

TRAVELING – TASTING – DISCOVERING

The new fair experience, undertaken by Ente Fiera Promoberg, started officially on Friday, October 10th 2014, when the ribbon cutting ceremony launched the first edition of Agri Travel & Slow Travel Expo with the participation of institutional representatives.

After a year of intense work, finally came the event that the Organizers have designed to be an innovative and dynamic promotion of rural and slow tourism.

An international event able to connect the many aspects that actively contribute to the growth of this specific segment of tourism .

Four keywords for three days

(Agriculture, Culture, Tourism, Sustainability)

During three days (from 10th to 12nd October, 2014) at Bergamo Exhibition Centre took place a show where “places”, companies, organizations and operators were object of great interest and appreciation by people who visited the event. Many visitors (50.000) had the opportunity, for free, to get in touch with the different facets of slow and rural travel.

The event confirmed the themes of the four keywords both because they represent the several contexts of application and also because of the proximity to Expo 2015, where food is an important factor of cultural identity and a strong element for communication among art, culture, science, landscape, history and traditions.

From here the paradigm enclosed in the keywords that explain the sense of the event and that, articulated around the themes of Expo 2015, joins itself with the great universal exhibition in Milan: AGRICULTURE, CULTURE, TOURISM and SUSTAINABILITY .

An overview of prestigious Bodies

The list of bodies, private and international, that joined the project, suggests an important roundup of supporters, as **Lombardy Region and the Chamber of Commerce of Bergamo**, and the many other who believed in the value of the initiative, providing sponsorship, collaboration for the conference program, or participation with its own stand.

Among the first to patronize the salon, there is the **Italian Pavilion for Expo 2015** and **MIPAAF**, while **FAO**, the Agency of United Nations for Food and Agriculture, honored us to use its brand during the initiative: “2014 International Year of Family Agriculture”

Many organizations distinguished for initiatives and application to the project during the event, from UNPLI (that represents over six thousand Italian local tourist associations - UNPLI), to parks, from local action groups to mountain communities; and also public bodies, associations of rural and territorial promotion, national and international organizations, foreign associations, the National Tourist Office of Morocco and the European Federation of Tourism Eurogites .

It's important at European level, the intervention of **Eurogites**, the European Federation of Rural Tourism which includes 35 associations represented in 27 European countries. Eurogites contributed, during the international exhibition, with the Federation work and experience (back in those days by the annual conference entitled "The Future of Rural Tourism" - Tyrol, from 6th to 8th October 2014), presenting the report on the European situation in this field.

Among the remarkable collaborations enters **Bergamo University**, the creator and partner with Ente Fiera Promoberg of the project "Centrality of the territories" that has been reflected in an international conference about agricultural urban space and European network of the city s-low.

There was also a stand, where University gave the visibility to copious pilot projects on the development of territorial marketing networks, targeted with the aim of showing to the public the European network University (**Beauvais - Amiens, Cambridge, Charleroi, Girona, Lubeck, Santander**) and Lombard areas participating in research.

And the overview continues with **ASL**, representing the planning that local institutions carry on in Italy and in European networks (walking groups, European Network of Healthy Cities, application of WHP -Workplace Health Promotion), and that engages the purpose of the fair for their idea that **be in motion** is a form of health protection and conservation of natural habitats.

In the sign of cooperation

The event proved to be a virtuous container of initiatives and ideas in the sign of cooperation thanks to the presence of Confcooperative. Comparison tables, proposed by the various entities, generated contacts and opportunities for dialogue. The event will remain the reference point for them, in order to ensure their growth through future editions.

Agriculture and tourism across the board. Trade associations frontline

Numerous farmhouses, perfectly coordinated, and main trade associations, first of all Terranostra national and Lombardy Agritourist, showcased the dynamism that represents agriculture from many years thanks to the multi functionality of companies. For these reason, there were stands organized and always crowded, an amazing range of activities and speakers prepared to live the future challenges (as declared again by associations during the conference on Tourism and Rural activity that on Friday, October the 10th, that inaugurated calendar events).

Good examples and best practices From North to South, comparing ideas

Another objective achieved, concerns the cases of virtuous examples and good practices that are presented during the three days of the event.

From north to south the program affected all fields involved in the fair. Presentations about quality of agricultural food production and teaching classes, thanks to the network of Educational Farms of Lombardy and the Network of Educational Farms in the Puglia region.

Examples of gastronomic tributes from different Italian regions shown the originality and innovation of various marketing strategies presented, with interesting presentations and case histories by Sardinia and Trentino Alto Adige.

Finally , a special mention is for the initiatives presented by Matching organized: the service created by the Organsers with the aim to match in the best and efficient way Meetings B2B and cooperation tables.

Cultural identities that born again: pearls for tourism

The enhancement and promotion of natural and architectural heritage founded a wide echo at the event. Great interest for little realities presented, as: Grumes (the smallest city in the European slow circuit), or the Zoldo Valley (with its program of promotion based on the Dolomites UNESCO heritage), or even the small Medieval village of Etroubles in Val d'Aosta, already orange flag of Touring Club and in the end the FAI – Fondo Ambientale Italiano, with its project of revaluation of the Canavese castle.

