

SUSTAINABLE RURAL TOURISM DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL AT MISSION ESPADA IN SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

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Abstract: San Antonio is a popular tourist destination, drawing more than 35 million visitors each year. Tourism in San Antonio currently is focussed on a wide range of tourist attractions which are concentrated within the city limits. The purpose of this study is to diversify the urban-centric tourism to the surrounding rural areas and to develop rural tourism through a sustainable model in these areas. This proposal studies and focuses on the rural outskirts of San Antonio at Mission Espada with the aim to develop rural tourism to revitalise the local agrarian-based economy and to reverse migration from rural areas to urban areas. The proposed site is around 612 hectares and is located 1.2 miles south of Mission Espada, just outside the buffer zone as it is a World Heritage site. This site has been chosen as it is accessible from Mission Espada through an asphalted country road in good condition. The road winds through country homes and farms, offering excellent vistas of the rural setting there. This road also has very little traffic which is ideal for cycling and directly connects the proposed site to the Mission Espada. The proposal is for a rural tourism hub centred around rural life in Ranches in Texas that revolve around agriculture, dairy, livestock and equestrian activities. Establishing a rural tourism model around Mission Espada would attract tourists and benefit rural communities as well. The development plan aims at creating a unique opportunity for tourists to experience the culture and heritage of Texas while creating employment opportunities and benefiting small businesses.

Keywords: Sustainable Tourism, San Antonio, Rural Tourism, Culture, Heritage

Introduction

The city of San Antonio in the state of Texas is a popular tourist destination, that draws more than thirty-one million visitors each year (Travel and Tourism, 2014). However, tourism is centred around urban areas within the city limits of San Antonio. The City offers a wide range of tourist attractions like the Alamo, the River Walk, Six Flags theme park, Sea World and San Juan Capistrano. The city's ten-day annual festival 'Fiesta' attracts about 3.5 million visitors with more than 20 % travelling from across the state, the nation, and different parts of the world (Fiesta San Antonio, 2017). The purpose of this proposal is to diversify tourism of San Antonio, which is currently concentrated within the city, to the surrounding rural areas. The diversification of tourism is aimed at being the driving force of development and economic rejuvenation of the rural areas. The focus of this proposal is the development of the rural area around the Mission Espada of the San Antonio Missions. It is a World Heritage Site and, the surrounding areas that belong to the Heritage South Sector in San Antonio. The San Antonio Tourism Council survey reports visitor length of stay ranging from one to seven days, averaging at four and a half days. According to the San Antonio Tourism Council, every one- half day that the typical visitor extends their stay, the hospitality industry impact could increase by approximately 11 %, which translates to approximately \$9 to \$11 billion annually. This increase is seen mainly from overnight visitors. Additionally, the one- half day extended stay equates to an economic impact of approximately \$1.0 billion in added revenue for the San

Antonio area (Destination SA update, 2011). Currently, tourists visit Mission Espada as part of their Mission tour, spend a few hours at Mission Espada and move on to the other four missions or other attractions in San Antonio. The visitors mostly stay in hotels located within the city limits. They do not stay at Mission Espada and hence there is no scope for significant economic development through tourism in the rural areas surrounding Mission Espada. This study aims at proposing a strategy which would encourage tourists to come to Mission Espada as a destination to experience Texas culture, heritage and a wide variety of rural recreational activities, in a historic setting with the local, rural people.

Literature Review

North America has predominantly been a rural society until recently. In the year 1790, only 5% of Americans lived in cities and towns with populations of 2500 or higher. Today, the figure is over 80% (Jensen, 1995). One of the main factors for the shift from rural to urban settlements was industrialisation. Industrialisation brought about an economic restructuring from resource-based extractive economy dominant in rural areas to a more service-based economy in urban areas. This phenomenon was further accelerated by the farm crisis and the changes in agricultural practices in the 1980's, which resulted in the decrease of rural jobs and the migration to urban areas. (Bourke & Luloff, 1995; Edgell & Cartwright, 1990; Luloff et al., 1994; Mac Donald & Jolliffe, 2003; Wilson et al., 2001).

