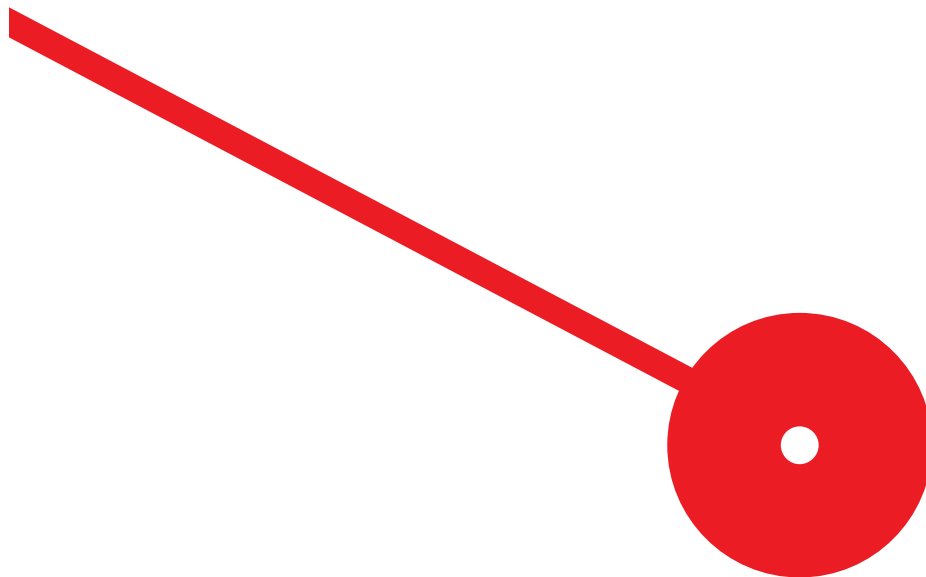




Working in the Accommodation Industry: an Experience at Tripas-Coração

Oleh Senyuta

10/2022

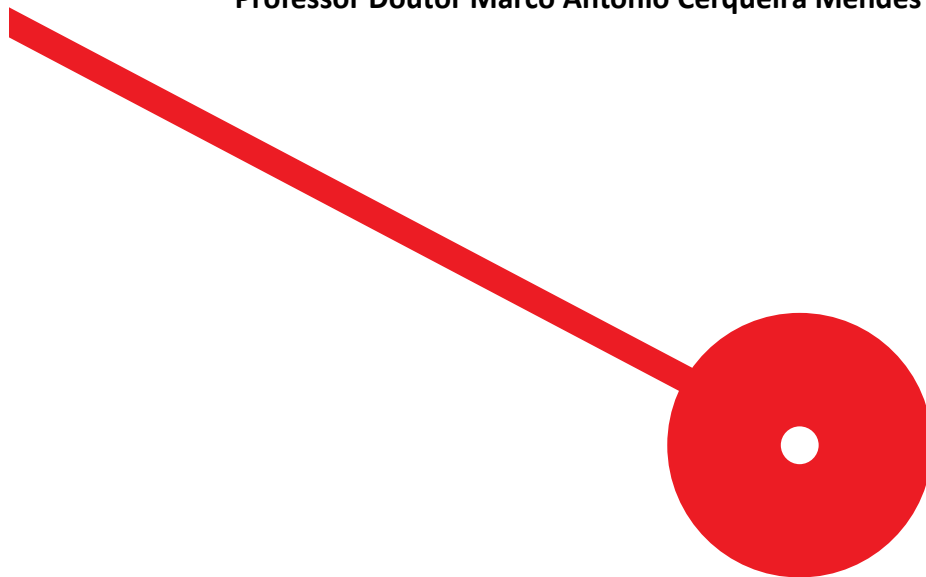




Working in the Accommodation Industry: an Experience at Tripas-Coração

Oleh Senyuta

Relatório de Estágio apresentado ao Instituto Superior de Contabilidade e Administração do Porto para a obtenção do grau de Mestre em Estudos Interculturais para Negócios, sob orientação do Professor Doutor Marco António Cerqueira Mendes Furtado.



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Resumo:

O presente relatório enquadra o estágio curricular do Mestrado em Estudos Interculturais para Negócios, no Instituto Superior de Contabilidade e Administração do Porto. O estágio foi desenvolvido na empresa Tripas-Coração, Lda., inserida na área do turismo.

