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DETERMINATION OF THE DISTINCTIVE COMPONENTS OF THE TOURIST PRODUCT OFFERED IN THE MAGICAL TOWNS OF CALVILLO AND REAL DE ASIENTOS IN AGUASCALIENTES, MEXICO.

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ABSTRACT

The Mexican Ministry of Tourism has provided the tourism market with a diversification of its offer through the Magical Towns Program. The destinations recognized by this federal government program to promote tourism activity in them, propose a tourism product composed of attributes and elements that allow tourists to have new and different experiences. The central objective of this research is to determine if the tourism product of two of the Magical Towns localities in the State of Aguascalientes in Mexico has the components that should properly constitute it. The study is exploratory and descriptive in scope, with documentary review and field work techniques for collecting information. The elements of the product are identified and described based on the four levels of the tourism product of Nicolau's theoretical proposal and subsequently, through discourse analysis, the findings have been interpreted to determine the attributes that distinguish the tourism product from the units analyzed. The results show that the Basic and Increased levels in the product of the two localities, are the ones that are best formed. Overall, it can be seen that the attributes of the tourism product in these Magical Towns correspond to those considered within the theoretical literature as the key elements that should make up a tourism product. It is advisable for any destination to periodically analyze the formation of its tourism products, to implement improvements in them and provide a competitive and quality product to the tourism market.

Key words: distinctive attributes, tourism product, Magical Towns Program, diversification, State of Aguascalientes (Mexico).

INTRODUCTION

Tourism, in its different types, must face the challenge of competitiveness in the products it offers to the demands of the tourism market. The tourists develop new behaviors and needs every day, which is why participatory work is required that leads each tourist destination to occupy a place of importance in the tourist's mind. Tourist destinations, being considered as geographical and territorial spaces that have elements that can cause an attraction and movement of visitors, must seek to structure a quality tourism product. A product that satisfies the needs and motivations of tourists and that evolves precisely to continue fulfilling its mission.

Porter (1990) points out that competitive management within tourism activity must consider constant improvement in the quality of the products offered, to progressively achieve a positive appreciation of the tourists towards them. A properly constituted tourism product provides benefits to tourists and also provides them with "...a different way of experiencing their trip, a different practice of approaching their travel" (Shaadi R. et al., 2017, p.128).

The above has led Mexico, through the Ministry of Tourism, to optimize the large amount of natural and cultural resources it has, to stimulate progress in the tourism sector through an offer of diversified products. The diversification of tourism products contributes, on the one hand, to the tourist enjoying and valuing the riches of a country and, on the other, to generating different economic and social benefits for the receiving communities (Benur and Bramwell, 2015).

In this process of diversification of tourism products, the Magical Towns of Mexico Program emerged, through which the federal government has sought to promote, in unique territories of the country, an interest in the development of tourism and the conservation and sustainable use of its natural beauties and its culture. Due to this, the federal entities in which the Magic Towns are located seek to strengthen and project them properly.

In the 2022-2027 Development Plan of the Government of the State of Aguascalientes, it is stated that the Magical Towns present an area of opportunity as tourism products, so that Aguascalientes can compete in tourism in the country. The state government seeks to systematically identify and develop its resources and services to structure tourism products with a sufficient degree of attraction to motivate the flow of tourists, providing them with interesting and pleasant experiences (PDE 2022-2027).

Based on the above, this research focused on determining those attributes existing in two of the locations with the distinction of Magical Towns in the State of Aguascalientes: Real de Asientos and Calvillo. To determine the structure of these Magical Towns as part of the state's tourism offer, we first proceeded to identify the elements of each component, according to the selected theoretical model. The interpretation of the described data was then developed to indicate the existence or absence of the elements of each component. To achieve this, the following objectives were established in this study.

GENERAL OBJECTIVE

Determine the distinctive attributes of the tourism product offered by two of the localities in the State of Aguascalientes incorporated into the Magical Towns of Mexico Program.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

- 1) Identify the elements and components that the tourism product has in two of the Magical Town locations of Aguascalientes based on the four levels that should characterize it according to Nicolau's theoretical proposal.
- 2) Point out the presence and arrangement of the elements of each component of the product of the two Magical Towns, making reference to each of the four levels indicated by the proposed analysis model.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1 Magical Towns Program

The Magical Towns of Mexico Program is a federal program that has gained relevance in promoting tourism in typical communities of the country, which, although they lack tourism development, have elements to position themselves as tourist destinations. The Ministry of Tourism of Mexico (SECTUR) created this program in 2001 to implement a policy to promote tourist activity in small towns, which would have a distinctive brand with this name.