North America's rural areas have long been of interest to domestic and foreign tourists, for the majority of Canada and the United States are rural in nature and include bounteous natural and cultural features that appeal to many types of travellers. However, it has only been since the 1970's and 1980's that rural regions, small villages, and county, state/provincial, and national governments have begun considering the importance of rural tourism development in earnest as a result of declining traditional farming and extractive industries (Hall, Kirkpatrick, Mitchell & Timothy 2005:42).

Rural tourism offers people from urban societies the opportunity to experience nature and the lifestyle of rural people. They can participate in activities, try out rural cuisine and relax in a natural setting. The concept of rural tourism is by no means well defined and is subject to a number of interpretations. Fleischer and Pizam (1997) associate rural tourism with the 'country vacation' where the tourist spends a large portion of their visit engaging in recreational activities in a rural environment which can be categorised into farms, ranches, country homes, or the surrounding areas. Rural tourism business has the potential to improve tourism as a way to rejuvenate and diversify the regional economy. This can be done through economic, social and cultural tourism with sustainable development practices while preserving the historical, natural and cultural heritage of the region. It provides the opportunity for people living in rural areas to supplement their traditional agriculture-based employment or other extractive means of employment such as logging, hunting, cattle rearing, fishing and so combat rural poverty.

Based on a rural tourism study in Cyprus, Sharpley (2002) indicated that the term rural tourism is synonymous with 'Agrotourism'. Agrotourism refers to 'the development of tourism based on traditional accommodation facilities in villages in the rural and mountainous Troodos regions.' This demonstrates the integral connection of rural tourism to the agrarian-based rural communities and gives us a good idea of the dependence of rural tourism on the infrastructure and facilities available in these communities. Additionally, it can be observed that agrarian-based communities are diversifying into tourism as a way to supplement their income from agriculture. According to Dewailly (1998), rural tourism is often portrayed as being sensitive

to the environment and antithetical to the more common mass tourism. Mass tourism usually has been observed to be environmentally exploitative and has dominated tourism in the 1970's and 1980's.

Cultural rural tourism is characterised by the heritage, traditions, way of life and places of interest that are unique to a specific rural community. They might also offer other activities in a rural setting such as nature, adventure, sports, festivals, crafts and general sightseeing (MacDonald and Jolliffe, 2003). This hybrid term is clearly derived from the concept of cultural tourism, which although defined in myriad ways, is generally understood as a kind of alternative form of tourism that is based on experience, understanding, and interacting with distinct local communities.

In typical urban settlements, there are a lot of factors that promote rural tourism such as fast-paced life, disappearing natural landscapes/greenery, polluted environments, increase in a number of built forms and the compaction of living spaces due to lack of free land. In addition, among Americans and Canadians, there is a certain mystique and romanticised representation associated with the countryside. According to Travel Industry Association of America (TIA), 62% of all American adults travelled to a small town or village between 1998 to 2000. While cities are important gateways and tourist destinations, rural space is a vitally important part of the tourism industries and both countries for domestic and foreign visitors (Murphy, 2003; Murphy & Williams, 1999). Rural tourism in the US can be classified into categories based on their location, culture, heritage and recreational activities that they offer. These categories can be seen in table 1 below.

Table 1: Based on the information from (Hall, Kirkpatrick, Mitchell & Timothy 2005:44-53).

Tourism Category	Location	Activities Offered
Indian Reservations	Native American reservations	Indian Casinos, Handicrafts, Rural outlet malls, local events, national monuments
Outdoor/Nature based	National Parks/Reserves, Marine Parks	Boating, fishing, camping, hiking, cycling, sightseeing
Heritage based	Rural areas with Cultural/Heritage significance	Archaeological tours, battlefield tours, cultural events/tours, mine/quarry tours
Farm/Agriculture based	Rural Ranches, Vineyards and Farm Homestays	Demonstrative farming, hunting, fishing, Equestrian related activities, country-style cooking

Case Studies

Case study methodology was selected for this study as it provides the framework to analyse numerous contemporary tourism development plans. It provides the opportunity to utilise information from a wide variety of case studies, both national and international. Case studies provide the opportunity of conceptualising a tourism development plan through close examination of the precedent plans and application of logical reasoning. The evolution of the case studies with the passage of time can be observed. This provides valuable insights into the general acceptability of the project in relation to the geographic context and can explain its successes or failures. The positive aspects of the case studies can be incorporated to develop a holistic rural tourism model.