A liberdade de movimentação entre países e a democratização dos transportes tornaram os fluxos interculturais possíveis em grande parte do mundo. Isto levou a algumas mudanças na cultura e na sua comodificação e na forma como as cidades se estruturam atualmente. Tendo em conta isto, é possível identificar que existe uma crescente necessidade para a análise e a compreensão da comunicação intercultural e do seu impacto na sociedade.

Estes fluxos e esta comunicação interculturais estão intrinsecamente ligadas à área do turismo. Isto é uma realidade para Portugal, que usufrui e que tem de lidar com estas novas questões e com as suas consequências. Isto também se aplica para a cidade do Porto, e é necessário admitir a importância de adaptar os discursos e os comportamentos culturais para acomodar todas as culturas.

O objetivo deste relatório é apresentar e descrever o trabalho desenvolvido na Tripas-Coração, empresa que atua na atividade turística do Porto. Deste modo, as tarefas desenvolvidas no âmbito do estágio curricular serão descritas para ser possível relacionar as mesmas com os conhecimentos adquiridos ao longo do mestrado e de educação prévia e fornecer uma análise da importância destes conhecimentos.

Palavras chave: Fluxos, Comunicação, Cultura, Turismo

Abstract:

This report is part of the curricular internship of the Master's Degree in Intercultural Studies for Business, at the Porto Accounting and Business School (Instituto Superior de Contabilidade e Administração do Porto). The internship was developed in the company Tripas-Coração, Lda., inserted in the tourism sector.

Freedom of movement between countries and the democratization of transport has made intercultural flows possible in the majority of the world. This has led to some serious changes in culture and its commodification and in the way that cities are structured nowadays. Bearing this in mind, it is possible to identify that there is a growing need for the analysis and understanding of intercultural communication and its impact on society.

These intercultural flows and communication are intrinsically linked to the area of tourism. This is a reality for Portugal, which benefits from it and also has to deal with new issues and their consequences. This also applies to the city of Porto, and it is necessary to admit the importance of adapting cultural discourses and behaviors to accommodate all cultures.

The objective of this report is to present and describe the work developed at Tripas-Coração, a company that operates in the tourism industry in Porto. In this way, the tasks developed within the scope of the curricular internship will be described in order to be able to relate them to the knowledge acquired during the master's degree and previous education, while providing an analysis of the importance of this knowledge.

Key words: Fluxes, Communication, Culture, Tourism

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List of Abbreviations

AL – Alojamento Local

ETA – Estimated Time of Arrival

EY – Ernst & Young Global Limited

GDP – Gross Domestic Product

INE – Instituto Nacional de Estatística

OECD - Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

OTA – Online Travel Agency

PDF – Portable Document Format

P&L – Profit and Loss Statement

QR – Quick Response

RNAL – Registo Nacional de Estabelecimentos de Alojamento Local

SEF – Serviço de Estrangeiros e Fronteiras

UK – United Kingdom

UNESCO – United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

UNWTO – United Nations World Tourism Organisation

VAT – Value Added Tax

VRBO – Vacation Rentals By Owner

INTRODUCTION

The following written paper encompasses the internship report that took place in the Masters of Intercultural Studies for Business. The aforementioned internship occurred in Tripas-Coração, a company that works in the accommodation segment. The internship started on the 1st of March and was completed on the 1st of September, thus making 6 months in total. The internship was based on a 35h/workweek.

What led to choosing the internship report over the thesis or the project was the chance to put in practice the concepts and knowledge acquired not only during the master's program but also from previous education. The internship was also an alternative to develop skills, to have a better understanding of workloads and the industry of touristic activities.

Before searching for a company for the internship, there were certain areas that needed to be explored. The internship had to have a close relation with culture and intercultural communication, while also being connected to business. Apart from this, for preference reasons, the area of tourism was the preferred one, due to past interest and previous education that was acquired before the master's degree. From there, the objectives for the internship were set:

- Have the vision of the company profile
- Acquire knowledge about booking management
- Get a better sense of communicating with guests in intercultural environments
- Acquire knowledge in managing back-office processes and stock management
- Creation of new business opportunities

Having established these aims, there was a search for a company. This company would be chosen according to the impact that it could have in the development of the intern and with the exploring of the areas mentioned above, while also helping in the achieving of the proposed goals.

