecla, a huge gypsy arm made by the Pastry Guild in Plaça de la Font or the Teclatapa, a quick meal in the square, vermouths with music, the mamadeta, a typical drink of this party, etc. A defining element of this event since 14 <sup>th</sup> century is the Seguici Popular, a set of dances and allegorical representations. The Amparito Roca is a popular pasodoble that over the years has become the anthem of the festivities. <sup>98</sup>
<b>Mentions and comments on the Internet of the Santa Tecla's festivity</b>
On the Minube platform, there are 18 evaluations of the Fiestas de Santa Tecla, with a score of 4.4 out of 5, that is to say 8.8 out of 10. Among the positive comments, it is highlighted that it is a festival of national interest and its numerous activities. <sup>99</sup>

## 4.2. Natural encounters as ecotourism, natural tourism and starlight tourism

### 4.2.1 Natural tourism vs ecotourism

The nature tourism includes all kinds of tourism, which travellers enjoy being surrounded from natural resources in an undeveloped or wild sort (Goodwin, 1996). The natural resources used are wildlife reserves, natural areas and protected areas (Laarman and Durst, 1993)

As Goodwin (1996) explained, ecotourism is a subcategory of nature tourism. Categorised for being a low impact nature tourism, which takes part in the species and habitat preservation, keeping safe their wildlife heritage zone. According to Boo (1990) ecotourism can be defined as travelling to uncontaminated nature space with the purpose of investigating, appreciating the environment, its wildlife and its cultural manifestation. Regarding Fennell (1999) ecotourism is an unconventional type of travel. It was born as an answer of the tourist's needs to find something new, away from the traditional stays, in favour of more ecological and socio-cultural involvement. In addition, it is considerate a good opportunity for all the countries, for

<sup>97</sup> <https://www.tarragona.cat/cultura/festes-i-cultura-popular/santa-tecla> (accessed 21th april 2020)

<sup>98</sup> <https://www.tarragona.cat/cultura/festes-i-cultura-popular/santa-tecla> (accessed 21th april 2020)

<sup>99</sup> <https://www.minube.com/rincon/fiestas-de-santa-tecla-a104586> (accessed 21th april 2020)



the economic chance to work in a tourism which protect their human and environmental conditions.

In general, in the latter twentieth century, eco tourists were scientists and bird watchers, characterised for being educated, well off in terms of financial, cooperate with conservation organizations and their travels were long staying, frequent and allocentric because they are in a constant search of the collective safety (Fennell, 1999). Other researchers as Laarman and Durst (1987) defined eco tourists as travellers whose interest in going to a destination is its natural history and in its visits learn, recreate themselves and sometimes enjoy adventurous experiences.

### Case Study #9: Lo Corral d'Arnes

Description of Lo Corral d'Arnes
Lo Corral d'Arnes is a rural accommodation d'Arnes refurbished from an ox pen since 2002. In 2004, they joined <i>Estels del Sud</i> a five-day route through the Els Ports' Massif, which some establishments are included to host its hikers. The accommodation is characterized for its tranquillity, ideal for visitors who want to rest and get away from the stress of everyday life. <sup>100</sup>
Communication offer of Lo Corral d'Arnes
They are promoted through social networks such as Facebook, in which they share images of the area, activities to do near the establishment and images of nearby natural environments. As we can see in its official page they promote the culture and history of the territory so that its guests feel more integrated in the experience of their stay.
Products of Lo Corral d'Arnes
They offer information on a wide variety of nature, environment observation, hiking tours with specialized guide and environmental educator, craft workshop or courses <sup>101</sup> as textile artisan workshops or beeswax candles and cultural activities. They encourage people to venture into the surrounded nature areas as doing excursions on foot, by bicycle or horse, to contemplate the Parc Natural dels Ports, the cultivated fields, doing the Via Verda, etc. Visitors have a big variety of interesting activities that they can join; for example, the historical, artistic and cultural baggage of the province visiting Terra Alta, the spaces of the Battle of the Ebro, etc. <sup>102</sup>

<sup>100</sup> <https://estelsdelsud.com/alojamientos/casa-rural-lo-corral-arnes/> (accessed 12<sup>th</sup> april 2020)

<sup>101</sup> <https://estelsdelsud.com/alojamientos/casa-rural-lo-corral-arnes/> (accessed 12<sup>th</sup> april 2020)

<sup>102</sup> [locorraldarnes.com](http://locorraldarnes.com) (accessed 12 th april 2020)



Mentions and comments on the Internet of Lo Corral d'Arnes
<p>On the platform of Airbnb, they only have one comment which is positive that recommend and highlights the quality of the pleasant service.<sup>103</sup></p> <p>In google they have a total of 37 reviews, 97% are positive and only 3% are negative.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Positive comments: underline the good food quality, the charm of the place, the good treatment and the beautiful natural environment.</li> <li>▪ Negative comment: said that there is no so much flexibility.<sup>104</sup></li> </ul>

## Case Study #10: Vinyols Ecocamp

Description of Vinyols Ecocamp
<p>Another example of rural accommodation is the Vinyols Ecocamp, a family camping integrated into an agro-ecological farm in the town of Viñols and Arcs. Their offer consist of give a rural approach to their due to have experiences in the countryside enjoying the calm and leisurely life, accepting animals, trees and the environment.<sup>105</sup></p>
Communication offer of Vinyols Ecocamp
<p>In its accommodation, the owners share the values to cure the ecosystem, coexistence and respect for the other, through play, exploration and collaboration, promoting the integration of human in the nature.</p>
Products of Vinyols Ecocamp
<p>They offer activities to connect their visitors with the environment. Visitors can participate daily in an agro-ecological farm, with CCPAE certified of organic farm, harvesting vegetables, aromatic workshops, harvesting and watering the garden, on the farm the animals are free and can be cared for and fed. It is a pet friendly accommodation; therefore, they accept their guests bring pets in all the camping establishments. Depending on the season, they organize a variety of special activities such as gymkhana in winter, cooking workshops, home remedies, creations with</p>

<sup>103</sup> [https://www.airbnb.es/rooms/27592221?source\\_impression\\_id=p3\\_1587078609\\_pTmP78jyhRw8JPC0&guts=1&adults=1](https://www.airbnb.es/rooms/27592221?source_impression_id=p3_1587078609_pTmP78jyhRw8JPC0&guts=1&adults=1) (accessed 17 th april 2020)

<sup>104</sup>

[https://www.google.com/travel/hotels/entity/Cgsl7svniLng\\_orIARAB/reviews?g2lb=2502548%2C4258168%2C4260007%2C4270442%2C4274032%2C4291318%2C4305595%2C4306835%2C4308216%2C4309598%2C4317915%2C4328159%2C4329288%2C4333265%2C4357967%2C4364231%2C4366684%2C4366685%2C4369397%2C4373085%2C4270859%2C4284970%2C4291517%2C4316256%2C4356899&hl=es&gl=es&un=1&rp=EO7L54i54P6KyAEQ7svniLng\\_orIATgCQABIAQ&ictx=1&hrf=KhYKBwjDxAFGA45BwjDxAFGA8YASgAggEIMHgxMmEwOTQ1NjFkNThjNWNmOjB4YzgxNWZiMDM5MTE5ZTVIZoBJxolMHgxMmEwOTQ1NjFkNThjNWNmOjB4YzgxNWZiMDM5MTE5ZTVIZQ](https://www.google.com/travel/hotels/entity/Cgsl7svniLng_orIARAB/reviews?g2lb=2502548%2C4258168%2C4260007%2C4270442%2C4274032%2C4291318%2C4305595%2C4306835%2C4308216%2C4309598%2C4317915%2C4328159%2C4329288%2C4333265%2C4357967%2C4364231%2C4366684%2C4366685%2C4369397%2C4373085%2C4270859%2C4284970%2C4291517%2C4316256%2C4356899&hl=es&gl=es&un=1&rp=EO7L54i54P6KyAEQ7svniLng_orIATgCQABIAQ&ictx=1&hrf=KhYKBwjDxAFGA45BwjDxAFGA8YASgAggEIMHgxMmEwOTQ1NjFkNThjNWNmOjB4YzgxNWZiMDM5MTE5ZTVIZoBJxolMHgxMmEwOTQ1NjFkNThjNWNmOjB4YzgxNWZiMDM5MTE5ZTVIZQ) (accessed 17 th april 2020)

<sup>105</sup> <https://ecocampvinyols.cat/> (accessed 12th april 2020)



materials from the environment, and in summer, they complement the previous activities with live music, shows, circus workshops, storytelling and themed activities. They also have spaces to establish meetings between visitors.<sup>106</sup>

#### Mentions and comments on the Internet of Vinyols Ecocamp

There is a total of 554 Google reviews, of which 88% are positive, 7% neutral and 5% negative.

- Positive comments: good place environment, nice accommodation for families with kids, the nice farm, very clean and quiet place.
- Negative comments: concerns about that there are no enough cleaning and not enough food quantities and little quality, at the same time in this reviewer's comment that the farm is very nice for children.<sup>107</sup>

On TripAdvisor, there are a total of 75 reviews, 67% of which are good, 7% normal and 16% negative.