The following case studies are selected as they provide working examples of rural tourism models with a wide range in the geographical location of the projects, ranging from Vermont in the United States of America, Akseki Sarihacilar Village in Turkey and the Island of Lesbos in Greece. They also give an idea of the activities and attractions typically offered in the rural tourism setting. The scale of the projects also varies, from Liberty Hill Farm, which is a privately owned and operated property, to the rural tourism development plan of the island of Lesbos in Greece undertaken by the government.

Case Study 1: Liberty Hill Farm & Inn Vermont, USA

The Liberty Hill Farm and Inn is located in Vermont 340 miles from New York. It is a good example of Agrotourism in the context of the United States and hence selected as a case study. It takes advantage of the combination of Vermont's natural landscapes, which are primarily forested and the historical background to create a hub for rural tourism. The tourism hub proposed at Mission Espada in San Antonio also aims at utilizing its natural landscapes and historical background for rural tourism which is a common feature that both the studies have in common. Hence this case study serves as a working example of the planning of a hub. The Liberty Hills Farm primarily caters to guests from the urban megapolis of New York, offering them an opportunity to experience the rural lifestyle through a host of farm-related and nature-based activities. It also offers country style home cooked rustic cuisine that features fresh, locally grown produce according to seasonal availability.

The activities offered at the Liberty Hill Farm can be subcategorised into farm-related experiential activities and nature/outdoor related nature activities. The farm-related activities offered are further divided into agriculture-related activities and farm animal based experiential activities (Liberty Hill, 2016). The agriculture-based activities on offer are berry picking and a tour of the vegetable farm. Activities such as milking cows, bottle feed baby calves and playing with country kittens relate to the farm animal-based experiences. The nature/outdoor activities offered make good use of the naturally occurring forest trails, river, and mountains. The nature-based activities offered are fly fishing, hiking, walking amongst wildflowers, skiing, mountain biking and star gazing.

The wide range of experiences presented to the guests ranging from the physically intensive nature activities to the relaxing experiences of farm-related activities cater to the wide range of visitors. The aim of this proposal is to create a tourist hub that caters to all ranges of visitors offering them a wide choice of activities (Liberty Hill, 2016).

Case Study 2: Akseki Sarihacilar Village, Antalya, Turkey

This case study (Altun, Beyhan, Esengil, 2007) proposes a framework for diversifying tourism in Antalya, Turkey through the evaluation of the village in terms of sustainable rural tourism. The intention of sustainable tourism has been to improve the tourism phenomena in a way that contributes to the regional economy and social life permanently without destroying the environment, society and historical, natural and cultural aspects of the area. The Sarihacilar village was selected as it had preserved natural and civil architectural works. The aim of the project was to target the well-established monopoly of the sea, sun and sand tourism and help diversify tourism by presenting a new concept of alternative tourism. This alternative tourism plan would rejuvenate the rural economy that is currently dependent on the declining traditional means of employment.

In order to make these rural areas suitable for tourism, it is critical to develop an understanding of tolerance among the local people towards the potential tourists who belong to different historical and cultural backgrounds. It is also important for the preservation of local value that is jeopardised by globalisation, and to accelerate the attempts for development by means of rural tourism. The diversification of tourism to the rural village of Sarihacilar was realised by the six phases listed below:

- Creating an inventory of the existing village
- Surveying the houses of the village
- Interacting with the homeowners to determine the necessities and planning the reprogramming of the buildings
- Preparation of maps of existing conditions
- Restoration of the buildings
- Development of settlement plans for village

A significant amount of land is reserved for sports facilities, rural activities and entertainment facilities. The project also provides information on other activities available in the surrounding region. The numerous recreational activities proposed within a twenty-kilometre radius are walking, climbing, wilderness tours, bird watching, photography, hunting, cycling, landscape appreciation and rural heritage studies (Altun, Beyhan, 2007). The tourism hub proposed at Mission Espada would be developed along the lines of the sustainable development principles, that ensures the preservation of the environment, society, culture, and heritage of the area (Altun, Beyhan, Esengil, 2007).