The SECTUR, through the Official Gazette of the Ministry of the Interior of Mexico (SEGOB), has declared the definition of a Magical Town: “it is a town that, over time and in the face of modernity, preserves, values and defends its historical, cultural and natural heritage, and manifests it in various expressions through its tangible and intangible heritage” (DOF, 2020).

These localities need to be oriented to improve and optimize the rational use of their resources and natural and cultural attractions. They require appropriate actions in various aspects: strengthening their infrastructure; offer quality services; innovate in their tourism products; effectively use marketing and technology.

Studies have been carried out on Magical Towns to identify levels of well-being, sustainability and local development for their communities (Hoyos, 2008; Velázquez, 2012; Carrillo 2013; Cazal and Omar, 2015; Palafox et al, 2016; Enríquez, 2018; Vázquez, 2022), as well as the relational dynamics of the actors who participate in the tourism management of these populations (Vargas and Rodríguez, 2014). Some Magical Towns have made their way towards their consolidation as relevant tourist destinations in the country through well-defined competitive strategies (Shaadi et al., 2018).

Other lines of study about the Magical Towns refer to the perception that the residents of these communities have about the various impacts generated as a result of their incorporation to the federal program (Covarrubias, Vargas and Rodríguez, 2010; Cornejo et al., 2018; Espinoza et al., 2022; Vázquez, 2021) or about how the Magical Towns community is involved in decision-making to their development as a tourist destination (Muñoz 2019). Studies carried out on the valuation and conservation of cultural heritage for the practice of cultural tourism in Magical Towns were also located (Hernández, 2009; Valenzuela et al., 2012; Martínez and Mínguez, 2015; Aragón et al., 2016; Enríquez and Guillén 2016; Enríquez et al., 2018). Finally, studies carried out regarding the analysis of the competitiveness of the Magical Towns from hotel perspectives (Del Valle et al., 2022) or from the preferences of tourism consumers (Trujillo and Madrigal, 2022) were also identified.

1.2 The tourism product

It is relevant that tourist destinations consider that in order to exist as a place that continually has greater attractiveness, they must take care of the quality of the tourist product they offer in the tourist market. Ávila and Barrado (2005) point out that tourist destinations must seek to develop their centrality, not so much by generating new products, but rather by innovating in their existing products to offer visitors new experiences in their consumption patterns and new ways of enjoying their journey. Furthermore, since a tourism product is well constituted, it can influence a locality to achieve an adequate position in the field of tourism activity.

The tourist destination, in itself, is considered a global product, since it is made up of tourist and recreational attractions and activities, infrastructure, transportation and accommodation systems (Kozak and Rimmington, 1999). Benur and Bramwell (2015) state that a tourism product can be a concentrated product, that is, a unique product with which a locality or destination is identified.

The “tourist product” has its origin in Western Europe, in the first half of the 20th century, but its antecedents date back to 1850, with the so-called Individual Inclusive Tour, known by the acronym IIT, which included several services for the traveler from origin to destination. Since the appearance of the term tourism product, various definitions have been provided, such as those presented below:

- 1) “A tourism product is made up of all the tangible and intangible elements that manage to attract flows of tourists to a region with the hope of satisfying their expectations for the use of free time” (SECTUR, 2003: 10).
- 2) “Tourism product is the combination of goods and services, resources and infrastructure that are arranged in a way that offers benefits to clients, so that they can satisfy their needs and expectations and are available to be consumed at the right time” (Milio, 2004: 119).
- 3) “The tourism product is a set of activities, services and benefits that constitute the entire tourist experience” (Medlik and Middleton, 1973 in Smith, 1994: 584).

In addition to finding definitions on this theoretical aspect, some authors also point out and establish the components that can be considered to conveniently characterize and shape a tourism product (Table 1).

