

ASPECTS REGARDING THE DEVELOPMENT OF TOURIST POTENTIAL IN SIMERIA AREA, HUNEDOARA COUNTY, ROMANIA

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Abstract

At the beginning of the 18th century, begins to take shape, on the left bank of the Mures River, what today is considered by dedicated specialists "a national monument in the art of parks" and at the same time the oldest and most valuable collection of exotic woody plants and autochthonous from Romania, the wonderful Arboretum from Simeria.

The geographical position favors the development of tourism, through the diversity of the landscape (dendrological park, hills, Mureș valley, Strei valley), the natural resources are the large, possibility of hiking, the capacity of the territory to support several types of tourism; ecotourism can be developed and promoting the local arboretum brand would include the city of Simeria and the area in the tourist circuits.

The aristocratic gardens from Banpotoc (located near Simeria) represent the work (over 15 years) of an Italian in love with Romania. Giovanni Savatelli created „I Giardini di Zoe” with love for his granddaughter, Zoe, for our country but also from her passion for gardening. In order to promote tourism in Simeria area, we must take into account both the natural and anthropogenic potential, besides it is necessary to preserve the traditions and popular habits of the area and develop these resources.

Keywords: Simeria, park, I Giardini di Zoe, natural reservation, tourism

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Introduction

Romania hides places that are hard to be discovered. There are many unknown places, among the multitude of "fashionable" tourist attractions, more or less commercial, full of history or not, with old traditions or affected by modernity. We dared to look for less promoted places, to patrol along untrodden paths, to find buildings, villages, landscapes, and people of history. Simeria is located in the eastern part of Hunedoara County, in the area of the Mures valley, protected to the north by the chain of the Metaliferi Mountains of the Apuseni Carpathians, to the south by the Poiana Rusca, Retezat and Sureanu Mountains, and to the west, by several gorges in the area between the Southern and Apuseni Carpathians. To the east, the Mures valley stretches towards Podisul Transilvaniei. (Compoziții optime pentru pădurile României, 2020; <https://www.discoverhunedoara.com/arboretum>; <http://www.primariasimeria.ro>)

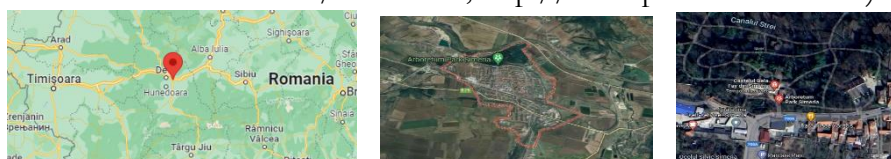


Figure 1. The location of the locality and the Simeria Arboretum

Source: Processing after <https://www.google.com/maps>

From a demographic point of view, Simeria belongs to the category of small towns. Simeria is an important railway junction, benefiting from exceptional connections from the point of view of road access and it is located on the E 68 or DN 7. (<http://www.primariasimeria.ro>)

Those passing through Simeria have the opportunity to visit the Arboretum (Simeria Dendrological Park is ranked 3rd in Europe and 11th in the world, according to the British Encyclopedia). (https://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arboretumul_Simeria)

The notion of arboretum can be defined in a few words as follows: as a notable area of land, dedicated to the effective growth and display of various types of trees, shrubs, vines and other plants, valuable from a forestry and ornamental point of view, which may grow in a given area, as well as to the maintenance, correct labelling and study of existing and newly introduced plants. (Popescu F., Radu S., 2000)

A dendrological and landscape reserve with a unique value for the national heritage, it was created at the beginning of the 18th century by arranging the natural ponds of the Mures valley in landscape style (English, romantic). The first exotic species were introduced in the mid-18th century. In the course of history, the park belonged successively to noble families of Hungarian origin (Gyulay, Kún, Fáy and Ocskay). At the proposal of the Natural Monuments Commission, in 1954, the Dendrological Park is protected by law, receiving the attribute of "Monument of Nature" - dendrological reserve. The role of dendrological parks is particularly important for science and for the national economy, although the general public considers them primarily ornamental and recreational parks. (Herța I., 1998; Ocskay L., 1991; Popescu F., 2000)

In Banpotoc, a village 11 km from Simeria, with a population of fewer than 500 inhabitants, in the Hunedoara County, we are given the impression that we have arrived in a royal court. I Giardini di Zoe, private gardens, is located in this village, 18 km from Deva and 26 km from Hunedoara. Created in a Renaissance style woven with their own vision, on an area of 3.5 hectares, the fairy-tale garden includes thousands of plant species as well as stone decorations and ornaments. Besides this wonderful private garden, in the village, you can also visit the wonderful Maria Castle. (<https://alexandracristian.ro>; <https://igiardinidizoe.ro>)

Materials and methods

The purpose of this paperwork is to promote the town of Simeria, and to present the objectives that can be visited both in the town and around it. It is a small town, with a population of 13,000 inhabitants, but with very high potential and it would be a shame to remain only a town on the map of the county Hunedoara. Unfortunately, we did not have access to the financial details of the accommodation structures (which are being analyzed), the situation of the investments, and the gains or losses that occurred during the pandemic. These are not available to the public and the owners did not want to discuss this topic either. Due to Romanian legislation, we do not have access to this data. Only authorized institutions, with special requests or court orders, have access to such data. In order to avoid legal problems with these structures, we concentrated more on the tourist side, than on the financial side. This was also the purpose to present the possibilities of promotion and development of the analyzed area, but by using the materials and information that we studied and analyzed, legally, to carry out this study.