- Positive comments: they refer to the farm, the good food, the pleasant place for all kinds of people and the philosophy of the site that is considered very welcoming for the visitors.
- Negative comments: visitors regret about the poor comfort of the beds, the poor quality and expensive price of the restaurant<sup>108</sup>

### Case Study #11: Montsant range

#### Description of Montsant range

The Natural Park of Montsant is located in the north of the Priorat region. It is considered one of the most impressive reliefs in Tarragona Counties. There are a wide biological diversity and it is also remarkable that Montsant has one of the greatest fauna populations in Catalonia.<sup>109</sup>

#### Communication offer of Montsant range

<sup>106</sup> <https://es.ecocampvinyols.cat/ecocamp/> (accessed 12<sup>th</sup> april 2020)

<sup>107</sup> <https://www.google.com/search?q=ecocamp+vinyols+comentarios&oq=ecocamp+vinyols+comentarios&aqs=chrome..69i57.6420j0j4&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF8#lrd=0x12a1455f23025b83:0x4785aac91ecebb1f,1,,> (accessed 17<sup>th</sup> april 2020)

<sup>108</sup> [https://www.tripadvisor.es/ShowUserReviews-g1190235-d1378950-r437587051-Vinyols\\_Camp-Vinyols\\_i\\_Els\\_Arcs\\_Baix\\_Camp\\_Costa\\_Dorada\\_Province\\_of\\_Tarragona\\_Ca.html](https://www.tripadvisor.es/ShowUserReviews-g1190235-d1378950-r437587051-Vinyols_Camp-Vinyols_i_Els_Arcs_Baix_Camp_Costa_Dorada_Province_of_Tarragona_Ca.html) (17<sup>th</sup> april 2020)

<sup>109</sup> <https://costadaurada.info/es/actividades/naturaleza/parques-naturales/parc-natural-de-la-serra-del-montsant> (accessed 17<sup>th</sup> april 2020)



As in the page of Catsud explained that Montsant is a mountain chain considered for lots of visitors a holy place, symbol of tranquillity, well-being and spiritual peace. <sup>110</sup>
Products of the Montsant range
It is a favourite place for hikers. During the Visigothic times, Montsant was a refuge for ascetics who were really integrated in the mountains and had a spiritual relationship with them. These people were admired for setting the example. Since pagan time, there have been practices related to the worship of nature and divinities. About its architectural heritage, there are many hermitages. It was in the second half of the 12th century that the first chapels and monasteries were built in Montsant as there are the ruins of the first Charterhouse monastery of Spain, the Charterhouse of Scala Dei. Coexisting in the same mountain, charismatic hermits, Carthusians and Cistercians. <sup>111</sup>
Mentions and comments on the Internet of the Montsant range
On TripAdvisor, there are 55 reviews, which 100% are positive, 85% are excellent and 15% are very good. Commenting that it is a fantastic place to meet nature, stand out its vineyards and wineries, highlighting that it is a good place for doing sports. <sup>112</sup>

#### 4.2.2. Spiritual Opportunity for Starlight tourism

Tourists have a big variety of opportunities to have natural experiences, but star tourism gives them another view of tourism.

On the official web page of the Tenerife's Starlight Foundation explained that Starlight Tourist Destinations are places where there are optimal sky's attributes for looking the stars. This means that the level of pollution is low and there is a continuous manage of the possible light contamination. These destinations not solely need to fulfil some sky characteristics; they also need to have a tourism infrastructure with a suitable inclusion into nocturnal nature.<sup>113</sup>

Concretely, in the area of the case study there are not any place with this quality certificate of sky's attributes. Otherwise, seeing the map of the quality of the night sky of Catalonia in 2019 published by the Department of Territory and Sustainability of Catalonia, it can be known and easily compared the quality of the night sky in different areas. In case of the Tarragona

<sup>110</sup> <http://www.catalunyasud.net/activitats/montsant-mistic/> (accessed 17<sup>th</sup> april 2020)

<sup>111</sup> <http://www.catalunyasud.net/activitats/montsant-mistic/> (accessed 17<sup>th</sup> april 2020)

<sup>112</sup> [https://www.tripadvisor.es/Attraction\\_Review-g1836991-d4752135-Reviews-Parc\\_Natural\\_de\\_la\\_Serra\\_de\\_Montsant-La\\_Morera\\_de\\_Montsant\\_Province\\_of\\_Tarra.html#REVIEWS](https://www.tripadvisor.es/Attraction_Review-g1836991-d4752135-Reviews-Parc_Natural_de_la_Serra_de_Montsant-La_Morera_de_Montsant_Province_of_Tarra.html#REVIEWS) (accessed 17<sup>th</sup> april 2020)

<sup>113</sup> [https://fundacionstarlight.org/en/section/starlight-tourist-destinations--definition/291.htmlRoquetes\\_Observatory](https://fundacionstarlight.org/en/section/starlight-tourist-destinations--definition/291.htmlRoquetes_Observatory) (accessed 13<sup>th</sup> april 2020)



Counties, the area of Montsant, Els Ports de Tortosa have a very good quality recognition, and the Delta de l'Ebre and the Prades mountain area receive better recognition.<sup>114</sup> The determination of its quality to observe the stars is due to the proximity of the populated areas.

Interested in astronomy they go to these areas to take photographs and look at the stars individually, but there are also sporadic astronomical activities organized in these four areas. Among them activities organized by Catsud, such as seeing meteor showers.<sup>115</sup>

### Case Study #12: AstroPrades

Description of AstroPrades
In Prades 2015, it was born a project focused on astrotourism called AstroPrades. The main purpose was the environmental protection of Prades' mountains, Montsant region and the creation of the Parc Astronòmic de les Muntanyes de Prades (PAP). <sup>116</sup>
Communication offer of AstroPrades
They also promoted themselves as a project focusing on bringing knowledge of the universe to everyone, creating a new economic motor for Prades and Baix Camp, as well as becoming an important observation centre to appreciate and study the universe. <sup>117</sup>
Products of AstroPrades
For that, in the website interested people can find a sort of astronomic activity for all the ages. Among them, these activities include gastronomic experiences seeing the stars, photographic contests of the night sky. Even one of the most outstanding activities is the one where all the lights go out in Prades, there are special astronomical projections held in the 360° planetarium, interested people can bring their own telescopes and practice star photography. There is an offer more spiritual to connect visitors with the starry sky that is doing a yoga workshop during the sunset to relax. <sup>118</sup>
Mentions and comments on the Internet of the Astroprades
On TripAdvisor there are seven reviews of Astroprades, all of which are positive and highlight the interesting projections, fascinating knowledge of astronomy, also some comments refers that the activity carried out in Prades that the village turn off the lights,

<sup>114</sup>[http://mediambient.gencat.cat/web/.content/home/ambits\\_dactuacio/atmosfera/contaminacio\\_luminica/a\\_valuacio\\_de\\_la\\_qualitat\\_del\\_cel\\_de\\_nit/Mapa\\_qualitat\\_cel\\_nocturn\\_Catalunya.pdf](http://mediambient.gencat.cat/web/.content/home/ambits_dactuacio/atmosfera/contaminacio_luminica/a_valuacio_de_la_qualitat_del_cel_de_nit/Mapa_qualitat_cel_nocturn_Catalunya.pdf) (accessed 17 th april 2020)

<sup>115</sup> <http://www.catalunyasud.net/activitats/> (accessed 17<sup>th</sup> april)

<sup>116</sup> <https://sites.google.com/view/astroprades/astronomia-a-prades> (accessed 4th april 2020)

<sup>117</sup> <https://sites.google.com/view/astroprades/astronomia-a-prades> (accessed 4th april 2020)

<sup>118</sup> <https://sites.google.com/view/astroprades/prades-apaga-els-llums-i-enc%C3%A9n-els-estels> (accessed 4th april 2020)



visitors explain that they find it surprisingly beautiful, interesting and the sky looks good.<sup>119</sup>

Also, in Prades, there are adapted accommodation to observe the night sky as *Iglús de les Estrelles* in Prades. An establishment with a total of five igloos prepared to sleep while you watch the stars. Inside each one, they have polygonal structure ceilings, creating an igloo-shaped space. The site also consists of green areas for walking, with a leisure area, restaurants, sports areas and a farm with animals.<sup>120</sup>

### 4.3. The harmony of the spiritual retreats, healing practices and spiritual disciples

#### 4.3.1. Meditation retreats and ashrams

Spiritual retreats supply a space to elude ordinary life routines, technology entertainment and unhealthy practices. These retreats promote to know more about themselves, just as connecting to nature, people or something transcendent. The spiritual retreat's community is described as a group fully of energy, friendship where everyone cares for others (Bone, 2013).

#### Case Study #13: A Meditar

Description of A Meditar
It is a centre created by the psychologist and psychotherapist Clara Rosell. <sup>121</sup>
Communication offer of A Meditar
It is a space in Tarragona where participants generate synergies to care about themselves by some practices with ethic, vegan, zero waste and human values. <sup>122</sup>
Products of A Meditar
The activities carried out in this centre are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Psychotherapies: individual therapeutic accompaniment.</li> <li>▪ Mindfulness: through meditation, participants works with their emotions and their physical sensations to accept the reality and live fully.</li> <li>▪ Yoga Synergy: Hatha yoga style that increases energy to work strength and flexibility.</li> </ul>

<sup>119</sup> [https://www.tripadvisor.es/Attraction\\_Review-g2442771-d18850316-Reviews-Astroprades-Prades\\_Baix\\_Camp\\_Costa\\_Dorada\\_Province\\_of\\_Tarragona\\_Catalonia.html#REVIEWS](https://www.tripadvisor.es/Attraction_Review-g2442771-d18850316-Reviews-Astroprades-Prades_Baix_Camp_Costa_Dorada_Province_of_Tarragona_Catalonia.html#REVIEWS) (accessed 17 th april 2020)

<sup>120</sup> <https://www.casasrurales.net/hoteles-rurales/iglus-de-las-estrellas--c62162> (accessed 17th april 2020)

<sup>121</sup> <https://www.ameditar.es/> (accessed 20th april 2020)

<sup>122</sup> <https://www.ameditar.es/sobre-mi/> (accessed 20<sup>th</sup> april 2020)



- Yoga Rocket: Dynamic yoga that is a restructured combination of poses from the Ashtanga series.
- Yin Yoga: very gentle yoga, which works the postures from presence and relaxation
- Vinyasa Yoga: Yoga, which combines conscious breathing, physical and energetic alignment, and a focused mind.
- Shiatsu: holistic body therapy based on the principles of Traditional Chinese Medicine. It helps people to understand how we relate to the world and to ourselves.
- Reiki: holistic technique based on energy transfer for the physical, emotional and spiritual well-being.