Table 1. Components that make up a tourism product.

| Author | Components |
|---|---|
| Stephen L.J. Smith breaks down the following elements of the generic tourism product. | 1) Physical Plant: climatic conditions, natural and cultural resources of the site. 2) Services: tasks required to satisfy tourist needs. 3) Hospitality: the expression of welcome from local residents. 4) Freedom of choice: acceptable range of options for the tourist to freely choose the travel experience. 5) Participation: mental and emotional responsibility of the tourist to enjoy their trip. |
| Fabio Cárdenas refers to the following aspects that make up a tourism product. | 1) Attractions: natural, artificial, human. 2) Facilities: accommodation, food and beverages, entertainment and fun, travel and transportation services, others. 3) Accessibility: sea, land, air. |
| Juan Luis Nicolau places the components of the tourism product into four levels. | 1) Basic Product Level - this level of the product offers tourists benefits through two main components: Attractions and Activities. 2) Auxiliary Product Level - at this level, services are considered as necessary components to make use of the basic product: Accommodation, food, travel, tourist guidance and signage services. 3) Increased Product Level - the components of this product level refer to the means by which the tourist receives the services: Infrastructure, Equipment, Accessibility. 4) Secondary Product Level - the component of this level refers to different products that provide additional value to the basic product such as Recreation, Circuits and routes and Organized Events. |

Source: Own elaboration based on Smith (1994), Cárdenas (1995) and Nicolau (2010).

The definitions and models cited in reference to the tourism product present as a common denominator the existence of a context of elements and components that support the product offered by a destination. These components must be integrated effectively and creatively to achieve a lasting, competitive and quality product.

It is important to point out that the models referred to above, regarding the appropriate components that a tourism product should have, give essential importance to natural and cultural resources. This is because these resources can be generators of tourist attractions, activities and experiences that position and give a competitive advantage to a destination within the tourism market.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

2.1 Materials used

To meet the first specific objective of identifying the elements and components of each Magical Town, at the four levels (basic, auxiliary, increased and secondary) of the tourism product indicated in Nicolau's proposal (2010), a table was designed in the which establishes the list of elements that illustrate the breakdown of the respective components of each level (Table 2).

The section of Table 2 where the elements of each component are listed by level is a complement to Nicolau's proposal prepared by the authors of this research based on their theoretical knowledge regarding the various resources with tourist functionality. This complementary proposal to the list of elements of the components of each level of the tourism product was subjected to a validation process by people with experience in the area of tourism and research, using a Likert scale.

Table 2. Elements of the components at the levels of the tourism product.

| LEVEL: Basic Product | |
|---|--|
| COMPONENT: Attractions | COMPONENT ELEMENTS |
| | <p>Architecture-Religious and Civil</p> <p>Festivities and traditions-popular fairs, religious and civil festivities, music and dance, popular beliefs.</p> <p>Typical foods and drinks</p> <p>Handicrafts</p> <p>Symbolic Attraction- Unique, authentic and emblematic natural or cultural element of the town.</p> <p>Geological-rock or sand resources</p> <p>Hydrological-water resources</p> <p>Wild Plants-plant associations</p> <p>Wild Animals-animal associations</p> <p>Landscapes-conjunction of various resources</p> |
| COMPONENT: Activities | COMPONENT ELEMENTS |
| | <p>Cultural- in cultural attractions</p> <p>Of Nature- in nature attractions</p> <p>Integrated - combine cultural and natural activities</p> |
| LEVEL: AuxiliaryProduct | |
| COMPONENT: Services | COMPONENT ELEMENTS |
| | <p>Accommodation-hotels or other types of accommodation</p> <p>Food and beverage consumption centers-restaurants or other types of centers</p> <p>Travel Services-travel agencies</p> <p>Tourist Guidance- Guide services or scheduled tourist tours with a guide.</p> <p>Tourist signage - signs or symbols to guide or orient visitors to or in a destination.</p> |
| LEVEL: IncreasedProduct | |
| COMPONENT: Infrastructure | COMPONENT ELEMENTS |
| | <p>Public Services- water, energy, sanitation, security, health, urban transportation, transportation terminals.</p> <p>Private Services - hospitals, banks, car rental companies, basic businesses such as groceries, pharmacies, sales of handicrafts.</p> |
| COMPONENT: Equipment | COMPONENT ELEMENTS |
| | <p>Transportation- air, land, water, rail transportation lines.</p> |
| COMPONENT: Accessibility | COMPONENT ELEMENTS |
| | <p>Transportation Routes- roads, highways, airports.</p> <p>Communications- radio, T.V., telephone</p> |
| LEVEL: SecondaryProduct | |
| COMPONENT: Differentiators | COMPONENT ELEMENTS |
| | <p>Recreation- sports facilities, theaters, cinemas, shopping centers, among others.</p> <p>Circuits and routes - routes that combine several thematic walks or explorations in one or more destinations.</p> <p>Organized events - festivals, fairs and exhibitions, contests, concerts, carnivals, sports competitions, others.</p> |

Source: Ownelaboration.