For this work, we have studied bibliographical materials of exceptional rarity. Through documentation, we have realized what an extraordinary history and path the creation of these wonderful objectives has had. The monographs of this area were also helpful, especially a monograph on the

Simeria Arboretum. The local authorities were very open and provided us with current data. They let us study and analyze a management plan for the Simeria Arboretum.

In addition to these data, we also consulted national statistics, with the help of which we managed to centralize and draw conclusions about the tourist activity in this area. The most important thing was to visit these tourist attractions in order to better understand and present this little-promoted. (Dumitriu-Tătăranu I. et al., 1960; Herța I., Radu S., 1995; Compoziții optime pentru pădurile României, 2020; <http://www.primariasimeria.ro>)

Results and discussion

The Simeria area has tourist potential and a developing tourist market. The town also has churches, archaeological sites, folk traditions that take on special forms, and artistic and cultural events. Through concrete plans and projects, through promotion, advertising, and publicity, by developing an efficient tourist circuit, which can offer new jobs, and new opportunities in services, together with travel agencies and services can contribute to the formation of the tourist market in the area of Simeria. (Ciolac Ramona, et al., 2020; Oana Maria Sicoe-Murg, et al., 2022; <http://www.primariasimeria.ro>)

The Dendrological Park in Simeria began to take shape on the banks of the Mures River about 300 years ago. Today it is a national monument in park art. The park is recognized as the oldest and most valuable collection of native and exotic trees and woody plants. (<https://ghidul-horeca.ro/obiective-turistice-agrement>)

Between 1870 and 1880, the first repairs were made to the park and the building and, according to precise plans, an enrichment of the park began with the introduction of numerous species from the Far East and North America, and seed exchanges with foreign countries took place. The owner who is reported after Count Kún is Fáy Bela, a naturalist, and member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, who enriches the park with exotic species and writes scientific works on the acclimatization of species. After 1918, Ocskay Istvan, an artist of noble origin, with a great artistic sense, greatly improved the park from a landscape point of view. (Ocskay I., 1991; <https://www.gohunedoara.com>)



Figure 2. Ludvig Bucek



Figure 3. King Ferdinand's visit



Figure 4. Count Kún



Figure 5. Simeria - Bela Fay Castel

Source:<https://ghidul-horeca.ro/obiective-turistice-agrement>,https://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arboretumul_Simeria, <https://www.discoverhunedoara.com/arboretum>

The dendrological collection of the park inherited from the former owners amounts to more than 250 taxa, there are currently 2165. The Simeria Forest Research and Experimentation Station (within the park) has initiated from the beginning extensive conservation, improvement, and development actions, mainly aimed at the maintenance and the improvement of landscapes, enrichment of the collection, realization of pilot plantations with exotic species of forestry interest, amplification of acclimatization and selection works and, last but not least, creation of a strong material base for the multiplication of valuable forest and ornamental species both for the Arboretum's own needs and those of other botanical parks and gardens, but also for the extension and development of green spaces in urban centres. (Radu S., 2001; Radu S, et al., 2005; <http://www.icashd.ro/arhitecturapeisagera.html>)

The dendrological, forestry, landscape, didactic and recreational importance of this "site" of national and even international heritage has been confirmed and attested by numerous personalities of science from the country and abroad, who have visited it in the last four decades. (Popescu F., Radu S., 2000)

The Dendrological Park - Monument of Nature. The arboretum now covers an area of almost 70 hectares, and the 50 parcels of the park, crossed by the Strei on its way to the Mures, bring together meadows, paths, alleys, lakes and springs, in a rare landscape complexity. Oaks, acacias, poplars, plane trees, but also bamboo and white and red water lilies, ivy, climbing vines, various species of splendid magnolias, this makes the Simeria park a dream landscape, extremely valuable, with an unparalleled variety of colours. (<https://ingerisidemoni.ro/parcul-dendrologic-arboretumul-simeria-un-loc-ce-nu-trebuie-ratat>). The material base includes: Simeria Arboretum – a valuable collection of woody, exotic and native plants - where the unit's headquarters and the molecular genetics laboratory are located; the nurseries (3 ha.) and greenhouses at Simeria, Dobra nursery (9 ha.). (Compoziții optime pentru pădurile României, 2020). The scientific research activity at Simeria includes the following fields: molecular genetics, biotechnologies (in vitro cultures), modern technologies for the cultivation of valuable ornamental species, dendrology. The nurseries contain a rich assortment of ornamental seedlings of coniferous and deciduous trees which are intensively used for landscaping green areas, parks and gardens. (Radu S, et al., 2005)