In this centre, there are being organized talks and workshops about stress reduction, self-care, conscious eating, etc.<sup>123</sup>

#### Mentions and comments on the Internet of the A Meditar

In Google's reviews, there are only two positive reviews about the centre and the activities. They express that the staff is really friendly and attentive, the place transmits peace and light to visitors because of its cleanness and cosy space, the sort of activity is very varied.

### Case Study #14: Riudoms' ashram

#### Description of Riudoms' ashram

From the International Foundation for Spiritual Unfoldment (IFSU), a non-profit organization born from the initiative of the Spanish Society of Meditation to teach meditation and mindfulness techniques, they create an ashram in Riudoms. This ashram is dedicated to teaching meditation year-round with scheduled activities and classes. It is led by Professor Roma Dulcet, the head of the IFSU Foundation.<sup>124</sup>

#### Communication offer of Riudoms' ashram

All workshops are aimed at personal well-being and deepening meditation techniques and the philosophy of life of the knowledge of the present moment so as not to get carried away by other thoughts. They transmit values such as feeling the body and the mind, harmonizing them and putting them at the service of the Spirit.<sup>125</sup>

<sup>123</sup> <https://www.ameditar.es/clases-a-meditar-tarragona/> (accessed 20th april 2020)

<sup>124</sup> <https://www.meditaya.com/meditacion-mindfulness-tarragona/> (accessed 21th april 2020)

<sup>125</sup> <https://www.meditaya.com/salud-y-bienestar-blog/> (accessed 21 th april 2020)



Products of Riudoms' ashram
It is dedicated to teaching meditation with several programs such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Meditation initiation program. It is based on a personalized meditation technique</li> <li>▪ Advanced meditation and mindfulness program. On this program they work on personal growth and spiritual awakening.<sup>126</sup></li> </ul>
Mentions and comments on the Internet of the Riudoms' ashram
In Google's reviews, they have five positive reviews about the potential techniques and the good installations of the ashram.

### Case Study #15: Chamamismo para todos

Description of Chamamismo para todos
It is a spiritual centre located in Tarragona. There organize Spiritual Retreats with indigenous natural remedies such as Ayahuasca. The main purpose of these retreats is a personal growth to learn how to seek well-being. It is ideal for people who are searching the emotional, physical and mental heal. <sup>127</sup>
Communication offer of Chamamismo para todos
They promote all their practices through the official website of Chamamismo para todos
Products of Chamamismo para todos
There organize different activities: <sup>128</sup> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Meditation retreat based on three days and the celebrations follow the ancestral traditions of the Amazon Indians, enlivening with Andean tribal songs and the traditional Ayahuasca indigenous relief. This remedy is used for ceremonies and it serves as a personal drink to attend the therapeutic and healing needs of each group.</li> <li>▪ Private consultations to be able to live fully and achieve their dreams.</li> <li>▪ Shamanic journeys. Trips to the Amazon to see ancient and sacred places with shamans and Taitas who will accompany you with their formulas and remedies.</li> <li>▪ Practices of shamanic culture, its origins, its history and traditions, in person and online.</li> </ul>

<sup>126</sup> <https://www.meditaya.com/meditacion-mindfulness-tarragona/> (accessed 21th april 2020)

<sup>127</sup> <https://chamanismoparatodos.com/>(accessed 21th april 2020)

<sup>128</sup> <https://chamanismoparatodos.com/>(accessed 21th april 2020)



Mentions and comments on the Internet of the Chamamismo para todos
In Facebook page of Chamamismo para todos, there is a total of 64 reviews all of them positive. Visitors express the gratitude of the effort of the owners and their professionalism.

#### 4.3.2. Healing practices and spiritual disciplines

In the last years, tourists are travelling more for spiritual purposes as personal healing (Ambrož and Ovsenik, 2011). These spiritual tourists like better find the freedom to have a personal space (Smith, 2003)

#### Case Study #16: Hotel Balneari de Vallfogona de Riucorb

Description of the Hotel Balneari de Vallfogona de Riucorb
The Hotel Balneari de Vallfogona de Riucorb is a spa and hotel founded in 1901. Their waters come from underground springs, which are used for mineral-medicinal utilization of spa facilities. <sup>129</sup>
Communication offer of the Hotel Balneari de Vallfogona de Riucorb
They promote themselves as a hotel spa full of history with different kind of offers to retired people, people who are looking for different cures and they are a bike friendly offering different sport and natural proposals. <sup>130</sup>
Products of the Hotel Balneari de Vallfogona de Riucorb
The hotel has 92 rooms with two categories premium and executive. They also offer a restaurant service, a social room for events, a cafeteria, TV and game rooms, socio-cultural entertainment and a safe service. The spa has facilities and application technique with a water properties based on hydro mineral, which cure problems related to rheumatism, arthritis, liver, skin diseases, nutritional disorders, respiratory disorders, among others. They also offer a sort of personalized treatment based on different therapeutic techniques. <sup>131</sup>
Mentions and comments on the Internet of the Hotel Balneari de Vallfogona de Riucorb
On Booking, there are 117 reviews on the spa hotel in Vallfogona de Riucorb, of which the total score out of ten is 7.9.

<sup>129</sup> <https://hotelbalneari.com/es/inici/> (accessed 21th april 2020)

<sup>130</sup> <https://hotelbalneari.com/es/actividades/> (accessed 21th april 2020)

<sup>131</sup> <https://hotelbalneari.com/es/inici/> (accessed 21th april 2020)



- Positive comments: focus on the comfort of the facilities, the friendly staff and the location surrounded by nature ideal for rest and relaxation.
- Negative comments: reference to the shortage of food in the buffets, the somewhat dated decoration and the reception staff in some cases unfriendly.<sup>132</sup>

### Case Study #17: YogaOna

Description of YogaOne
It is a yoga centre in the city of Tarragona, where they give classes about the physical and mental discipline of yoga. Concretely, there are two centres both in Tarragona: one in the residential area of Arrabassada beach and the other in the centre of the city.
Communication offer of YogaOne
In these spaces, the discipline of yoga is practiced to rediscover balance and expand knowledge of this practice. <sup>133</sup>
Products of YogaOne
The difference between each centre remains in the classes taught, in the one in Tarragona's centre have classes every day of the week and the one in Llevant close to the Arrabassada beach have classes from Monday to Thursday and Saturday. Introductory yoga classes for beginners or styles such as hatha, asthanga, kundalini or vinyasa among others, which adapt to all levels and ages. In addition, in Yoga One they also have specific yoga classes, such as D-Gravity (aerial yoga) or Pilates. <sup>134</sup>
Mentions and comments on the Internet of the YogaOne
On YogaOne's Facebook page, the centre is scored with an 8.4 based on 66 comments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Positive comments: refer to the good services that are given in the space, flexible hours and good classes.</li> <li>▪ Negative comments: there are few staff, expensive prices and disorganization.</li> </ul>

<sup>132</sup> <https://www.booking.com/reviews/es/hotel/balneari-de-vallfogona-de-riucorb.es.html> (accessed 21th april 2020)

<sup>133</sup> <https://www.yogaone.es/es> (accessed 21th april 2020)

<sup>134</sup> <https://www.yogaone.es/es> (accessed 21th april 2020)



#### 4.4. Analysis of existing attractions/sites/products and diagnosis of the extent and necessary services to promote spiritual and religious tourism

Figure 4.4.1.: Comparison of the existing spiritual attractions in Tarragona Counties

ATTRACTIONS	COMMUNICATION	ACTIVITIES	PERCEPTIONS
<i>Way of Saint James</i>	Well communicated and indicated.	Two ways to link to the main way to Compostela.	-Less frequented and enough accommodation
<i>Cistercian Route</i>	A big variety of strategies to promote well the area	Itinerary to link a three important Cistercian monasteries and a big sort of activities to know more the area	+Good itinerary to appreciate the architecture of the monasteries and good option to disconnect
<i>Route of the Earliest Christians of Tarraco</i>	The City Council promoted to know the history of the Earliest Christians of Tarraco	A card to have discounts to visit the eight attractive where the first Christians went.	Relatively new and any user comments about it.
<i>Estels del Sud</i>	Through the official website of Estels del Sud, interested people formalize the reservation and ask for insurance in case that they don't have it	A route links five rural lodgings that function as the beginning-end of the stage	+Beautiful natural landscape and good accommodation
<i>Poblet's monastery</i>	There is a Master Plan to restore and protect the monastic life of the monastery	It is really significant for the art, culture, history and the spirituality of this construction. It is designed in three enclosures, enveloped by a protective wall.	+Nice architecture, conservation and accessibility of spaces. -Price entrance, guidance
<i>Scala Dei's monastery</i>	Its ruins belong to the Museum of the History of Catalonia and its catalogued as architecture, artistic, renaissance, baroque and counter-reform religious monument.	The structures are preserved to make visit tours to the 3 cloisters and commercial about vine and oil crops	+Good impressive of the ruins, worthwhile guided tours -some bad guides and no interesting ruins
<i>Tarragona's cathedral</i>	The official web page of the cathedral promotes the building as a space full of spirituality to pray.	It is used as a place where visitors can find themselves and meet God's love, at the same time as asking forgiveness for their sins.	+Good lighting of the cathedral's structure at night, well-preserve structure and the visit -price's entrance
<i>Lo Corral d'Arnes</i>	Through Facebook, they share images of the area and activities	Rural accommodation with a wide variety of activities as hiking tours with	+ food quality, cosy place, treatment and the