Case Study 3: Island of Lesbos, Greece

This case study was chosen in order to understand the development of the Island of Lesbos by the redistribution and diversion of tourism from the central 'Greater Athens' to the agrarian-based rural community on the island of Lesbos, the strategies used to develop sustainable tourism, and the role of policymakers.

The main proposal 'Rural Tourism Program for Mission Espada Region in San Antonio, Texas' shares the same objectives with this study which are:

- Decentralisation and diversification of tourism
- Sustainable development of rural tourism in agrarian-based rural communities

- The stimulation of rural employment and economic development of the region

The Greek tourism policy focused on the swift development of tourism in the Greater Athens region till the early 1970's. This focus of the policymakers was then shifted to the mainland region of Greece. This was done by developing the transportation, electricity and communication networks. After the 1970's, the tourism policy shifted to decentralising tourism in Greece. This was done by employing 'five-year plans' which aim at the development of the underdeveloped and backward regions of Greece.

Since tourism represented a major economic activity in Greece it played an important role in these plans. In 1988 tourist revenues contributed more than 7% to the Gross Domestic Product. Tourism was instrumental in creating direct, indirect and induced jobs and employed an estimated 480,000 people in 1990. During the time period between 1971 and 1992, the number of tourists visiting Greece increased by 420 %. This development is clearly reflected on many islands, e.g. on Lesbos (Nijkamp and Verdonkschot, 1995).

The island of Lesbos is still one of the economically deprived and sensitive areas of Greece. The most important part of the economy of Lesbos is the primary sector that comprises of the large-scale production of olive oil and ouzo. Although International tourism has been prevalent in Lesbos since the 1960's, significant development was seen in the last 10 to 15 years, through the construction of holiday resorts and rapid expansion of infrastructure facilitating tourism.

The tourist attractions offered by the island play a key role in increasing tourist arrivals to Lesbos. The desirable Mediterranean climate along with beaches and natural landscapes provide the right location for the diversification of tourism. Lesbos is rich in architecture and archaeology which can be explored by tourists through its numerous museums, castles, cathedrals, ancient theatres and Roman aqueducts. The old picturesque village of Molyvos can be visited to see the traditional industries that produce olive oil, ouzo, leather, woodcarving, and pottery. (Nijkamp and Verdonkschot, 1995).

The visitors have been classified into different tourism categories in order to conceptualise and plan activities and services based on their specific demands. The potential tourists are classified into the following types of tourism which provide a brief description of the activities offered in each category in Table 2.

Table 2: Based on the information from (Nijkamp and Verdonkschot, 1995).

Tourism Category	Target Visitors	Infrastructure and Development Required	Activities Offered
Farm/Agriculture based	Visitors from urban areas and international tourists	Training locals for tourism, establishing standards for products and services, development of infrastructure to accommodate guests	Farm animals-related activities, demonstrative farming, rural style cuisine, harvest festivals and nature-based outdoor activities
Adventure sports tourism	Adventure sports enthusiasts	Development and maintenance of trekking/hiking routes, mapping of existing trails, proposal and development of facilities to support adventure sports	Trekking, hiking, adventure sports and cycling
Sea tourism	Aquatic sports enthusiasts	Proposal and development of facilities/ infrastructure to support aquatic sports, training of locals to conduct and maintain aquatic sports	Windsurfing, water skiing, snorkelling, scuba diving, sailing, and parasailing
Winter tourism	Winter tourists	Infrastructure development to accommodate winter tourists, planning of winter activities	Food festivals, music festivals, indoor sports and activities, culture and heritage tours
Exclusive tourism	High-income tourists	Development of luxury tourism facilities, training locals to provide luxury services and products, extension of the present built-up area	Spa treatments, beauty and wellness services, gourmet dining, adventure/aquatic sports and luxury tours

In conclusion, the different opportunities for tourism development are explored and the plans and strategies for different types of tourism are developed to bring tourism to the agrarian-based island of Lesbos. This is a great example of how tourism is decentralised and diversified from popular overcrowded destinations to rural agrarian-based communities for the development of rural tourism.