Monument of landscape architecture. The entrance to the Arboretum is marked by the solemnity of the pyramidal oaks, the slightly symmetrical forms of the vegetation combined with the white architectural background of the building and its majestic Tuscan columns. The two symmetrically arranged access points, typical of noble houses, are delimited by the rondo in front of the building, a huge carpet of juniper from which two shaggy tree specimens with an umbrella crown grow, outlined on the outside by a rose border. (<http://www.icashd.ro/arhitecturapeisagera.html>; <https://www.gohunedoara.com>; <https://ingerisidemoni.ro/parcul-dendrologic-arboretumul-simeria-un-loc-ce-nu-trebuie-ratat/>)



Figure 6. Entrance to Arboretum Simeria

Source: https://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arboretumul_Simeria , Personal archive of the authors

The exceptional compositional structure is achieved through the combination of shapes, the characteristic tidal pattern of monumental trees with tabular crowns at maturity, fastigiated or hanging, with the regularity of globular crowns and the bamboo curtain. The proportion between volumes and spaces, between grandeur and gentleness, the contrast of lights and shadows, the harmonious combinations of colours and shades, envelop the whole terrace in a glow and harmony. (Popescu F., Radu S., 2000; <https://www.discoverhunedoara.com/arboretum>)

Descending from the upper terrace towards the centre of the park, along the winding paths, with steeper or domed slopes, under the boxwood canopies, you suddenly enter the park's plant paradise. You reach the lakes, wonderful mirrors in which monumental specimens of pyramidal oak and pond cypress are reflected. On the quiet surface of the lakes rest white and red walnut trees, and the perspective that opens up offers the possibility of contemplating a landscape composition of rare beauty. Trees and shrubs, exotic and native, leafy and resinous, with crowns of varying shapes and heights, are inserted on the contours of the lakes in a harmony of colors and shades, of lights and shadows constituting one of the most sought after and picturesque places in the park. (Compoziții optime pentru pădurile României, 2020; <https://ghidul-horeca.ro/obiective-turistice-agrement>; <https://www.discoverhunedoara.com/arboretum>)



Figure 7. Landscape from the park

Source: Personal archive of the authors

The wide and winding main alleys highlight the landscape and taxonomic richness through the alternation and contrast of colours, shades, and shapes given by the arrangement of vegetation in multiple planes and the meadows with shrubs and perennials. The smooth or abrupt transition from sunny areas to shady and cool corners always arouses the visitor's interest and attention.

Narrow side alleys usually have a pronounced meandering aspect, strongly curved, developing panoramas and perspectives or spectacular structural changes after only a few steps. The waters of the Streit flow through the park through an artificial channel and gently flow towards the confluence with the Mures, dividing the reserve into two distinct architectural landscape zones. (<http://www.icashd.ro/arhitecturapeisagera.html>). Another area, situated between the Strei canal and the Mures river, the relief is relatively flat, and the architecture and landscape effects combine exotic elements with the existing natural meadow vegetation. Among the infinite landscapes that unfold over the course of a year, we cannot fail to mention the "symphony of magnolias", a true outpouring of purity and gentleness.

The impressive number of species (10), but also of magnolias, with abundant flowering and with a chromatic unheard of in other places in the country, considerably increase the beauty and elegance of the park, leaving unforgettable impressions on visitors. (<https://ghidul-horeca.ro/obiective-turistice-agrement>; <https://www.discoverhunedoara.com/arboretum>; <https://ingerisidemoni.ro/parcul-dendrologic-arboretumul-simeria-un-loc-ce-nu-trebuie-ratat/>)



Figure 8. Magnolia species

Source: <https://ghidul-horeca.ro/obiective-turistice-agrement>, <https://www.discoverhunedoara.com/arboretum>,
Personal archive of the authors

The "Symphony of Magnolias" begins in the second half of March, continues in April and ends in July with *Magnolia macrophylla* Michx and *Magnolia virginiana* L. (<https://ghidul-horeca.ro/obiective-turistice-agrement>; <https://ingerisidemoni.ro/parcul-dendrologic-arboretumul-imeria-un-loc-ce-nu-trebuie-ratat>). In the studied area, the number of tourist reception structures is not very large. Until 1995, there were camping-type structures in Simeria. After 1995, this accommodation structure is no longer available. Tourist villas have decreased in number since 2022, when there were 2, while in 2015, when there is only one tourist villa. Starting with 2015, a new accommodation structure can be found in the locality, namely a tourist guesthouse. From the same year, an agritourism guesthouse was established in Simeria.