	to do near the establishment. In its official website they promote the culture and history of the territory.	specialized guide and craft workshop	natural environment. - flexibility
<i>Vinyols Ecocamp</i>	They share the values to cure the ecosystem, coexistence and respect for the other.	Visitors can participate daily in an agro-ecological farm, variety of special activities depending the season and live music, shows, circus workshops, storytelling, etc.	+ environment, farm, comfortable accommodation for families with kids, cleanness, food and quiet place. -cleaning, food quantities and quality, beds' comfort and price's restaurant
<i>Montserrat range</i>	In website of Catsud declared the mountain chain a holy place, symbol of tranquillity, well-being and spiritual peace.	It is a favourite place for hikers, a place for worship of nature and divinities with many charismatic hermits, Carthusians and Cistercians.	+ nature, environment and ideal place for doing sports
<i>Astroprades</i>	Project focus on bringing knowledge of the universe, creating a new economic motor for Prades and Baix Camp and being an important observation centre.	A sort of astronomic activity for all the ages including gastronomic experiences seeing the stars, photographic contests of the night sky, special astronomical projections, etc.	+projections, interesting activities and sky looks qualities
<i>A Meditar</i>	Participants generate synergies to care about themselves by some practices with ethic, vegan, zero waste and human values.	They do different activities such as psychotherapies, mindfulness, different varieties of yoga (synergy, rocket, dynamic, yin, vinyasa), shiatsu and reiki	+staff, cleanness, cosy space and varied activities
<i>Riudoms' ashram</i>	Workshops based on personal well-being and deepening meditation techniques to feel the body and the mind at the service of the Spirit.	It is dedicated to teaching meditation with several programs such as meditation (level initiated and advanced) and mindfulness program.	+ techniques and installations
<i>Chamanismo para todos</i>	Through website of Chamamismo para todos they promote their practices.	There organize meditation retreats, private consultations, shamanic journeys and practices of shamanic culture.	+Staff professionalism and attitude



<i>Hotel Balneari de Vallfogona de Riucorb</i>	They promote themselves as a hotel spa full of history with different kind of offers.	It is a hotel with different services as spa, restaurant, a social room for events, a cafeteria, TV and game rooms, socio-cultural entertainment and a safe service.	+facilities' comfort, staff attitude and ideal nature environment for rest and relaxation.  - the shortage of the food, old fashion decoration and the attitude of the reception staff
<i>YogaOne</i>	The discipline of yoga is practiced to rediscover balance and expand knowledge of this practice.	Big variety of classes such as Introductory yoga classes for beginners or styles such as hatha, asthanga, kundalini or vinyasa among others, which adapt to all levels and ages.	+classes, flexible schedule and good service.  -fewer staff, prices and organization.
<i>Santa Tecla's festivity</i>	These festivities have received various awards, among them: the National Tourist Interest Festival, the National Interest Heritage Festival, and the ARC Prize for the best festival program.	The event program is composed about 500 activities such as human castles, Seguici Popular, the Amparito Roca and gastronomic events	+ festival of national interest and big sort of activity

Own elaboration based on [section 4.1.](#), [4.2.](#) and [4.3.](#)

As we can see in the comparison above, seventeen attraction has been compared in particular detail with respect to their communication, activities and perceptions.

Four of those routes are differentiated for their visitors' sight. Being the Cistercian Route the most popular one and the Route of the first Christians of Tarraco and Way of Saint James less frequented because its relatively new implementation. The Way of Saint James and Estels del Sud have a good signalization, both achieve the purpose to integrate the pilgrims with nature. Due to improve their recognition, the time is needed to attract visitors who want to try these paths. Cistercian Route is really appreciated for linking the history and architecture of the three monasteries.

Reference to natural encounters Montsant range, Lo Corral d'Arnes and Vinyols Ecocamp works for attracting people with values to respect the others and feel the nature. Montsant



range and Scala Dei's monastery have a meaning for visitors who search spirituality and tranquillity for having a big past history. Further, it is noted that in current years, tourists are looking for places with an identity.

Some building described above are presented in terms of spiritual place, but the main purpose of visitors is visiting their architecture as Poblet's monastery and Tarragona's cathedral. Those constructions require a strong promotion due to attract more spiritual seekers.

Certain meditation centres present strong values referred to specific market as A Meditar, Riudoms' ashram and Chamamismo para todos described in their official websites. It can be noted that the process to find users is easy and effective. Otherwise, YogaOne and Hotel Balneari de Vallfogona de Riucorb have a more inclusive promotion based on different kind of people, who have the same motivation to find the well-being inside themselves.

Astroprades is a new project which is growing because it is new and it's continually updating with new things that will have a good acceptance as Santa Tecla's festivity, that it is not a new festivity, it has a historical background but its events are composed with traditional activities and new ones that are well accepted for young people.

Due to reinforce the products that are new and not really recognised it, it should be borne in mind that currently the world is developing very fast and social networks take a strong role. Using them is convenient to know the customers experience in view of improving constantly and rectify all the things that cause a bad visitor's perception. The physical approach is important to have a better experience as we could see in visitor's reviews.

## 5. ANALYSIS OF POTENTIAL DEMAND

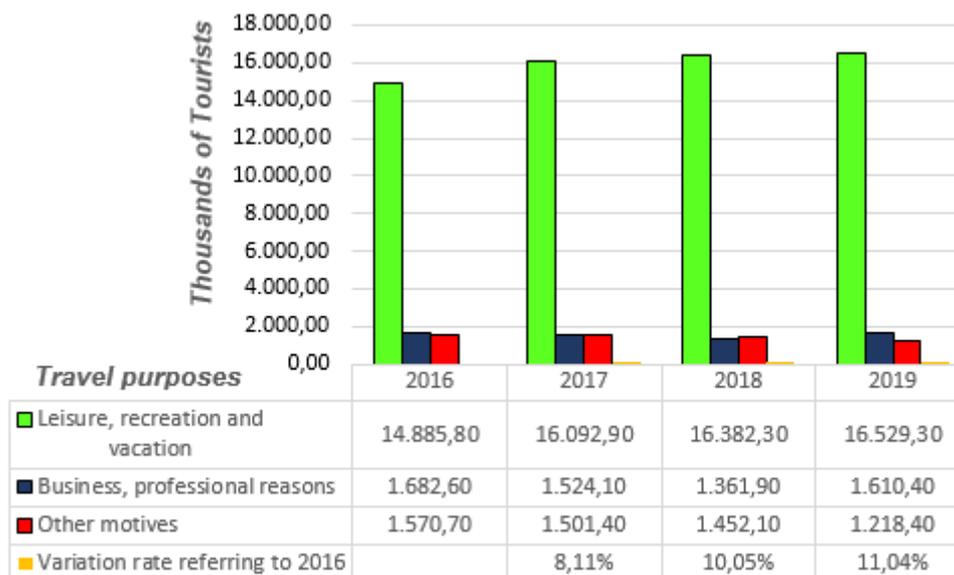
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### 5.1. Sociodemographic profile

This chapter provides a sociodemographic profile of foreign tourists and visitors who travel to Catalonia for different purposes. Concretely, the analysis focus on the main purpose of leisure, recreation and vacations. As we see in ([Figure 5.1.1](#)) most tourists choose to travel for leisure, recreation and vacations. There is an increase since 2016 of more than eleven percent of the tourist travel for this purpose. Through the data graph, we can understand the situation of tourist need to have time for themselves, escaping from their daily routines and recreating themselves.



Figure 5.1.1.: Foreign tourists with main destination is Catalonia, 2016-2019



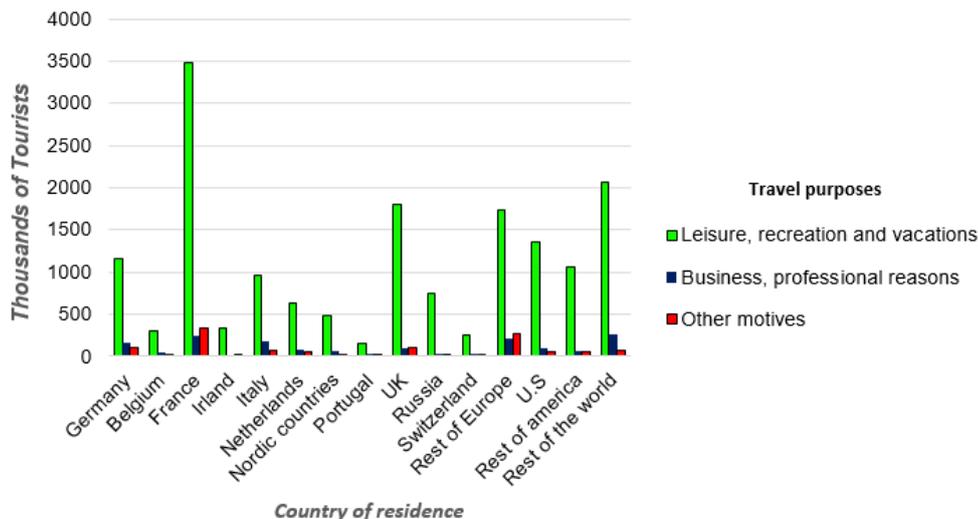
Own elaboration from the table of Idescat.<sup>135</sup> Idescat source: Idescat, based on data from the Statistics on border tourism movements and INE Tourism Expenditure Survey

Thus, considering that in 2019, Catalonia received 19.358 thousand of tourists from all around the world. Eighty-five percent of the tourist came for leisure, recreation and holiday ([Figure 5.1.2.](#)). The potential market is France, United Kingdom, the United States and Germany.