With respect to the second specific objective of the study, to indicate how the arrangement and existence of elements is found in each component of the four levels, a chart was used to concentrate the analysis of the content of the table describing the attributes of the Magical Towns (Chart 1).

Chart 1. Concentrated interpretation of results.

| Basic ProductLevel | |
|------------------------------|--|
| Component | Interpretation of the described results |
| Attractions | |
| Activities | |
| AuxiliaryProductLevel | |
| Component | Interpretation of the described results |
| Services | |
| IncreasedProductLevel | |
| Component | Interpretation of the described results |
| Infrastructure | |
| Equipment | |
| Accessibility | |
| SecondaryProductLevel | |
| Component | Interpretation of the described results |
| Differentiators | |

Source: Own elaboration

2.2 Methodological design

The present investigation is a study in which the aim was to determine the characteristic components of the tourism product in two of the Magical Towns of the State of Aguascalientes. The study presents a cross-sectional, exploratory and descriptive design, since the information was investigated at a single point in the research. The methodological design is non-experimental, since the information was obtained through consultation in secondary sources and direct observation of the components of the tourism product in the towns of Real de Asientos and Calvillo, considered as the units of analysis. on the research. The information analyzed yielded findings about the relevant features in the composition of the tourism product in these Magical Towns of Aguascalientes.

2.3 Methodology

The model used to determine the distinctive components of the product offered in two of the Magical Towns of the State of Aguascalientes, is the theoretical proposal of the professor and researcher of the Marketing Department of the Faculty of Economics and Business Sciences of the University of Alicante, Juan Luis Nicolau, who is considered, according to the Tourism Management Perspectives analysis magazine, among the 25 best tourism researchers in the world in the last 30 years. Nicolau's proposal is a 4-level model for the effective composition of the tourism product, explained in the Literature Review section.

The necessary data on the Magical Towns that are the object of this study were collected from secondary sources, mainly databases with content from government reports, tourist guides, municipal archives and web pages of the respective localities, as well as through direct observation in the same populations. The information that was collected was located and mentioned in the spaces in the format of Table 2 corresponding to the elements and components of the four levels of the tourism product. This table was used to make a content description of the information collected about the components and elements of each Magical Town.

Subsequently, the information described in the results is interpreted to indicate the existence or absence of elements in each component by level and determine whether the conformation of the tourism product in each Magical Town is appropriate with respect to what is proposed in the theoretical model used to the study. The discussions are then presented, followed by the corresponding conclusions.

3. RESULTS

3.1 Descriptive analysis of the identified elements

To present the identified data about the existing elements in each Magical Town, a table was prepared for the Magical Town of Real de Asientos (Table 3) and another for the Magical Town of Calvillo (Table 4). At the beginning of the table for each Magical Town locality, general data about it and the municipality where it is located are presented.

Table 3. Magical Town of Real de Asientos

| REAL DE ASIENOS | | |
|------------------------|--------------------|--|
| General Data | | <p>It is the head of Asientos, the oldest municipality in the State of Aguascalientes, which is located in the east of the state of Aguascalientes and has an area of 547.74 km². Its climate is with an average annual temperature between 12° and 18°C. It has buildings dating back to 1548, mainly characterized by their pink quarry facades.</p> <p>The mining landscapes are witnesses of the activity that prevailed during the colonial era and that is currently a symbol of its identity.</p> <p>It was declared a Magical Town in 2006.</p> |
| PRODUCT LEVEL | COMPONENTS | ELEMENTS OF EACH COMPONENT |
| BASIC PRODUCT | ATTRACTIONS | <p>Architecture- Parish of Our Lady of Belén, Church of Guadalupe, Church of the Lord of Tepozán, Church of San José de Asientos, Chapel of the Holy Cross, Chapel of the Sacred Heart, Chapel of the Purísima Concepción, Square Juárez, Municipal Palace, Clock of the Municipal Palace, House of Culture, Sanctuary and Pantheon of Guadalupe, Former Convent of the Lord of Tepozán, Underground Tunnels of the Parish of Our Lady of Belén, Parish Art Gallery, Miner's House, Larrañaga House, House of Geode Stones, Artisan's House, Royal Museum of Seats, Living Museum of Cactaceae, Elevated Aqueduct, Former Hacienda de Letras, Hacienda Cienega Grande, Hacienda El Tule, Hacienda Los Campos, Hacienda San Rafael, Hacienda Santa Apolonia de los Pilotos, Guadalupe Bridge, White Bridge, National Bridge.</p> |
| | | <p>Festivities and traditions - Feast of Our Lady of Belén (January), Living Via Crucis (Holy Week), Feast of Mr. Del Tepozán (July), Miner's Festival (July), Town Anniversary Feast (July 23)</p> |
| | | <p>Typical foods and drinks -Mezcal, Gorditas, Chichimeca-style rabbit, Bride's roast, Hen with 9 wines, Sweet milk desserts.</p> |
| | | <p>Crafts-Pottery</p> |
| | | <p>Symbolic Attraction- Landscapes and mining environment.</p> |
| | | <p>Geological-Hill of Altamira, HillBufita, Hill Chiquihuite, Hill Pachón, Sinkholeof San Juan, Tunnel La Escondida.</p> |
| | | <p>Hydrological- Chicalote River, El Picacho River, La Jabonera River, HondoStream, AzafránStream, DesparramaderoStream, DichosaStream, ChiquihuiteStream, CarpinterosStream, El Llaverro Dam, Los Alcatraces Dam, La Colorada Dam.</p> |
| | | <p>Wild plants- Cactaceae, mosques and grasslands.</p> |
| | | <p>Wild animals- Variousbirds.</p> |