Rural Tourism and Sustainable Business Development Proposal

Mission Espada was founded in 1690 as San Francisco de Los Tejas in the east of Texas. It is the oldest of the Texas missions and was renamed to San Francisco de La Espada in 1731. It is the southernmost mission amongst the San Antonio Missions and is relatively remote (Las Misiones, 2017). The missionaries at Espada strove to make the missions resemble typical Spanish villages. According to the National Parks service, Espada was the only mission that

was capable of making bricks and the influence of these mission artisans can be seen throughout the city even today. The National Parks service also states that the Spanish Franciscan missionaries trained the indigenous Coahuiltecan tribe to hunt and gather and to be loyal and productive citizens of 'New Spain'. Along the period of 50 years, the tribe was taught the principles of farming, ranching, architecture, blacksmithing, loom weaving and masonry. The Spanish language coupled with the Catholic faith formed the foundation of the 'new culture' of San Antonio (National Parks Service, 2017).

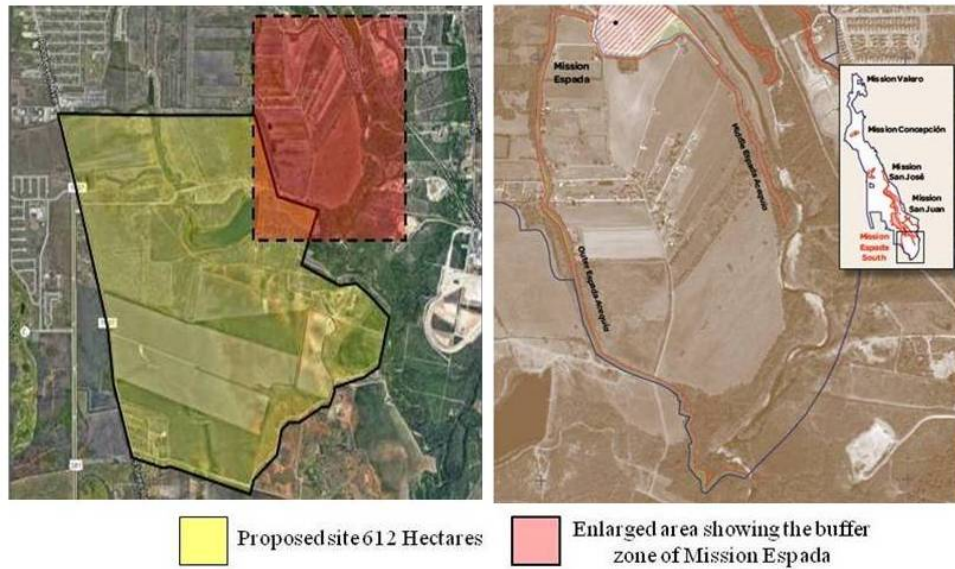
1. Site

Mission Espada is located 6.5 miles south of Mission Concepcion and is linked by the historic 'Camino De Los Reyes' also known as the Kings Path. A World Heritage Inscription, the proposed site is around 612 hectares and is located 1.2 miles south of Mission Espada. The site is located just outside the Mission Espada's buffer zone as it is a World Heritage site. This particular site has been chosen as it is accessible from Mission Espada through an asphalted country road in good condition that winds through country homes and farms, offering an excellent view of the rural setting there. This road also has very little traffic which is ideal for cycling and directly connects the proposed site to the Mission Espada which is just 1.2 miles from the site.

The main feature of the site is the Cassin Lake, located in South-Eastern part of Bexar County, and forms part of the San Antonio river basin (at 29°18' N, 98°27' W). It is an artificial lake built by William Cassin in 1907 for irrigation purposes. It is spread over 580 acre-feet and was owned and operated by Medina Properties limited in the early 1990s. The surrounding landscape is largely flat with a surface of clay loam and supports vegetation like Mesquite, cacti, and grasses (Texas State Historical Association, 2017). The lake provides an opportunity for popular recreational activities like fishing, boating, picnicking and relaxation. The lakeside is also the ideal location for 'Texas Style' barbecues. The flat nature of the site is ideal for equestrian, demonstrative agriculture and demonstrative dairy activities that are all planned as per this proposal.