First of all: slow. The success of the slow section

The combination of slow travel, with his slow rhythms, with the health and travel intensity, was really appreciated. Main character again was Unpli with its local associations and ASL, but also Legambiente, the Slow Movement Association and the European Foundation of the Via Francigena, which are ones of the heralds of this new trend of thinking about vacation and experience travel.

The handcraft field is still a strong incentive

Handcraft played an important role of connection among territories and communities development, because it is an expression of creativity and creative genius. This connection is more important when the handicraft forms the identity of a culture, including food heritage.

This role has given high visibility at the event, with great appreciation from the public that has been able to interact directly with many craftsmen.

Internationalization. From the contact B2B until know-how

In his position as an international event, since the first edition, AT&ST Expo had a special focus on bringing the event nearest with the demand and foreign markets.

The result was a great feedback, both for B2B section and for the availability of operators to advice and inform about orientation inside the international market, especially the area of the Gulf and Dubai, side of the next World Expo.

Education: growing with the right tools. From strategies to resource finding

As indicated in its project program, the event wanted to be a platform of training orientation. The qualified presence of local marketing experts, of examples of successful projects and also the presence of representatives of local agencies responsible to distribute funds under the new development programs of the European Community, demonstrated the success of the project program, providing companies tools for growing and knowing.

Social network. The new frontier of marketing at the event

The idea of planning a busy timetables of workshops specifically dedicated to marketing with social networks, was a successful intuition. A topic which affected both the public and operators, for whom the event promoted a special campaign of information so much followed.

Communication with the new generations

The dialogue that Organizers wanted to engage with younger generations found in schools its natural partner and resulted in a substantial presence during the event of students and educational institutions of the tourism sector and hotel .

A dialogue that the organizers expect to continue and extend to a wider scene, which includes a national and international comparison that sees schools involved to integrate as much as possible programs with curricular experiences of working realities.

The exhibition explained by events

The events section catalyzed the attention and participation of public and operators. The program interchanged over fifty events including conferences, workshops, presentations, panel discussions, workshops and folklore performances, which highlight the variety and richness of the themes and initiatives proposed. **During the major conferences 'Tourism and Rural activity' and 'S-low cities'**. The "agricultural urban space", both of them international, it was organized a lot of events that ranged from workshops on social media marketing, to the internationalization, presentation of case histories, show cooking, slow tourism, protocols of Smart Cities, passing through many other areas considered to be of interest: rural nutrition and promotion of authenticity, the Hi - Tech applied to traveling, the teaching of rural folklore, the European calls and new PSR, the food and the healthy lifestyles, till to the use of animals in the proposals for active tourism, from trekking to the pet therapy .

Lombardy, the heart of Europe

A beating heart is the most appropriate imagine to describe the central role of Lombardy compared to Europe and therefore of Agri Travel & SlowTravel Expo, too, which is to be located on a strategic position that cross all the European routes, thanks to the international traffic of the airport 'Caravaggio' Orio al Serio, third Italian hub, located five minutes from the exhibition halls.

The opening conference was the occasion for an international view, with a focus on tourism and rurality, starting from the strategic position of territories of Lombardy, today also interested by the wave of media exposure and planning generated by Expo 2015 .

A central role that reflects the state of rural tourism in Europe, a reality that exposed by Eurogites, the European Federation of Rural Tourism, both during the conference with the participation of Dr . Klaus Ehrlich (General Secretary), and with the presence of Federation during the event, with a representing stand of 35 associations registered , distributed into the 27 European countries . A partnership that led virtually the event into contact with over 72.000 members, from farm and service suppliers to the industry, that are the members registered in Eurogites

Territory

The event can count many participations and synergies with some specific reality as the **Bergamo Province, Bergamo FAI and the Diocese of Bergamo**, with its Office for the Pastoral Care of Tourism and Free Time, **Bergamo ASL**, to conclude with bodies representing industry and trade, **Confindustria and Confartigianato**, and the **Bergamo University**.

Arm in arm with the territory.

From the plains to the mountains: a strong presence

Impossible not to underline the strong presence of the public and private institutions of the territory, with associations, local action groups, mountain communities, parks, educational farms and operators.

Participants are several and we had many examples of virtuous promotion and cooperation in tourism, presented and shared during the event. From the mountains, to the lakes and plains, all areas of the Bergamo territory gave credit to this opportunity by bringing to the event testimony to how rural tourism of this province is lively and started to mature entrepreneurship. But, above all, demonstrating how much important will be the combination among key aspects as opening up to foreign markets, designing new strategies and opening to network.

See you to the 2015 edition!

The year of the Universal Expo is coming. Of all the important facts that Expo will be able to generate, and we hope to maintain, we consider AT & ST Expo a project that already collected part of the Expo legacy, thanks to the four keywords, and for this reason will be able to create a second edition, even more challenging and full of ideas for a sustainable and lasting development, also after the Universal Expo.

See you at AT & ST Expo 2015!

Bergamo Exhibition Center – from 9th to 11th October, 2015