| | | |
|-------------------|-----------------|---|
| | | Landscapes -Footprints of the Mining Train, Cave Paintings of “Las Negritas”, the Royal Inland Road "Camino Real de Tierra Adentro", Tepozán Recreational Park, Open Sky Aqueduct. |
| | ACTIVITIES | Cultural -Visit the Living Museum of Cactaceae; Visit the Miner's House; Walk along the Artisan's Route: "Between stone and mud"; Tour the underground tunnels, Travel on El Piojito (tourist train); Visit the Parish Art Gallery; Participate in workshops at the Casa del Artesano; Visit the Geode Stone House; Visit the Ex Convento del Tepozán Museum, Buy handicrafts at the Casa del Minero (Museum). |
| | | In Nature - Zip lines in Tepozán; Observation of plants in the Living Museum of Cactaceae; Walk along Alameda Rangel; bird watching, hiking, camping, rappelling, mountain biking. |
| | | Integrated - Walk up to the Cerrito Chapel. Walk the paths of the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro. |
| AUXILIARY PRODUCT | SERVICES | Accommodation -Real Altamira Hotel, Villas del Real Hotel, Real de Asientos Cabins, Los Cactus Cabins, EcologicalStays. |
| | | Food and beverageconsumption centers -Restaurants Puente Nacional, Real Barroco, Compas R. Bar, Comedor Lupita; Páramo Pizzeria; Gorditas Doña Martha, Gorditas El Edén, Gorditas Doña Juana; Tacos Todo Bien, Tacos Licho; Doña Tere EconomicKitchen, Lupita EconomicKitchen. |
| | | Travel Services -Vive Real Agency, Tourist information of Real de Asientos Magical Town. |
| | | Tourist Guidance - Scheduled tours with a guide in the Parish of Our Lady of Belén, in the Tunnels, in the Pinacoteca, in the Sanctuary and Pantheon of Guadalupe, in the Museum, Sanctuary and Ex-convent of the Lord of Tepozán. |
| | | Tourist Signage - There are signs on the Aguascalientes-Asientos route, mostly on federal highways México 45, México 70 and México 22. |
| | | |
| INCREASED PRODUCT | INFRAESTRUCTURE | Public Services - Street Lighting, Roads, Drinking Water Network, Telephone Lines, Garbage Collection, Sewers, Paving. Private Services - Health Services: Real de Asientos Health Center, IMSS Family Medicine Unit No. 5 Real de Asientos, Postal Service, Grocery Stores, Pharmacies, Gas Stations, HSBC and BBVA Banking Services. |
| | EQUIPMENT | Transportation -Interstate Bus Service, Estrella Blanca buses,Combis Aguascalientes collectivetransportation. |
| | ACCESSIBILITY | Transportation Routes – Highways 45, 71, and 22. |
| | | Communications - Radio (State Stations), T.V. (Dish, Sky TVP, Izzi), Telephony (Telcel, Bait). |
| SECONDARY PRODUCT | DIFFERENTIATORS | Recreation - sports facilities. |
| | | Circuits and routes - "In search of the geode stone" tour. |
| | | Organized events - Tamal Festival (February), Miner's Festival (July 11), Magical Town Anniversary (October 30), Calaveras Festival (October 31, November 1 and 2), Taco Festival (November 20). |