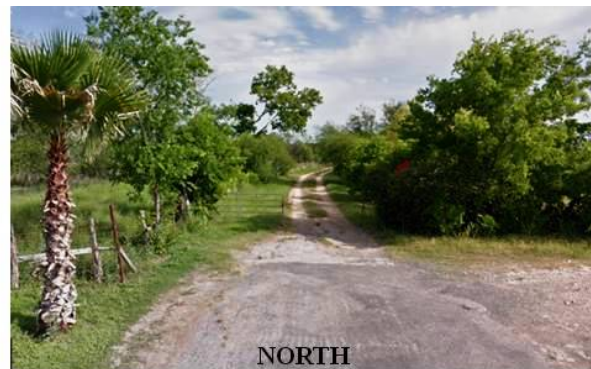
The site is flat to gently rolling and is surfaced by clay loam that supports mesquite, cacti, and grasses. The site is bordered by the Roosevelt Avenue to the west, farmland to the north, national parkland to the east and a large-scale solar farm to the south. The site is not in the flood zone of the San Antonio River and the lake is artificially created. The site borders the Mission Espada buffer zone towards the north-east as seen in Figure 1. As per the latest land use map of San Antonio, the site falls in the suburban tier which is further described as a private and industrial zone.

Figure 1: Land use map showing the extent of the buffer zone. The proposed site is not in the buffer zone (image reference: Google Maps and San Antonio Missions 2014: 255)



There are two main entry points to the site, one of which is accessible from the country road leading south of the Mission Espada and entering the site from the North, and the other entrance being accessible from the main Roosevelt avenue which is from the West as seen. The entrance from the North is ideal for tourists as it leads directly from Mission Espada to the site and offers excellent views of the country style homes and farms along the road. This road introduces tourists to the rural setting before they enter the site. The entrance from the West is well suited to be the service entry for the site as it is directly connected to the Roosevelt Avenue. Roosevelt Avenue is the main road which will make access to the site for the heavy vehicles providing services to the site easier, without disturbing the peace and quiet of the countryside. By having two different entrances we can ensure that services provided to the site will not interfere with tourists and the tourists do not see the movement of heavy trucks in and out of the site.

Figure 2: The two entrances to the site are seen in the above image. (image reference: Google Maps)



2. Concept and Development Programme

The project is aimed at developing rural tourism in the areas around Mission Espada by proposing a rural tourism model that would attract tourists and benefit the rural communities. This would generate a lot of employment opportunities and help in the development of small businesses in the area while providing a unique way for tourists to experience the culture and heritage of Texas.

The proposal is a rural tourism hub centred around rural life in Ranches in Texas that revolve around agriculture, dairy, livestock and equestrian activities. The whole program is divided into four main themes based on four different types of activities. The Themes are:

- Dairy and livestock
- Lake and Fishing
- Agriculture and Apiculture
- Equestrian

These four themes would be accommodated in four different zones and the site will be divided based on their area requirement. These zones will provide recreational activities, tutorials, demonstrations and offer products specific to the zone.