If in 2015 there were 3 tourist reception structures in Simeria, now there are only 2. The data that will be presented below were obtained from the studied statistics, from data received from the City Hall and very short discussions with the owners of the accommodation structures. Unfortunately, we did not receive the data of major interest. They told us the situation in certain years of the (total) accommodation capacity, the accommodation capacity in the busiest months of the accommodation structures, the arrivals both in total and by month, but also the situation of total overnight stays and in the months they are most requested by tourists. We did not receive official data about the pandemic period, about the recorded losses, but they were affected due to the restrictions. About the investments in these structures, we did not receive any answer, except that they are confidential data, not for the public.

Following the study of the area and the centralization of the data, below are the results on the situation of the accommodation structures on various analyzed aspects. In Figure 9. we have made a centralization of tourist reception structures with accommodation function. The situation presents the evolution over time of these structures between 1990-2022. If at the beginning there was only one campsite in the area, over time a tourist villa appeared, which unfortunately closed after 1995. After 2019, only two structures remained, as can be seen from the figure.

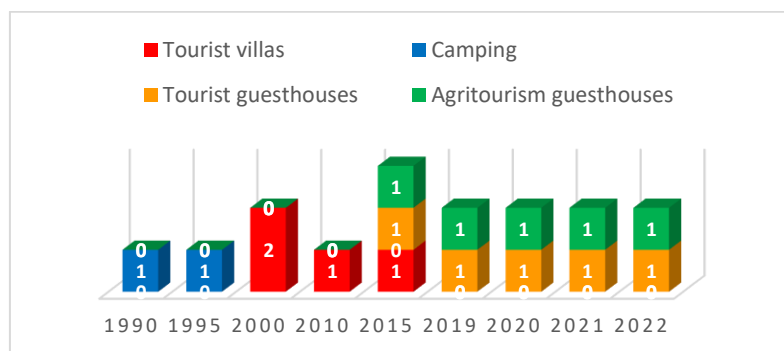


Figure 9. Tourist reception structures with tourist accommodation functions by types of structures (number)

Source: Author's processing after www.insse.ro/cms, Primaria Simeria, The owners of the accommodation structures

The accommodation capacity of the analyzed structures is presented below in Figure 10. It can be observed that in the period 1990-2022 some of them gradually decreased until they disappeared, compared to other structures that managed to resist over time.

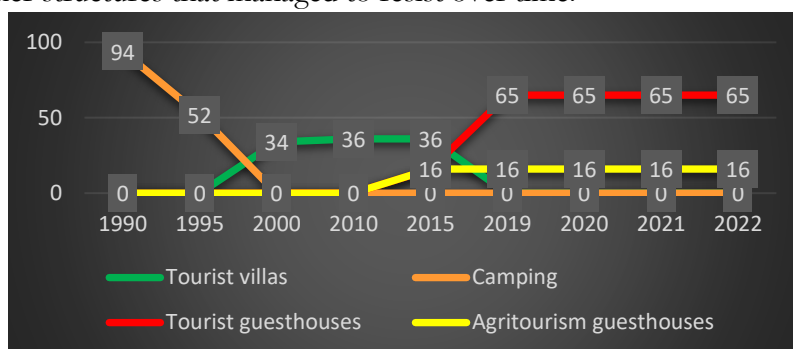


Figure 10. The existing tourist accommodation capacity by types of tourist reception structures (number of seats)

Source: Author's processing after www.insse.ro/cms, Primaria Simeria, The owners of the accommodation structures

If until now we had data starting with 1990, in the following situations the data are starting with the year 2001 for some analyzed categories, and in the situation where the analysis was done by month of the remaining accommodation structures, the analysis starts with the year 2019, and the months studied (May -September) are the most requested months of the year. The tourist accommodation capacity in operation on the main types of tourist reception structures is analyzed in Figure 11. The analysis is carried out for the period 2001-2021 at the accommodation structures in Simeria.

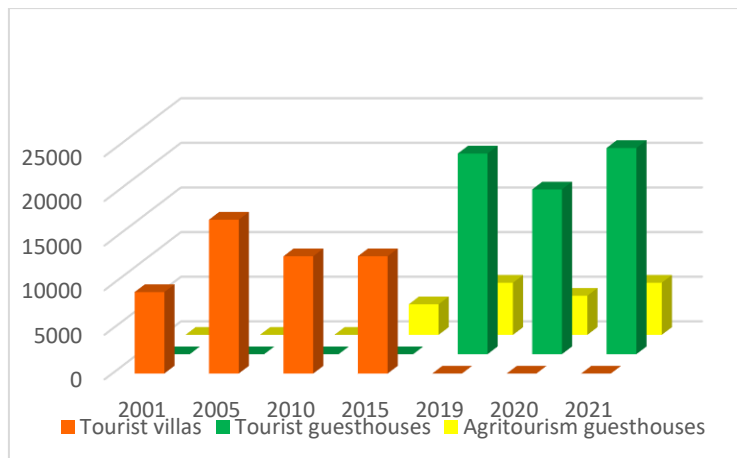


Figure 11. The capacity of tourist accommodation in operation by types of tourist reception structures (number of places per day)

Source: Author's processing after www.insse.ro/cms, Primaria Simeria, The owners of the accommodation structures

Figure 12. shows the total situation (tourist guesthouse and agritourism guesthouse) of tourist accommodation capacity for the crowded months and highly requested by tourists. It can be seen that, there are not very big differences between the analyzed months. The lowest values are in August 2019, June 2020 and September 2022. The month of May does not appear in this figure because it was the pandemic period and everything was closed. Even in the figures that will follow, which present a monthly situation, the month of May is absent.