Source: Own elaboration

Table 4. Magical Town of Calvillo

| CALVILLO | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|--|
| General Data | | <p>The municipality of Calvillo is located in the southwestern part of the state of Aguascalientes, and its municipal seat was declared a Magical Town in 2012.</p> <p>For a long time and until now, the Municipality has forged an identity based on the production and processing of guava into various products, as well as on the craft of openwork, a craft whose technique has been transmitted from generation to generation.</p> <p>It has an area of 931.26 km². The predominant climate in the municipality is semi-warm, with an average annual temperature between 18° and 22°C.</p> |
| PRODUCT LEVEL | COMPONENTS | ELEMENTS OF EACH COMPONENT |
| BASIC PRODUCT | ATTRACTIONS | <p>Architecture- Temple of the Lord of Salitre, Sanctuary of the Virgin of Guadalupe, Temple of the Virgin of Carmen, Temple of Lord San José, Temple of San Tadeo, Crypt of Santa Cruz, National Museum of Magical Towns, Hacienda de San Diego de La Labor, Hacienda del Sauz, Hacienda de Vaquerías, Hacienda de la Primavera, Municipal Palace, Main Plaza, Parián, Hemicycle, House of Culture, Mirador de la Santa Cruz.</p> |
| | | <p>Festivities and traditions - Festivity of the Lord of Salitre, Festivity of the Virgin of Guadalupe, Holy Week, Guava Fair, Festivity of Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception of Ojocaliente, Festivity of San Tadeo, Festivity of the Virgin of Carmen, Matlachines Dance, Traditional Sunday walks to the guava orchards.</p> |
| | | <p>Typical food and drinks- Carafe snow, Adobera cheese, traditional homemade bread, traditional artisanal sweets and desserts of guava, quince, walnut and milk, guava liqueur, quince liqueur. Temachaca broth, ranchero mole, quelites stew, pinguicawater.</p> |
| | | <p>Crafts- Openwork craft, organic jewelry, candles, wicker, weaving and embroidery, saddlery.</p> |
| | | <p>Symbolic Attraction- Its cultivation of guava has led Calvillo to be known as the guava capital of the world.</p> |
| | | <p>Geological- Malpaso Canyon, Sierra Fría, Sierra del Laurel, Huejúcar Valley.</p> |
| | | <p>Hydrological- La Labor, Calvillo and Santos Rivers; The flowing stream that exists only in rainy seasons such as: Ojo Caliente, los Huenchos, las Cabras, las Moras, Los Mezquitillos and el Roble; The dams of La Codorniz, Ordeña Vieja, Peña Blanca, Media Luna, Malpaso, Cerro Blanco, El Pajarito, Taray, Alisios, Alamitos, Ojo Caliente, Adobes, Cebolletas and Adobera; The Serna Dam banks; Ojo Caliente Spring; El Garruño and Huenchos waterfalls.</p> |
| | | <p>Wild plants- chaparral, scrub, natural grassland, oak forest; forest reserve of oak, poplar, cedar and pine.</p> |
| | | <p>Wild animals- White-tailed deer, wolf, puma, coyote, wild cat, wild boar, fox, hare, rabbit, badger, different</p> |