3. Development of Programme:

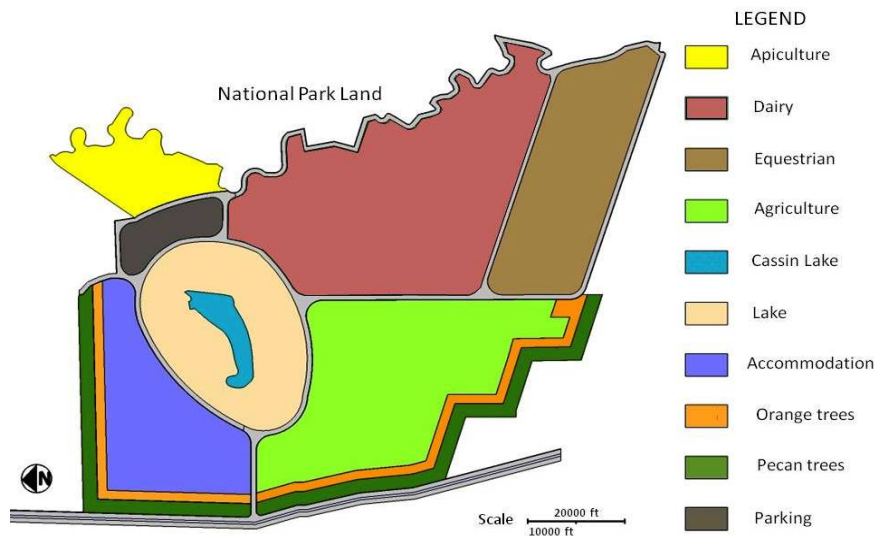


Figure 3: Site plan representing the various zones

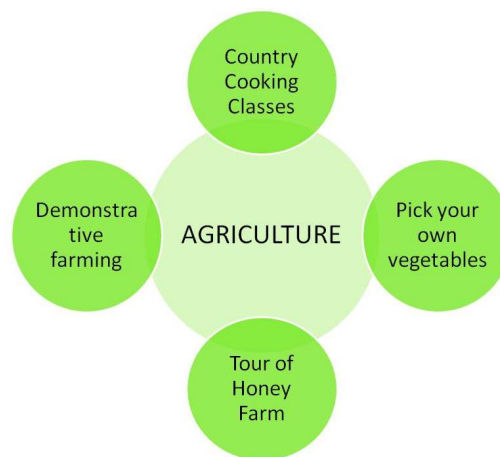
Activities Based on Zones

A. Agriculture Zone:

The Agricultural zone focuses on activities related to agriculture and are demonstrative in nature. The demonstrations encompass different aspects of agriculture e.g., farming, crop cultivation, and harvesting techniques. The main activities proposed in this zone are listed below.

- Country cooking classes: Tourists will have a unique opportunity to learn how to cook healthy country delicacies using fresh local ingredients in a farm style ambiance from local experts.
- Pick your own vegetables: Guests are given a tour of the vegetable farm where they will have the experience of seeing how vegetables, herbs, and spices are grown, be allowed to pick the vegetables which will then be used by the project staff to cook a meal and serve it to the guests.
- Demonstrative Farming: Tourists are given a demonstration of farming techniques, equipment used and the process of harvesting the crop.
- Tour of the honey farm: Tourists get the opportunity of visiting a bee farm and to see how honey is harvested and processed. Tourists can also buy organically farmed honey.

Figure 4: Proposed activities for the Agricultural Zone

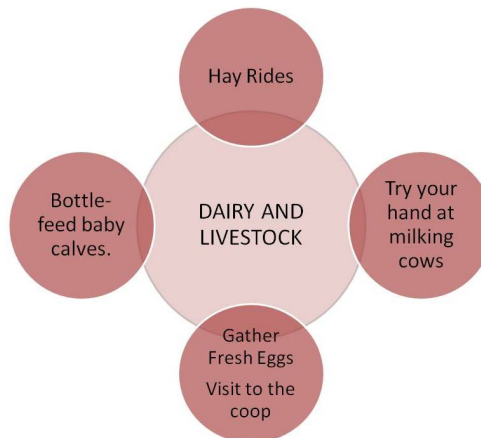


B. Dairy and Livestock Zone:

This zone focuses on demonstrations and activities that relate to the different aspects of dairy and livestock rearing. The guests will get the opportunity to interact with the animals and participate in related activities. The main activities proposed in this zone are listed below.

- Hayrides: Hayrides will be offered to the tourists as a form of entertainment.
- Try your hand at milking cows: Guests will get the chance to learn how to milk cows the traditional way, by hand.
- Bottle feed baby calves: Bottle feeding baby calves and playing with them can provide a rich and fulfilling experience for the guests.
- Tour of the coop: Guests are given a tour of the chicken coop. They can see how chickens are fed, eggs harvested and other activities.