<sup>135</sup>Own elaboration from the table of Idescat. *Turistes estrangers. Per motiu del viatge*. Recovered from <https://www.idescat.cat/pub/?id=aec&n=570> (1<sup>st</sup> may 2020)

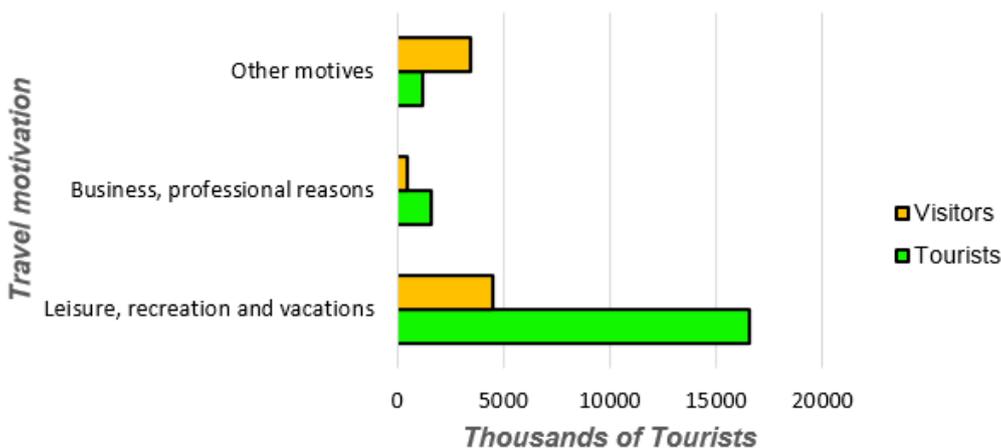


Figure 5.1.2.: Foreign tourists with main destination is Catalonia, 2019



Own elaboration from the table of Idescat.<sup>136</sup> Idescat source: Idescat, based on data from the Statistics on border tourism movements and INE Tourism Expenditure Survey

Figure 5.1.3.: Tourists and foreign visitors with main destination is Catalonia, 2019



Own elaboration from the table of Idescat.<sup>137</sup> Idescat source: Idescat, based on data from the Statistics on border tourism movements and the INE Tourism Expenditure Survey.

<sup>136</sup> Own elaboration from the table of Idescat. *Turistas extranjeros con destino principal en Cataluña. Por motivo del viaje, país de residencia, duración del viaje, tipo de alojamiento, forma de organización, vía de acceso y mes.* Recovered from [https://www.idescat.cat/visor/?id=tarest&lang=es&tc=true&tm=factor\\_ind\\_factor\\_tur&td=t.any,terr.ccaa,mv.mv.proc.proc&tf=t.any\[2019\]&cc=true&cm=factor\\_ind\\_factor\\_tur&cd=t.any,terr.ccaa,mv.mv.proc.proc&cf=t.any\[2019\]&filters=temps\\_24054.2019&filters=territori\\_emtf\\_25077.09&columns=n4\\_emtf\\_dim\\_motiu\\_princ\\_viatg\\_25076&rows=n4\\_emtf\\_dim\\_pais\\_agr\\_25073&filters=concept.factor\\_ind\\_factor\\_tur#](https://www.idescat.cat/visor/?id=tarest&lang=es&tc=true&tm=factor_ind_factor_tur&td=t.any,terr.ccaa,mv.mv.proc.proc&tf=t.any[2019]&cc=true&cm=factor_ind_factor_tur&cd=t.any,terr.ccaa,mv.mv.proc.proc&cf=t.any[2019]&filters=temps_24054.2019&filters=territori_emtf_25077.09&columns=n4_emtf_dim_motiu_princ_viatg_25076&rows=n4_emtf_dim_pais_agr_25073&filters=concept.factor_ind_factor_tur#) (accessed 1st may 2020)

<sup>137</sup> Own elaboration from the table of Idescat. *Visitantes extranjeros con destino principal en Cataluña. Por motivo del viaje, tipo de viajero, vía de acceso, país de residencia, forma de organización y mes.* Recovered from [https://www.idescat.cat/visor/?id=tarest&lang=es&tc=true&tm=factor\\_ind\\_factor&td=t.any,terr.ccaa,mv.mv.tv.tv&tf=t.any\[2019\]&cc=true&cm=factor\\_ind\\_factor&cd=t.any,terr.ccaa,mv.mv.tv.tv&cf=t.any\[2019\]&dataset=2&filters=temps\\_24054.2019&filters=territori\\_emtf\\_25](https://www.idescat.cat/visor/?id=tarest&lang=es&tc=true&tm=factor_ind_factor&td=t.any,terr.ccaa,mv.mv.tv.tv&tf=t.any[2019]&cc=true&cm=factor_ind_factor&cd=t.any,terr.ccaa,mv.mv.tv.tv&cf=t.any[2019]&dataset=2&filters=temps_24054.2019&filters=territori_emtf_25)



Regarding 2019, it can situate through the graphic of ([Figure 5.1.3.](#)) that in Catalonia came more tourists than visitors for leisure motives. This means, the tourists who came here for these motivations overnight at the destination, they stay for at least 24 hours and no more than 1 year. This causes a higher economic expense of being longer at the destination.

The data indicate that in 2020, it would have been a promising year with an increase in tourism for leisure of approximately 14% due to the increase that has occurred since 2016. A year with a lot of foreign tourists that would entail a large amount of income for Catalonia. Still, no one knew that a pandemic called COVID-19 would ruin all those tourist plans and projections.

As in [section 2.3.](#) we said, spirituality is referenced as the peak level of the Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Human Needs. Otherwise, because of this pandemic the population has gone down three notches in Maslow's pyramid of needs. Currently, people care more about basic needs, as the category of safety needs (security of health, of employment, of family and of property). When all the confinement is over, people will try to regain confidence for traveling, but will prefer a more proximity and safe tourism. As in the survey that Hosteltur made to Spanish citizens on new tourist trends, it concludes that 87% plan to travel this 2020, of which 40% opt for traveling in Spain and 54% choose to use the services of a physical agency.<sup>138</sup>

Due to the possibility of working with the tourism sector once the state of alarm in Spain has ended and when travel is allowed, spiritual tourism gives way to help all those people who have become stressed due to these circumstances and seek inner peace and find themselves. Considering that there will be stronger confidence in travel agencies, it is time for travel agencies like [Tripaneer](#) and [Spiritual Retreats](#).

## 5.2. Results about drivers to engage in spiritual tourism in Tarragona

The analysis of the survey is restricted to the 262 respondents that were classified in three categories depending on the origin: 25 respondents from the province of Tarragona (8'92 %) and 50 respondents who are not from the area (19'08%). From the last ones we classified 25 who not frequent the province and 25 respondents who usually frequent it ([Figure 5.2.1](#)). This sample was stratified by four age divisions: late adolescence (18-21 years), youth (22 - 26

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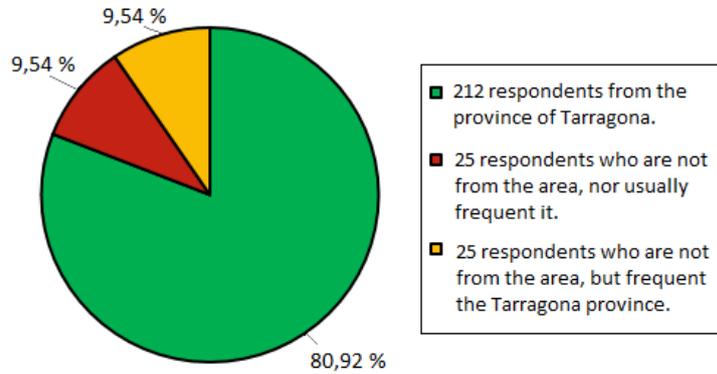
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<sup>138</sup> Hosteltur. (2020). *El confinamiento refuerza el deseo de viajar*. Recovered from [https://www.hosteltur.com/136560\\_tendencias-de-viaje-en-la-nueva-normalidad.html](https://www.hosteltur.com/136560_tendencias-de-viaje-en-la-nueva-normalidad.html) (accessed 10th may 2020)



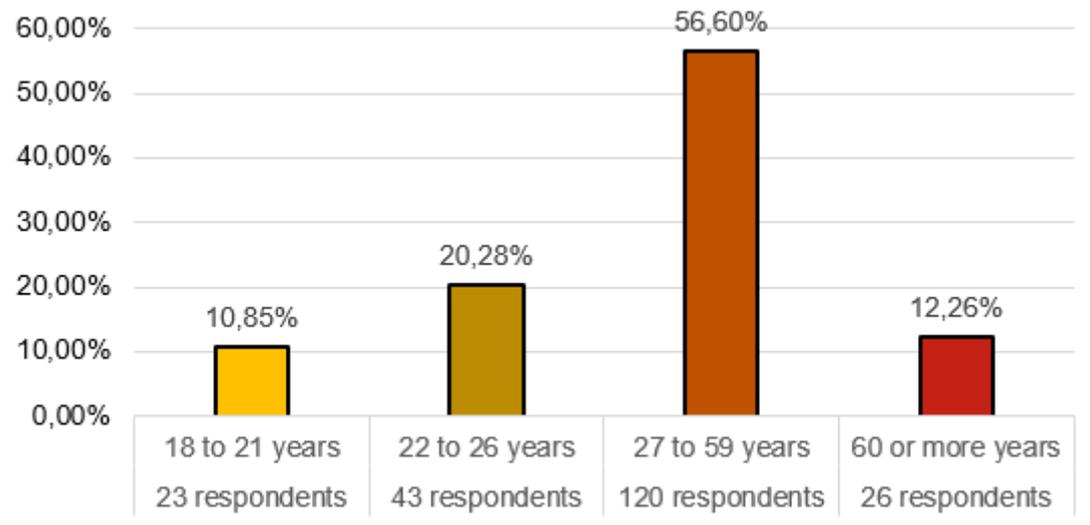
years), adulthood (27 - 59 years) and old age (60 years and over) ([Figure 5.2.2.](#), [5.2.3.](#) and [5.2.4.](#)).