| | | |
|-------------------|-----------------|---|
| | | varieties of birds. |
| | | Landscapes- Huejúcar Valley, The Sabinal Ecological Park. |
| | ACTIVITIES | Cultural- To visit the National Museum of Magical Towns, taste the sweets, breads and typical drinks, visit the Municipal Plaza and surroundings, visit the temples and sanctuaries, purchase handicrafts. |
| | | In Nature- Practice water sports in the Malpaso and La Codorniz dams; camping in the El Sabinal Ecological Park; explore the Sierra del Laurel at Cienega de los Pinos ecotourism ranch; visit Cabins in Sierra Escondida and rappel, climb, cycle and zip line, as well as see the stars while camping; to visit Sierra del Sol to do various extreme sports or visit El Garruño waterfall. Practice hunting white-tailed deer, wild cat, wild boar and wild turkey. |
| | | Integrated- visit to the Fruitland production company, observe the town from the Mirador de la Santa Cruz. |
| AUXILIARY PRODUCT | SERVICES | Accommodation- 7 Hotels for a total of 145 rooms; 14 Cabin establishments – 65 Cabins – 239 rooms; 3 Water Parks; 3 Spa/Tamazcal. |
| | | Food and beverage consumption centers- 32 Restaurants; 8 Cafes; 7 Bars. |
| | | Travel Services- INTERTOUR Calvillo Agency; ADVENTURE Travel. |
| | | Tourist Guidance - Guided tours on the Artist's Route; on the Guava Route; on the Artisan Route. |
| | | Tourist signage- There are signs on the route that leads from Aguascalientes to Calvillo, mostly on federal highway No. 70. In the center of Calvillo there is little signage to locate attractions or services. |
| INCREASED PRODUCT | INFRAESTRUCTURE | Public Services- Street lighting, Roads, Drinking Water Network, Telephone Lines, Garbage Collection, Sewer. |
| | | Private Services - 30 Artisanal Openwork Craft Stores, 6 Banks, 2 Post and Telegraph Office, 1 Cinema, 2 Traditional Markets, 8 Guava Processing Agroindustries, 10 Guava Sweets, Bakeries where regional bread is sold, 1 Transportation Center Bus (Combis), Taxi Service, Car Rental Service, 1 Bus Station, 7 Self-Service Stores, 5 Gas Stations, 4 Gas Stations, 598 Grocery Stores, 4 Places with health services, 7 pharmacies, Clinics and health services health at the Calvillo General Hospital, Public Security |
| | EQUIPMENT | Transportation- Interstate Bus Service, Estrella Blanca Buses, Combis de Aguascalientes collective transportation that has 50 units. |
| | ACCESSIBILITY | Transportation Routes – Federal Highway 70. |
| | | Communications- Radio (State Stations), T.V. (Dish, Izzi, Total Play), Telephony (Telcel, Telmex). |
| SECONDARY PRODUCT | DIFFERENTIATORS | Recreation- sports facilities. |
| | | Circuits and routes on the Guayequito tram: Guayaba Route, Cantina Route, Craft Market Route, Gastronomic Route “Manuel Gómez Morín”, Artisan House Route, Explora Calvillo Route, Sierra Aventura Route. |
| | | Organized events- Hot Air Balloon Festival, Gastronomic Festivals, Popular Horseback Parade, Day of the Dead Celebrations. |

Source: Own elaboration.

3.2 Interpretation of the described elements.

In Chart 2, the interpretation of the information described in Table 3 and Table 4 is concentrated below, with the purpose of generally pointing out the presence and arrangement of the elements that make up the tourist product of the Magical Towns of Calvillo and Real de Asientos at each level analyzed.

Chart 2. Concentrated interpretation of results.

| Basic ProductLevel | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Component | Interpretation of the described results |
| Attractives | In this component, the localities present the existence of sufficient attractions in terms of architecture, especially of a religious type, gastronomy related to typical foods and family tradition, as well as in terms of popular religious and civil festivities. It also highlights the existence of hydrological resources such as rivers and dams and fauna species mainly for observation and hunting. Finally, the presence of its symbolic element is identified: the mining environment for Real de Asientos and the Guava Production for Calvillo, which are a representative and differentiating attraction in each locality of their identities as a Magical Town. |
| Activities | In both locations there is a supply of activities in natural resources, but there is a lack of integrated activities, that is, those that can combine the use of cultural and natural attractions. Real de Asientos stands out for presenting a good quantity and variety in terms of cultural activities. |
| AuxiliaryProductLevel | |
| Component | Interpretation of the described results |
| Services | It can be noted that the Magical Town of Calvillo stands out in terms of the number of units in accommodation elements such as hotels and cabin companies, as well as in food and beverage consumption centers, especially for the number of restaurants that exist in the center of the Magic Town and at its entrance. In these same accommodation and restaurant elements, the town of Real de Asientos presents the existence of sufficient units, although in terms of its food consumption centers, these refer more to fast food and typical food establishments. Travel service companies, tourist guide and tourist signage exist in both Magic Towns, but they are still limited to a small number of units in each element. |
| IncreasedProductLevel | |
| Component | Interpretation of the described results |
| Infrastructure | The two localities of Magical Towns present breadth in terms of the existence of general and private services for the community, which are also used within the tourism sector. |
| Equipment | Both the Magical Town of Calvillo and Real de Asientos have insufficient means of transportation to get to the town, especially because there are only two bus lines that transport visitors to the towns. |
| Accessibility | There is a lack of transportation roads in the two Magical Towns, making it necessary to increase the creation of state highways and improvements in roads and highways. On the other hand, the extensive existence of media in the studied localities is detected. |
| SecondaryProductLevel | |
| Component | Interpretation of the described results |
| Differentiators | The Magical Town of Calvillo presents the existence of a good amount of offer in terms of Routes or Circuits to discover and enjoy activities in |

| | |
|--|--|
| | natural or cultural attractions. For its part, the Magical Town of Real de Asientos has insufficient supply of this type of element. In the case of Organized Events, both locations have made an effort to create events scheduled on different dates and with different themes, which identifies the existence of variety and sufficiency in this element. |
|--|--|

Source: Own elaboration.