Figure 5: Proposed activities for the Dairy and Livestock Zone

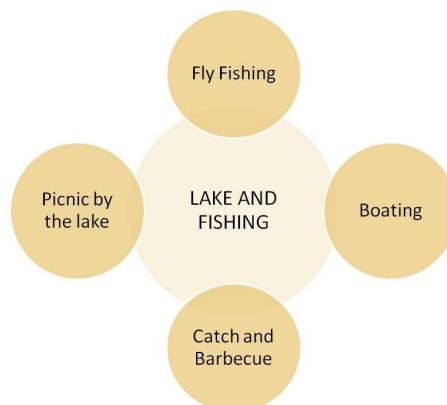


C. Lake Zone:

This zone focuses on demonstrations and activities that relate to the lake and sustainable fishing. The guests will get the opportunity to relax by the lake and engage in recreational activities that are offered by the lake. The main activities proposed in this zone are listed below.

- Fly Fishing: Fly fishing can be pursued by fishing enthusiasts at the Cassin lake situated on the property.
- Boating: Kayaks and boats will be provided at the Cassin lake for guests, who can use the lake for boating.
- Picnic by the Lake: The landscaped area around the lake is a perfect place to have a picnic with the family. This can also be combined with fishing and boating to make the experience more memorable.
- Catch and Barbeque: Guests can have a fishing and barbecue party by the lakeside, where freshly caught fish can be barbecued. The guests also bring in their choice of meat.

Figure 6: Proposed activities for the Lake and Fishing Zone

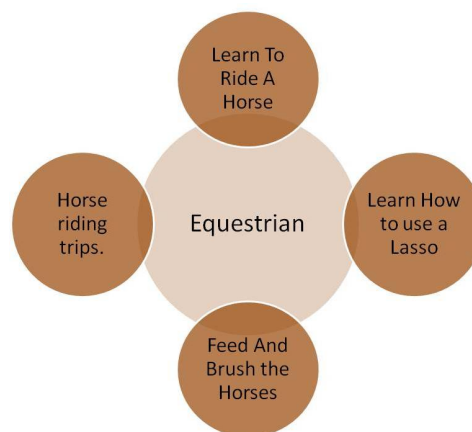


D. Equestrian Zone:

This zone focuses on the grooming, maintenance, and activities that relate to horses and horse riding. Guests can learn all about horses and even learn the skill of horse riding. The main activities proposed in this zone are listed below.

- Learn to ride a horse: Horse riding lessons are offered to guests at the Equestrian Zone by experienced horse riders from rural Texas.
- Learn how to use a Lasso: Guests get the chance to experience local culture by the traditional art of using the Lasso which is synonymous with being a cowboy and can be learned from the rural experts.
- Horse riding excursions: Horseback excursions are offered to the guests by local guides, where they can explore the numerous trails in the neighboring parklands, the San Antonio River and the world heritage San Antonio Missions.
- Feed and brush the horses: Learn how to care for horses, how to feed them and brush them at the horse stables in the project.

Figure 7: Proposed activities for the Equestrian Zone



Conclusion

This sustainable rural tourism proposal aims to serve as a model for rural tourism development in San Antonio, with the objective of diversification of tourism from urban San Antonio to the rural areas. The proposed project for the 'The Heritage South Sector' in Bexar County, San Antonio has great potential for generating sustainable growth built on the foundation of its heritage and values. The main goal is to promote sustainable growth while respecting its history and preserving its natural resources. It aims at increasing the number of days spent by tourists, hence increasing the income from tourism for the city of San Antonio. The aim of the project is to provide employment opportunities for the local community through sustainable tourism, resulting in the improvement of the local economy and standards of living. Tourists will have the opportunity to experience authentic Texan rural lifestyle, culture and heritage in the historic setting of Mission Espada. This proposal can be further developed to design a tourism hub along the guidelines of sustainable tourism at Mission Espada. The development of detail plans for the buildings, program, and activities would be necessary for discussion with experts from different disciplines, such as architecture, business, culture, academics, hospitality, and finance. This would ensure the economic viability of the proposal and the effective design and smooth functioning of the tourism hub. This sustainable rural tourism model also has the potential to stimulate rural, sustainable tourism development projects around the world.

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