Figure 12. The total capacity of tourist accommodation according to the tourist reception structures, per month (number of places/days)

Source: Author's processing after www.insse.ro/cms, Primaria Simeria, The owners of the accommodation structures

Tourist arrivals at the existing reception structures are highlighted on Figure 13. Tourist villas were the most requested between 2001-2015. After 2015, with the appearance of tourist guesthouses, the number of arrivals in tourist villas decreased and then this type of structure disappeared from Simeria. With the appearance of the agritourist guesthouse, the demand for the tourist guesthouse decreased. From here we understand that tourists' preferences have changed, they want to be as close to nature as possible, to participate in household activities and to serve homemade products.

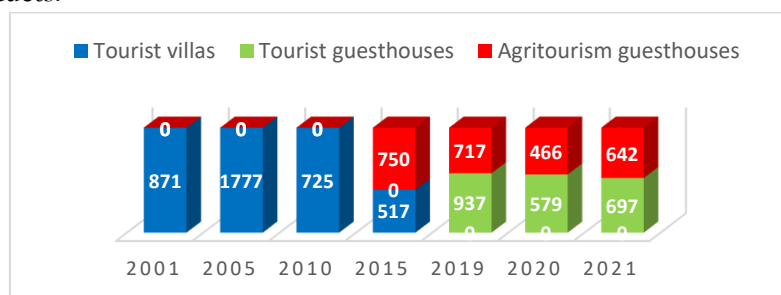


Figure 13. Arrivals of tourists in tourist reception structures by types of structures

Source: Author's processing after www.insse.ro/cms, Primaria Simeria, The owners of the accommodation structures

As we mentioned above, the month of May 2020 does not appear in the study due to the pandemic when the accommodation units were closed. Figure 14. highlights the total tourist arrivals of the two tourist reception structures in Simeria. It can be observed that there are not very big differences in the studied months, except in June 2019, June 2020 and June 2021, they recorded a small decrease in the arrival of tourists in the accommodation structures.

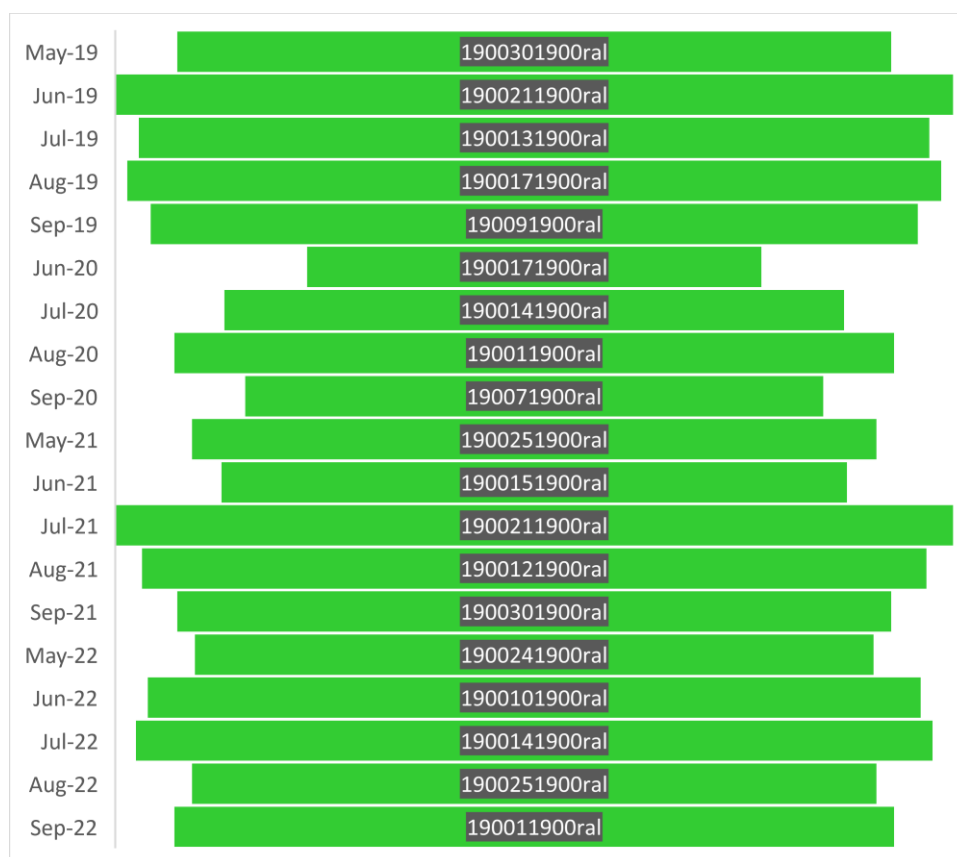


Figure 14. Arrivals of tourists in tourist reception structures by types of structures, by month