**Figure 5.2.1.: Origin of the respondents who answered the Spiritual Tourism survey**



Own elaboration of the data collected from the respondents who answered the survey in Annexe A

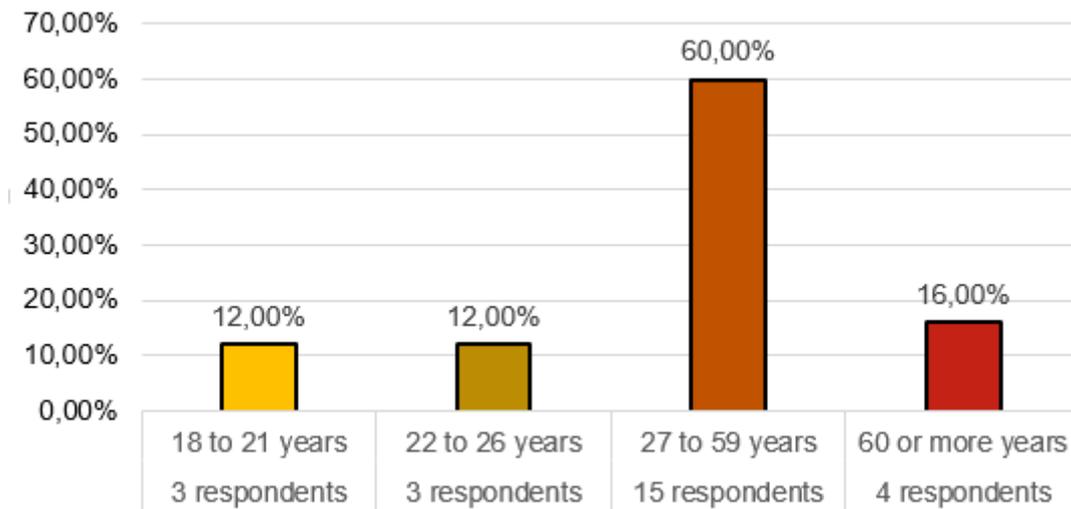
**Figure 5.2.2.: Respondents' sample from the province of Tarragona**



Own elaboration of the data collected from the respondents who answered the survey in Annex A

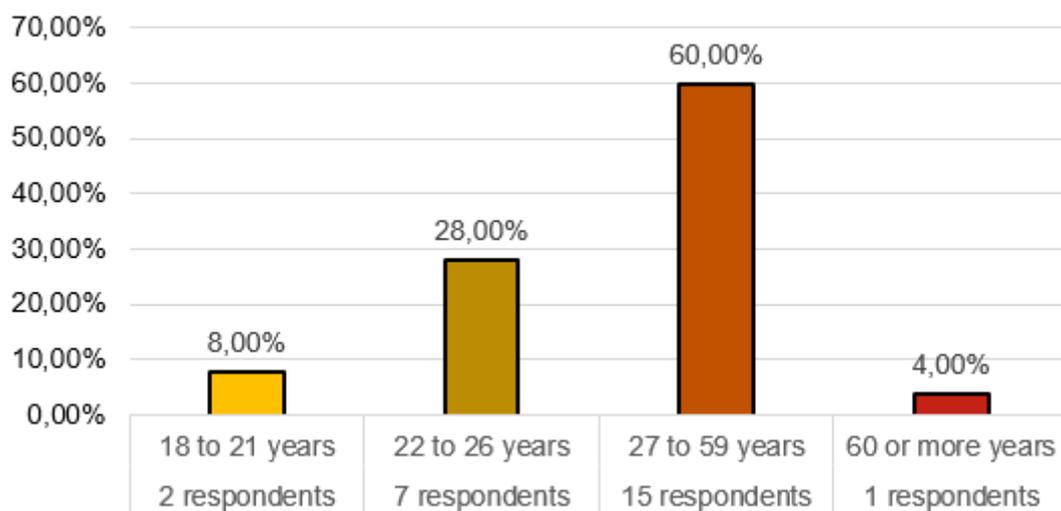


Figure 5.2.3.: Respondents' sample who frequent the province of Tarragona



Own elaboration of the data collected from the respondents who answered the survey in Annexe A

Figure 5.2.4.: Respondents' sample who not frequent the province of Tarragona



Own elaboration of the data collected from the respondents who answered the survey in Annex A

The age divisions help us to understand the sociodemographic profile of the current people's preferences.

Regarding the [section 2.3](#) of this research, we learned thanks to the literature review that people confused the term of spiritual tourism with religious tourism. In the survey, this fact is confirmed. More than the fifty percent of respondents answered know correctly the meaning



of spiritual tourism. Seventy percent of respondents with more than 60 years old confused the term with the meaning of religious tourism as it can be seen in ([Figure 5.2.5.](#)).

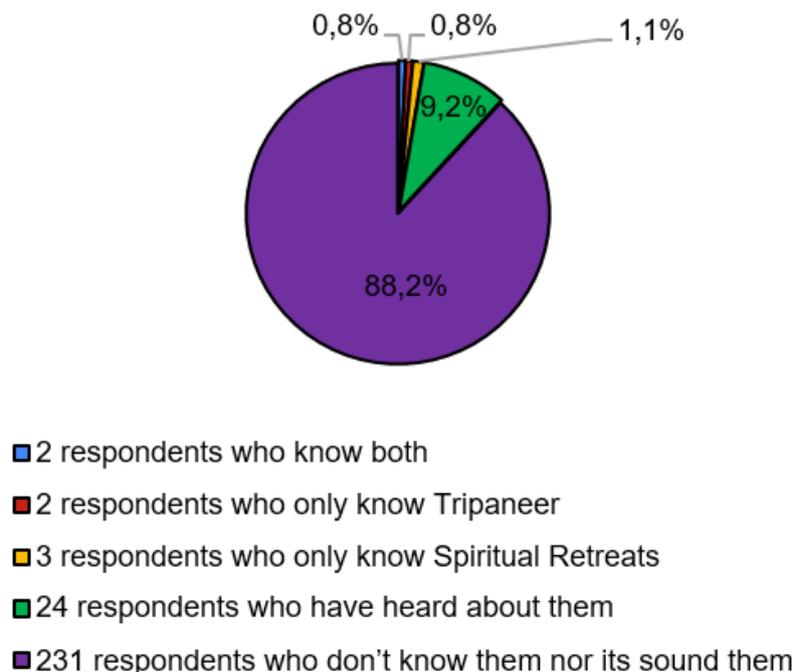
Figure 5.2.5.: The meaning of spiritual tourism for respondents

	Religious tourism definition	Spiritual tourism definition
18-21	17%	69%
22-26	15%	78%
27-59	37%	54%
≥60	70%	25%

Own elaboration from Figure A.1 of Annex A

In the second question of the survey, we asked about the knowledge of two important Spiritual Tourism Agencies (Spiritual Retreat and Tripaneer). The results remarked a great ignorance of these two agencies, an 88'2% answered that don't know them nor its sound them. A 9'2% have heard about them and only seven respondents really know either or both ([Figure 5.2.6.](#)).

Figure 5.2.6. Average of total answers to the second question of the Spiritual Tourism survey



Own elaboration of the data collected from the respondents' answers to the [second question](#) of the survey in Annex A



The third question about if contestants think that Tarragona is an appropriate place to do spiritual practices, the answers were considerably shocking because of most of survey's respondents who live or frequent the province of Tarragona thinks that Tarragona is an appropriate place to do spiritual practices (around 63%). Otherwise, less than 50% of survey's respondents who not frequent the area neither they live Tarragona Counties thinks that it is a good place to develop this kind of practices. This means that the outlook is more optimistic for people in the province or who frequent it ([Figure A.3](#)).

The fourth question about the idea of spiritual tourism could be a positive development alternative for the province of Tarragona is answered that more than the fifty percent of the respondents from the province of Tarragona and the ones who frequent the area thinks so. Otherwise, 73% of respondents who are not from the area are not sure if it could be because they are not sure in what consist this practice. It is curious that people from the adulthood (27-59 years old) are more optimistic about the positive impact of this tourism in the province of Tarragona with a percentage that goes more than the sixty-eight percent ([Figure A.4](#)).

The fifth question about the possible spiritual strategic promotion of the brands Terres de l'Ebre and Costa Daurada, it can be realised that around the sixty percent of the respondents answered that both brands don't have a spiritual tourism strategy ([Figure A.5](#)).

In question sixth, more than 50% of respondents who frequent the province of Tarragona and the ones that are from this area thinks that there are enough resources to develop spiritual tourism there, otherwise people who do not frequent the province more than seventy percent are not sure if there are enough or not ([Figure A.6](#)).

The seventh question shows that more than 50% of respondents have experienced a spiritual experience throughout their life. Concretely, people over 27 years old had more spiritual experiences than the group of ages comprise between 22 and 26, which have, the less percentage of respondents who had this kind of experiences ([Figure A.7](#)).

As it can be seen in question eighth of the survey, the 94% of the respondents, who had practised spiritual tourism, would be willing to repeat and only the 6% said that they would not repeat it ([Figure A.8](#)).

In case of the one that have not tried yet, only the 67% of them would try this practice, the 7% if they had the opportunity they won't try it and the 27% are not sure ([Figure 5.2.7](#)).