4. DISCUSSIONS

Being of interest to the government of the State of Aguascalientes, to gradually achieve a competitive tourism positioning at the national level that provides economic, sociocultural and environmental benefits, it has been considered in this study that Calvillo and Real de Asientos present an opportunity to contribute to this objective.

With the designation of Magical Town that has been granted to them, these localities have sought to generate an attractive tourist product that generates constant flows of visitors, who, by being satisfied with their needs and expectations, will be able to be promoters of these sites and possible recurring visitors to the same. To achieve this satisfaction in the tourist, it is convenient to identify whether the tourist product offered to the visitor meets those necessary elements and in an appropriate proportion to grant them a status of well-being and complacency. The results of this research allow us to know and create awareness of the importance of determining the structural conditions of a tourism product, which, in this case, can give these Magical Towns of the State of Aguascalientes, competitive advantages over other towns in the country that have that same distinction from the federal government of Mexico and that also seek to be competitive at the national level.

The main limitation in this research was the constant updating that some secondary sources that were consulted needed to have, such as the web pages of the locations studied. Despite this limitation, the strength of the study was that it had sufficient information in the sources consulted and the availability of information agents to corroborate the data collected and be able to obtain some additional information.

As practical implications of the study, it can be noted that in the methodology used to determine the distinctive attributes of the tourism product of these localities, the government tourism agencies have a reference to know what are the mandatory elements that the product offered to the community must have. With this, it is possible for the tourist to find satisfaction to his expectations and needs.

This study only determined the composition of the tourism product of Real de Asientos and Calvillo, which are two of the four Magical Towns that the State of Aguascalientes, Mexico currently has. A future study can be carried out to identify the conformation of the tourism product of the two remaining Magical Towns: San José de Gracia and Pabellón de Hidalgo. A comparative study can also be carried out in the future between the four localities with this designation. This would be to carry out an evaluation of the numerical status in which the elements of the tourist product of each Magical Town are found and that should properly characterize them.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Through the Magical Towns Program, various municipal localities in Mexico that have been recognized with this designation, which is already considered a brand, have been favored with the improvement of several of their fragile initial conditions through the promotion of tourism as a local development factor. These towns seek the growth and consolidation of tourist activity in them through the offer of an attractive product that encourages people to visit them and have a pleasant stay. Magical Towns are tourist destinations that, being aware of this, must plan and organize the elements they have to articulate an adequate product that convinces the consumer that they have made a correct decision about the destination chosen for their trip.

The central objective of this research was to determine the distinctive attributes that make up the tourism product of the Magical Towns of Real de Asientos and Calvillo in the State of Aguascalientes, Mexico. To this end, the sources consulted provided information that made it possible to detect and specify the elements of the product, as well as interpret its disposition and existence to provide the tourist with a beneficial, enjoyable and timely travel experience.

It is basically concluded that the product of the Magical Towns of Real de Asientos and Calvillo has elements in all the components of the levels evaluated according to the analysis model used.

It is also significant to conclude that the simple existence of all the elements that theoretically should prevail is not enough. The effective sufficiency and functionality of these elements must be sought to satisfy needs, in addition to the growth in their offer according to the pace of demand from visitors to the Magical Town.

It is important to note that the government of the State of Aguascalientes has seen in the Magical Towns the opportunity to promote tourism development in the semi-urban and rural areas of the state that have natural and sociocultural resources worth taking advantage of through tourism activity.

Finally, it should not be forgotten that with the current and global use of technology, the possibility of locating unknown and different destinations is within the reach of tourists. In them, the visitor aims to find various resources that satisfy their needs and meet their expectations. Therefore, carrying out an analysis and reflecting on how the tourism product offered is made up will allow a tourist destination to implement improvement actions that lead it to continually propose a quality product to the market. This may influence its competitiveness, its positioning and its economic and social sustainability.

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