Source: Author's processing after www.insse.ro/cms, Primaria Simeria, The owners of the accommodation structures

A centralization of the situation of overnight stays for tourists in tourist reception structures is presented below. Figure 15 highlights the evolution of overnight stays during the studied period. It can be seen that the number of overnight stays in tourist villas decreased with the appearance of tourist guesthouses. Even though after 2015 when the agritourism guesthouse appeared, the number of overnight stays were not affected and remained high in the tourist guesthouse.

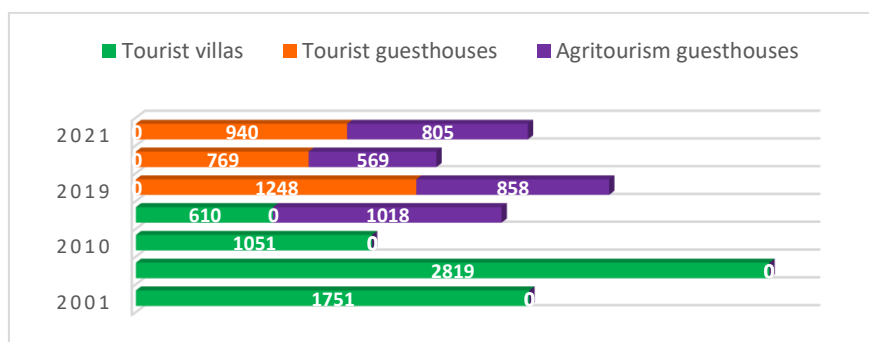


Figure 15. Overnight stays in tourist reception structures by types of structures

Source: Author's processing after www.insse.ro/cms, Primaria Simeria, The owners of the accommodation structures

The total situation, per month, of overnight stays in the reception structures is presented in Figure 16. It can be seen that the high number of overnight stays like before the pandemic. In 2020, due to the pandemic situation, the number of overnight stays was quite low, but slowly from 2021 the number of overnight stays began to increase.

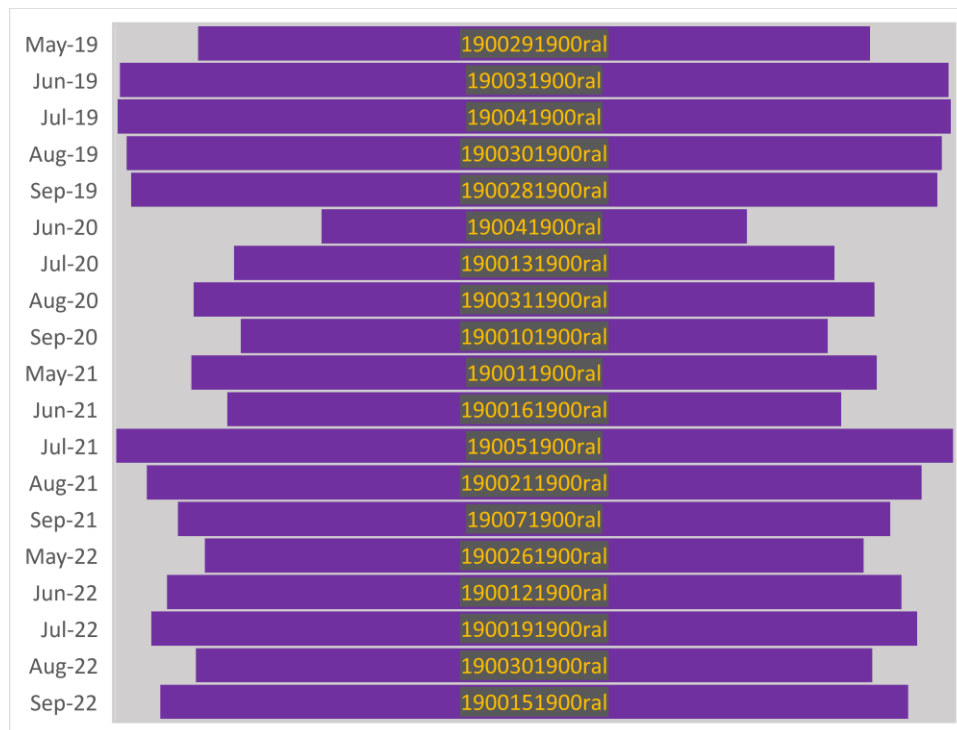


Figure 16. Overnight stays in tourist reception structures by types of structures, per month

Source: Author's processing after www.insse.ro/cms, Primaria Simeria, The owners of the accommodation structures