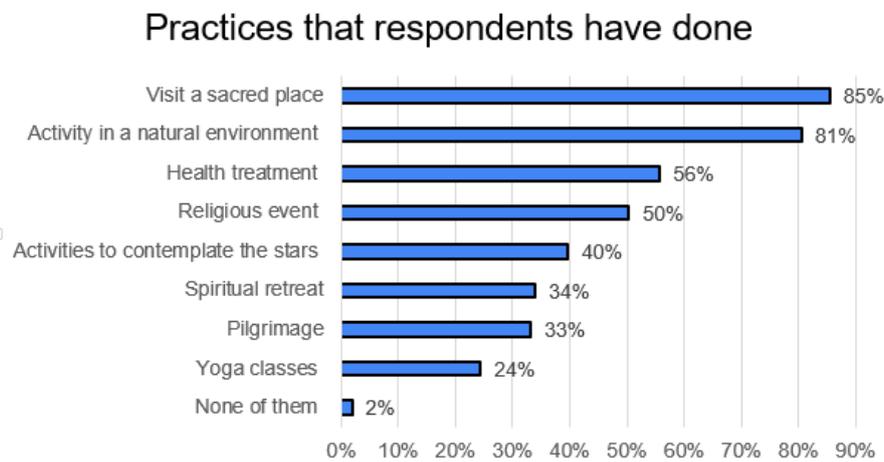
Figure 5.2.7. Respondents' answer about the possibility of trying again a spiritual practice

9	People who would try spiritual practice because they have not tried yet								
	Respondents from the province of Tarragona			Respondents who frequent the province of Tarragona			frequent the province of Tarragona		
	yes	no	no idea	yes	no	no idea	yes	no	no idea
18-21	92%	0%	8%	67%	0%	33%	50%	0%	50%
22-26	57%	11%	32%	100%	0%	0%	66%	17%	17%
27-59	60%	8%	31%	67%	0%	33%	63%	13%	25%
≥60	36%	24%	41%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Average	60%	11%	29%	81%	0%	18%	59%	9%	33%

Own elaboration from [Figure A.9](#) of Annex A

As we can see in ([Figure 5.2.8.](#)) the practices that more than 50% of respondents have done are visiting a sacred place, activities in a natural environment, health treatment and attend to a religious event.

Figure 5.2.8.: Respondents' answer about the possibility of trying again a spiritual practice



Own elaboration from [question 10](#) of Annex A

One of the main motivations to do spiritual tourism is escape from everyday life and disconnect of the routine. In question eleventh, around the 61% of the respondents answered that they need to escape from the routine, the 32% answer that sometimes they need it, but not always, only a 3% answer that they do not need it and 4% answer that they are not sure if they need it



or not. Curiously, respondents who frequent the area of Tarragona the big percentage of answers were that they need to disconnect ([Figure A.10](#)).

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

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### 6.1. Personal

As the Secretary General of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), Taleb Rifai, said at the Trends and Talent forum for the advancement of the Spanish tourism economy, “When we connect education with tourism, we are joining two forces that can make this world a better place”.<sup>139</sup> This study brings together all the insights from literature review, case studies, field study through a survey and our own analysis to extract answers to three request questions. At the same time, a detailed example of proposal for spiritual tourism is presented thanks to that. This proposal makes the province of Tarragona, an adequately exploited area without damaging the environment, its traditions and its gastronomy.

During the realization of my research, I had passed through many different moments. The most difficult thing was to start shaping because I had many ideas in my mind about how to make them possible. Therefore, I learned that a good organization is the clue to accomplish any goal.

After investigating, writings and rewritings, for me, I can say that the result is satisfying. I discover that the province of Tarragona has potential to explode its tourism with a different view, one that helps people to discover themselves, growing and being more fully in their lives taking care our traditions, gastronomy and culture.

My first idea was finding if spiritual tourism could be a positive alternative to Tarragona counties. The result was finding a good and economic opportunity that protects the identity of a place. In addition, this study has revealed that tourists travel for spiritual purposes and they do not realize it because of a lack of spiritual promotion. A spiritual tourism survey has been done to prove the viability of a possible spiritual proposal in the province of Tarragona.

Once, the project is completely made, I can truly see this tourism as a good project for individuals who wants to make the world a better place.

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<sup>139</sup> <http://www.nexotur.com/noticia/88465/NEXOTUR/La-OMT-urge-a-adaptar-los-planes-de-formacion.html>  
(accessed 15th may 2020)



## 6.2. Answering to RQ: Analysis of the potential market response

As it was mentioned at the beginning of this research, I proposed three request questions that along this study we could answer them:

1. Is Tarragona Counties currently an attractive destination for travellers motivated for spiritual and religious reasons?

According to the taxonomy in ([Figure 3.1.2](#)) and the comparison of the existing promotions of each element diversified by type ([Figure 4.4.1.](#)). We discovered the promotion of public institutions and private destination managers, letting us know that most of them are promoted as spiritual tourism assets but the result of their promotion is a diversified demand. The minority of tourists is attracted for spiritual reasons. Their potential are good installations that the only that its need is a stronger spiritual tourism promotion based in social networks. It needs time and the visitors' comments helps to improve constantly and rectify the things that are not working correctly.

2. Which Markets (existing or potential) would be more responsive to the development of a spiritual tourism strategy/ products in Tarragona counties?

Thanks to the sociodemographic profile made it in [section 5.1.](#), we knew that the data indicate that in 2020, it would have been a promising year with an increase in tourism for leisure. Because of the COVID-19, the population needs have changed and they care more about safety ones. As a result, people will prefer a more proximity and safe tourism.

By a survey, send it by social networks to people from the province of Tarragona and other provinces of Spain ([Annexe A](#)), during confinement, we discovered that the idea is that Tarragona counties have the potential to develop spiritual tourism. As in [section 5.2.](#) we observed, people who live or frequent Tarragona counties are more optimistic about the positive results of a spiritual tourism promotion and its resources to achieve this purpose. Otherwise, for people who not live neither they frequent are less positive but most of them thinks that it will be accomplished.

To sum it up the current tourism needs to make a strategy focus into a spiritual dimension to attract more tourists because we noticed that around eighty percent of survey's respondents answered that usually and always feel they need to escape from everyday life and disconnect. Furthermore, most people who tried a spiritual tourism experience wants to repeat and the ones who not try it yet want to try.



3. Which assets, sites, products have more potential to be included in a spiritual tourism strategy for the Tarragona counties?

Taking account what I have learned in first and second request questions, I can develop a strategy configured as a package transmitted by networks, with a well-defined spiritual brand. Sacred spaces, routes, health treatments and religious events have to be included in a spiritual tourism strategy because it has potential and recognition for tourists.

Due to inability to conduct expert interviews due to Covid-19, we could not find out how they would do a spiritual tourism promotion and why they have not done yet.

### 6.3. Proposal- Enhancement of spiritual tourism development strategy for the Tarragona Counties

In this part of the chapter, we will present a spiritual tourism proposal for Terres de l'Ebre and Costa Daurada, both brands situated in the province of Tarragona, in Catalonia, Spain.

Considering the result of the COVID-19 is not uniform and the recuperation of the tourism sector is in medium and long term. For a fast and effective recovery is necessary good communication strategies and favourable destination management (Rodríguez and Álvarez, 2013). For that reason, we considered configure a spiritual brand for Costa Daurada and Terres de l'Ebre with a visible logo (Figure 6.3.1.). Which colours convey serenity and tranquillity showing the practice of meditation.

Figure 6.3.1. Possible spiritual logo for Costa Daurada and Terres de l'Ebre



Own elaboration by page *Free logo Design*<sup>140</sup>

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<sup>140</sup> <https://es.freelogodesign.org/>



In recent years, the online agencies have gained a lot of strength, although two of the spiritual agencies asked in the survey in Annexe A, are very little known in the area. Creating an online agency of the province of Tarragona, promoted by public and private institutions would be a good option to promote the spiritual attractions of the area. Considering that sacred spaces, natural encounters, health treatments and religious events are really practiced in the province, will be included in a spiritual tourism strategy.

Through the website, visitors can buy tickets to sacred places such as churches, cathedrals, shrines, within the section of natural activities interested people can rent the materials needed to make various routes in the area, and buy mountain experiences with specialized guides, etc. Within health & treatment, all the spa centres in the area are offered at a cheaper price and for meditation, yoga, reiki, etc. Religious events include the ones in the area, packs of material to attend such as T-shirts and activities in which those interested can sign up to participate. Within online experiences, there will be companies in the province of Tarragona that offer online spiritual experiences ([Figure 6.3.2.](#)).

Figure 6.3.2. Example of possible main page of Tarraco Spirit



### About us

Tarraco Spirit was developed in 2020 in response to the need to disconnect from daily routines and find relaxing experiences for rejuvenating your mind, soul and body.

Our mission remains helping people to find the perfect activity that is right for each of you with our online agency made our the sort of activity that can be done in the province of Tarragona.

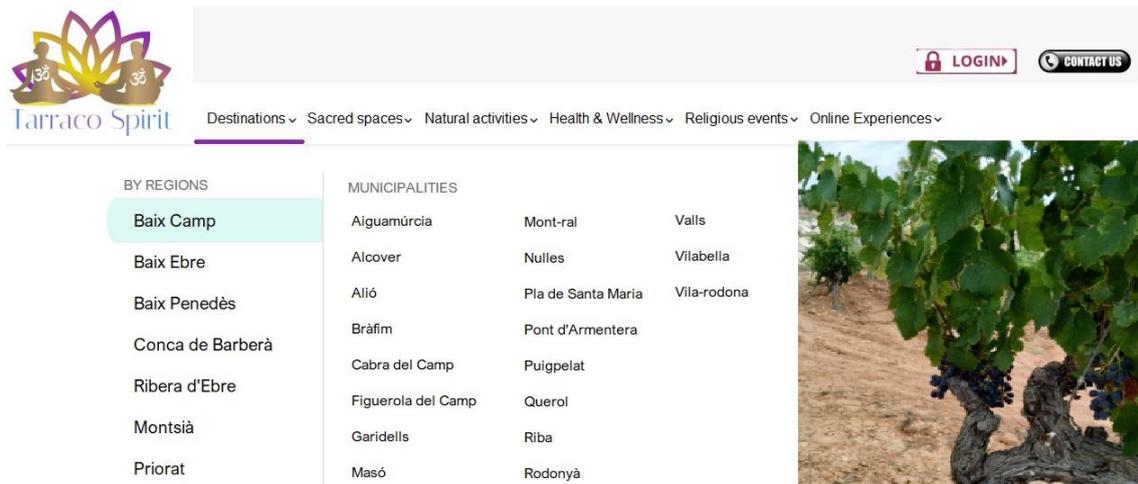
"Knowing others is wisdom. Knowing yourself is lighting"  
-Lao Tzu

Own elaboration



This online agency will serve as a means of promotion at the same time that the visitor will be able to buy within the page. Accumulating points and discounts for upcoming experiences. As you can see in (Figure 6.3.3.), each region will have its spiritual promotion that through the website visitors will be able to discover it.