Nearby Simeria, nature reserves that can be visited and admired by the visitors or tourists are the following: Deva Fortress Hill, Bejan Forest, Deva city, Uroiului Hillock, Săcărâmbului Gorge, Certeju de Sus commune, Săcărâmb village, Chizid Forest, commune of Băița, village of Crăciunești, Colț Hill, Zănoaga Hill and at a distance of 25 km the tourists and the visitors can visit the balneo-climatic resort Geoagiu Bai. In Geoagiu Bai you can see: 1,000-year-old mini-church, caves, ancient thermal center unique in the world, Clocota Waterfall and many other sights full of history. About Geoagiu Bai we have another paper. (Oana Maria Sicoe-Murg, 2022; <https://www.discoverhunedoara.com/arboretum>; <https://conacularchia.ro>)

In the area there are also the following historical monuments: The church "Saint Nicholas", village Bârsău, commune Hărău, Orthodox church, built in the second half of the 17th century. 15th century under the influence of Gothic architecture; Tower of the old Orthodox church, Deva municipality, Călugăreni 21 - 1700; Monastery and Franciscan church, Deva municipality - 17th century. 18th century; Church "Sfântul Dumitru", village Hărău, commune Hărău - 18th century. XIV; Roman castrum Micia, com. Vețel, important Roman fortress, Roman port at the Mures river. Civil settlement, thermae, amphitheatre, temples, customs point, necropolis area, post-Roman settlement, sec. 2nd - 4th century AD; Corvinilor Castle, Hunedoara municipality, the most complex

ensemble of fortified civil architecture of the Middle Ages in Romania. (Oana Maria Sicoe-Murg, 2022; <https://ghidul-horeca.ro/obiective-turistice-agrement>; <http://www.primariasimeria.ro>)

Around Simeria tourists and visitors can also admire other interesting sights such as Lake Cinciș, the Tara Hațegului Dinosaurs Geopark and especially the wonderful park "I Giardini di Zoe". "I Giardini di Zoe" a corner of heaven, an oasis of peace, a heavenly destination where beauty has been created by man's hand. The colors of the flowers intertwine in the most enchanting way possible with the raw green of the perfectly manicured lawn and the plants, the hedge, the shrubs and the trees create the most beautiful image we have ever found. (<https://alexandracristian.ro>; <https://www.gohunedoara.com>)



Figure 17. The entrance and landscapes from the park

Source: Personal archive of the authors, www.igiardinidizoe.ro

A place with a special energy, a unique aristocratic garden in Romania. Hundreds of ornamental trees and shrubs, each carefully placed in its own place, fountains, on which the birds of the air land and then delight visitors with their trails, pathways that take you to heaven, colors that blend in an exquisite way, all this makes you think you have arrived in a fairy tale. Here, you can take a leisurely stroll and rest in the shade to let your eyes fully delight your soul.

(<https://alexandracristian.ro>; <https://igiardinidizoe.ro/>)

The gatekeepers in purple uniforms. As soon as you enter the garden, you are greeted by the local "gatekeepers". A neat row of ornamental cork trees charmed everyone who stepped into the wonderful alley, called "the spring show". Once mesmerised by these soldiers in purple uniforms, you arrive at the gate to heaven. Without blinking, you enter a fairyland and are enchanted by the tranquillity and beauty of the place. Here, no blade of grass goes unruly wherever it wishes, but has its place, firmly established. Everything is 'on the line' and nothing is left to chance. The cool air and the garden's arrangements entice you to explore every inch of it. (<https://conacularchia.ro> ; <https://igiardinidizoe.ro/>)



Figure 18. The entrance alley and the fountains of the park

Source: Personal archive of the authors, www.igiardinidizoe.ro

You walk nervously through the alleys, afraid that your steps will spoil this perfect harmony. The three fountains attract visitors like a magnet, even those who come by air, the birds of the air, who stop here to cool off and delight those in the garden with their trills. Most of the trees and shrubs come from nurseries in Romania, the main supplier being the nursery of the Simeria Dendrological Park. The colorful shrubs come from nurseries in Hungary and the roses are exclusively from Italy. (Popescu F., 2000; <https://www.gohunedoara.com>)

„Giovanni's Alley”, a burst of color. Another wonderful place, an explosion of color in every season, where soft, thick, perfectly mown lawns are bordered by rivers of flowers, flowering bushes and trees of different textures, is „Giovanni's Alley?”. (<https://www.gohunedoara.com>; <https://igiardinidizoe.ro/>)



Figure 19. The park in autumn season

Source: Personal archive of the authors

In 2018, I Giardini di Zoe became a tourist attraction, gaining popularity through the harmonious combination of plants and decorative objects brought from Italy. Through vision, dedication, love and work this park has become the most beautiful aristocratic garden in Romania. (<https://igiardinidizoe.ro/>)

The mansion from the stories. On the outskirts of the village of Banpotoc there is also an old noble mansion, overlooking a large garden with fir and oak trees and many flowers, orchard and forest. The mansion is not very old, it was built in the interwar years by an aristocrat named Vlad, who was looking for a quiet place and was enchanted by the village surrounded by woods. With the passage of time, the castle and garden fell into disrepair but a few years ago, it was brought back to life and regained its lustre. In the manor house called Maria Castle there are still some old objects that revive the atmosphere of the past. (<https://conacularchia.ro>; <https://www.castelulmaria.ro/povestea-noastra>)

It was built of stone blocks and the room in the tower is especially reminiscent of the romantic tales of princes and princesses that enchanted all children. But all rooms are comfortably furnished for tourists and offer them a kitchen for all tastes, which excels with local, homemade products, but also with sophisticated menus for the most demanding gourmets, at more than affordable prices. The mansion can also be found, if you search for reservations, under the name of Villa Castelul Maria. (<https://www.castelulmaria.ro/povestea-noastra>)



Figure 20. Maria Castel Villa

Source: Personal archive of the authors, www.castelulmaria.ro/povestea-noastra

Villa Maria Castel has 3 apartments and one room, all of which are comfortable, elegant and welcoming. There are two restaurant halls, one with a capacity of 20 people, and the other with a capacity of 30 people, both with a fireplace. The villa's services include the terrace with a capacity of 12 people, restaurant with Romanian and Italian specialties, menus for special diets on request, organization of events, garden with tables for 44 people, payment by card, gazebo in the yard, dining room, place arranged for children, living room, TV, barbecue, own farm, bar and much more. The information about its evolution since it opened, how it was affected by the pandemic

and how it recovered after the pandemic are not public data, we have not received any information, because they are considered confidential information. In the same way, the information related to the investments made for the development of this accommodation unit is also considered strict confidential. (Castelul Maria, 11.12.2022; <https://www.castelulmaria.ro/povestea-noastra>)

Conclusions

The botanical importance of the Arboretum lies in the rich collection of woody plants cultivated here, including many rare species of resinous trees, magnolias, bamboos. As forestry importance we can mention the existence of this old acclimatization and forestry experimentation centre. The landscape value is given by the diversity and originality of the landscapes specific to the natural style in which the arboretum was created and developed. It is considered the most successful park in the country and can be an inexhaustible source of inspiration for various artists.

The knowledge of the Arboretum and its vegetation through study tours is used with efficiency in the instruction of pupils and students, for the learning of botanical, forestry and horticultural disciplines, giving the collection a special educational role.

In terms of social and cultural importance, the Arboretum is a popular place for excursions and rest. Here one can get to know, in a picturesque, refreshing and instructive setting, the unimaginable beauties of nature. Its social and cultural importance derives from the fact that the arboretum is a sought-after place of excursions and rest for the population of the locality and its surroundings.

Visitors who sometimes come from great distances can experience the unsuspected beauty of nature in a picturesque, comforting and instructive setting. At times the number of annual visitors has exceeded 100 000, most of them from other places.

Prof. Dr. Otto Schwartz, former director of the botanical garden and the Institute of Special Botany in Jena (Germany) noted "the great dendrological treasures of Simeria, the wealth of species" and noted with satisfaction that "the state values these treasures, protects them and uses them for scientific research, for the development of forestry and the beautification of the country". For its multiple value and importance, the Simeria Arboretum was declared a monument of nature (dendrological and landscape reserve) in 2000 and is protected by law.

The fountains, benches and hedgerow domes together with the stone paths, mazes and terraced garden make this park in Banpotoc a fairy-tale destination. Here you can lose yourself for hours admiring the cultivated plant species, and the elegance of the place and the perfection with which the whole decor has been created leaves you breathless.

This area of Romania is historically and scenically wonderful. Due to these strengths of the area studied, it can be seen below how the accommodation capacity in tourist and agritourism pensions is increasing. The aristocratic garden inspires elegance and is in perfect good taste. In summer it turns into an oasis of peace and coolness, and in autumn it intoxicates you with its pastels. We chose this area for our review precisely because it is not promoted as it deserves to be. Many people have not heard of the park in Simeria, although it was a real attraction in the 90s. There was no Sunday that was not visited by thousands of tourists or visitors, and who were looking forward to revisiting the wonderful park, because it always reveals another wonderful part of it.

The purpose of the study is to encourage the locality to develop on this tourist side, to attract visitors or tourists and of course to attract investors in this area full of history and a special beauty. The discussions and the data received from the owners of accommodation structures helped us. Thanks to them, we were able to make a better analysis of the situation in the area.

The area has great potential and once the restrictions are lifted, the owners hope to recover slowly at least part of the losses of 2020. With the help of investments in this beautiful area, through collaboration with tourism agencies, by making a management plan for the development of the area, we can make Simeria and its surroundings visible. Along with the development of the area, jobs are developed for young people, opportunities to develop in the field, so they no longer have to go to other cities or other countries. Thus, small entrepreneurs could promote their small businesses. The area is full of traditions, the traditional popular port is a treasure of the area, the crafts, the traditional cuisine has not yet disappeared, all these could take life and go further, to be known and appreciated by young people.

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