Figure 6.3.3. Example of possible destinations' section of Tarragona Counties



Own elaboration

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## 8. ANNEXES

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### Annexe A. Survey of Spiritual Tourism, 2020

Spiritual Tourism Survey Do you live in the province of Tarragona?

- Yes
- No
- No, but I am often in the province of Tarragona

Age

- from 18 to 21 years
- from 22 to 26 years
- from 27 to 59 years
- 60 or + years

1. For you, what is spiritual tourism?

- a) It includes all kinds of travel, the motivation is religion and faith
- b) It includes all kinds of experiences that contribute to well-being, self-knowledge and self-discovery
- c) It is not a real tourism
- d) I do not know



Figure A.1. Answers to the first question of the Spiritual Tourism survey

1	Respondents from the province of Tarragona				Respondents who frequent the province of Tarragona				Respondents who not frequent the province of Tarragona			
	a	b	c	d	a	b	c	d	a	b	c	d
18-21	17%	74%	0%	9%	33%	33%	0%	33%	0%	100%	0%	0%
22-26	12%	81%	2%	5%	33%	67%	0%	0%	0%	86%	0%	14%
27-59	23%	68%	1%	8%	53%	40%	0%	7%	33%	53%	13%	0%
≥60	35%	50%	8%	8%	75%	25%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%
Average	22%	68%	3%	7%	49%	41%	0%	10%	33%	60%	3%	4%

Own elaboration of the data collected from the respondents' answers to the first question of the survey

2. Do you know these two international travel agencies that specialize in spiritual travels:

Tripaneer and Spiritual Retreats?

- a) Yes, I know both
- b) I only know Tripaneer
- c) I only know Spiritual Retreats
- d) I've heard of it
- e) I don't know them nor they sound like me

Figure A.2. Answers to the second question of the Spiritual Tourism survey

2	Respondents from the province of Tarragona					Respondents who frequent the province of Tarragona					Respondents who not frequent the province of Tarragona				
	a	b	c	d	e	a	b	c	d	e	a	b	c	d	e
18-21	0%	0%	0%	9%	91%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
22-26	0%	0%	2%	7%	91%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%	14%	0%	0%	86%
27-59	1%	1%	1%	11%	87%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
≥60	4%	0%	0%	8%	89%	0%	0%	0%	75%	25%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%
Average	1%	0%	1%	9%	89%	0%	0%	0%	19%	81%	0%	4%	0%	25%	71%

Own elaboration of the data collected from the respondents' answers to the second question of the survey

3. Do you think that the province of Tarragona is a good place to do spiritual practices?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) I do not know



Figure A.3. Answers to the third question of the Spiritual Tourism survey

3	Respondents from the province of Tarragona			Respondents who frequent the province of Tarragona			Respondents who not frequent the province of Tarragona		
	a	b	c	a	b	c	a	b	c
18-21	57%	9%	35%	33%	0%	67%	0%	50%	50%
22-26	47%	23%	30%	33%	0%	67%	43%	0%	57%
27-59	72%	4%	24%	93%	0%	7%	53%	47%	0%
≥60	69%	4%	27%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%
Average	61%	10%	29%	65%	0%	35%	49%	24%	27%

Own elaboration of the data collected from the respondents' answers to the third question of the survey

4. Do you think that spiritual tourism could be a positive development alternative for the province of Tarragona?
- Yes
  - No
  - It could be, but I'm not sure what it is

Figure A.4. Answers to the fourth question of the Spiritual Tourism survey

4	Respondents from the province of Tarragona			Respondents who frequent the province of Tarragona			Respondents who not frequent the province of Tarragona		
	a	b	c	a	b	c	a	b	c
18-21	65%	4%	30%	33%	0%	67%	0%	0%	100%
22-26	47%	14%	40%	33%	0%	67%	29%	0%	71%
27-59	68%	8%	24%	93%	0%	7%	73%	7%	20%
≥60	65%	0%	35%	75%	0%	25%	0%	0%	100%
Average	61%	6%	32%	59%	0%	41%	25%	2%	73%

Own elaboration of the data collected from the respondents' answers to the fourth question of the survey

5. Do you think that the tourist brands of Terres de l'Ebre and Costa Daurada have an approach to spiritual tourism?
- Yes
  - Maybe yes



- c) No
- d) I do not know

**Figure A.5. Answers to the fifth question of the Spiritual Tourism survey**

5	Respondents from the province of Tarragona				Respondents who frequent the province of Tarragona				Respondents who not frequent the province of Tarragona			
	a	b	c	d	a	b	c	d	a	b	c	d
18-21	4%	35%	35%	26%	0%	0%	33%	67%	0%	0%	50%	50%
22-26	5%	19%	61%	16%	0%	33%	33%	33%	0%	57%	14%	29%
27-59	7%	13%	54%	26%	0%	0%	73%	27%	7%	0%	60%	33%
≥60	4%	12%	65%	19%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%
Average	5%	20%	54%	22%	0%	8%	60%	32%	2%	14%	56%	28%

Own elaboration of the data collected from the respondents' answers to the fifth question of the survey

6. Do you think that there are enough resources to develop spiritual tourism in the province of Tarragona?
- a) Yes
  - b) No
  - c) I do not know

**Figure A.6. Answers to the sixth question of the Spiritual Tourism survey**

6	Respondents from the province of Tarragona			Respondents who frequent the province of Tarragona			Respondents who not frequent the province of Tarragona		
	a	b	c	a	b	c	a	b	c
18-21	65%	9%	26%	33%	0%	67%	50%	0%	50%
22-26	56%	19%	26%	33%	0%	67%	0%	0%	100%
27-59	53%	12%	36%	60%	40%	0%	47%	7%	47%
≥60	50%	8%	42%	75%	25%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Average	56%	12%	32%	50%	16%	33%	24%	2%	74%

Own elaboration of the data collected from the respondents' answers to the sixth question of the survey

7. Do you think you have experienced any spiritual experiences throughout your life?
- a) Yes
  - b) No
  - c) I do not know



Figure A.7. Answers to the seventh question of the Spiritual Tourism survey

7	Respondents from the province of Tarragona			Respondents who frequent the province of Tarragona			Respondents who not frequent the province of Tarragona		
	a	b	c	a	b	c	a	b	c
18-21	70%	17%	13%	67%	0%	33%	0%	100%	0%
22-26	42%	47%	12%	33%	0%	67%	29%	29%	43%
27-59	73%	20%	8%	80%	13%	7%	73%	20%	7%
≥60	62%	35%	4%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%
Average	61%	30%	9%	70%	3%	27%	50%	37%	12%

Own elaboration of the data collected from the respondents' answers to the seventh question of the survey

8. If you had practised spiritual tourism, would you be willing to repeat it?
- Yes
  - No
  - I have not done spiritual tourism

Figure A.8. Answers to the eighth question of the Spiritual Tourism survey

8	Respondents from the province of Tarragona			Respondents who frequent the province of Tarragona			Respondents who not frequent the province of Tarragona		
	a	b	c	a	b	c	a	b	c
18-21	61%	4%	35%	33%	0%	67%	0%	0%	100%
22-26	35%	2%	63%	33%	0%	67%	0%	14%	86%
27-59	45%	0%	55%	67%	0%	33%	47%	7%	47%
≥60	46%	4%	50%	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%
Average	47%	3%	51%	58%	0%	42%	37%	5%	58%

Own elaboration of the data collected from the respondents' answers to the eighth question of the survey

9. If you have not practised spiritual tourism, would you like to try it?
- Yes
  - No
  - I do not know
  - I have already done spiritual tourism



Figure A.9. Answers to the ninth question of the Spiritual Tourism survey

9	Respondents from the province of Tarragona				Respondents who frequent the province of Tarragona				Respondents who not frequent the province of Tarragona			
	a	b	c	d	a	b	c	d	a	b	c	d
18-21	48%	0%	4%	48%	67%	0%	33%	0%	50%	0%	50%	0%
22-26	37%	7%	21%	35%	67%	0%	0%	33%	57%	14%	14%	14%
27-59	38%	5%	19%	38%	27%	0%	13%	60%	33%	7%	13%	47%
≥60	23%	15%	27%	35%	50%	0%	0%	50%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Average	36%	7%	18%	39%	53%	0%	12%	36%	35%	5%	19%	40%

Own elaboration of the data collected from the respondents' answers to the ninth question of the survey

10. Have you done any of these practices?

- Pilgrimage
- Visit a sacred place like a shrine, church or cathedral
- Perform an activity / excursion in a natural environment
- Travel or do activities to contemplate the stars
- Spiritual retreat (meditation retreat, ashram ...)
- Go to the Spa or do some health treatment
- Yoga classes
- Attend a religious event
- None of them

11. Do you feel the need to escape from everyday life and disconnect?

- a) Yes
- b) Sometimes yes
- c) No
- d) I do not know

Figure A.10. Answers to the eleventh question of the Spiritual Tourism survey

11	Respondents from the province of Tarragona				Respondents who frequent the province of Tarragona				Respondents who not frequent the province of Tarragona			
	a	b	c	d	a	b	c	d	a	b	c	d
18-21	74%	26%	0%	0%	67%	33%	0%	0%	50%	0%	0%	50%
22-26	63%	35%	2%	0%	33%	67%	0%	0%	71%	14%	14%	0%
27-59	50%	43%	8%	0%	60%	40%	0%	0%	53%	47%	0%	0%
≥60	35%	50%	12%	4%	75%	25%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%
Average	55%	38%	5%	1%	59%	41%	0%	0%	69%	15%	4%	13%

Own elaboration of the data collected from the respondents' answers to the eleventh question of the survey