The choice was clear when Tripas-Coração offered an opportunity that would fit with the established parameters and because of their nature. Being able to have an internship in a small tourism company in Porto was a perfect opportunity to understand the specificities of a growing company. This would also mean that the intern would have contact with the intercultural world, enabling the development of skills and the solidification of the ones already acquired.

This report is organised into four different chapters. The first chapter presents the more theoretical part of the internship report. This chapter will develop topics such as culture, its connection to tourism, its importance, and its commodification, tourism and its specificities, cultural tourism, and the characterization of the touristic activity in Portugal and more specifically in Porto. There will also be a part where Alojamento Local, one of the types of touristic accommodation in Portugal, the main reservation platforms used during the internship will be explored, and a brief look into customer journey. Finally, a brief methodological contextualization will be developed to give a better perception of the internship report.

The second chapter centres around Tripas-Coração, the company where the internship took place. In this part of the report there will be a summarisation of the history of the company, of how it came to be and where it is now. This chapter also includes the contextualization of the apartments of the company, the team, and the main markets during the internship, with a small analysis and assessment regarding the overall markets of Portugal.

The third chapter contains a detailed description of the internship. This comprises the plan developed along the whole process and the tasks that were performed during the internship. This will include both field and office work and their analysis and importance for the development of the intern and the company.

The fourth and last chapter will analyse the internship and the master's degree and its importance. This will include an overall look into the internship, its success, and least developed aspects. Then an analysis of the master's degree will take place to understand how it helped in a professional and real context and its influence on the internship. At the end of this chapter, an assessment of the perspectives will be made and related to the master's degree and the internship.

CHAPTER I – THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this chapter, a framework will be developed for the better understanding of some concepts that are relevant for the internship report. These concepts are related to the general topics of culture, tourism, and reservation platforms and the challenge faced when relating them to each other.

Regarding culture, there will be an analysis of its definitions and how different they can be, how culture can be a resource, how it can easily fall into commodification, and its relationship with tourism. In the tourism section of this report, there will also be a definition of what tourism is, the definition of cultural tourism, its growth and impact on the economy and its specificities in Portugal and the city of Porto. Lastly, a brief explanation of Alojamento Local, AirBnb and Booking, and a contextualization of customer journey is given for the better understanding of these concepts.

1.1 Culture

1.1.1 Defining Culture

Having in mind that the area of work for the internship is tourism, it is evident that any touristic aspects are always closely related to culture. It is for and through culture that people tend to travel to other places outside of their comfort zone. It is this desire of experiencing something new in an abstract way that gets people to move. For this reason, it is crucial to understand the aspects of an ever changing and an ever-growing concept like culture.

Culture is a concept that has been hard to define since it first appeared. Culture passes into the twenty-first century as a key word in contemporary critical thought. However, it continues to mean different things to different people (Mulhern, 2001). Also, as is well known, the term “culture” is used in a wide variety of contexts to mean different things, sometimes rigorously defined, frequently not (Throsby, 1999). This idea is still present nowadays, as culture is an abstract idea and not a palpable object. Therefore, culture is not as mouldable or changing as other aspects of the human life.

Even though culture cannot be confined to specific parameters, it still needs to be analysed and understood. According to UNESCO (2010, p. 4):

“Culture plays a key role in all societies around the world, influencing various facets of peoples’ lives, from leisure to professional activities. The role of culture in development has also recently emerged as an important policy issue. However, preserving and respecting

the specificity of each individual culture as well as the distinctive qualities of other cultures is the challenge that must be met globally.”

But as a consensus on what culture is does not exist, it is necessary to look at more concepts to extract a more sensible idea of what culture can be. According to Spencer-Oatey (2008, p. 15):

“Culture is a fuzzy set of basic assumptions and values, orientations to life, beliefs, policies, procedures, and behavioural conventions that are shared by a group of people, and that influence (but do not determine) each member’s behaviour and his/her interpretations of the ‘meaning’ of other people’s behaviour.”

Here it is possible to analyse that, even though the concepts from UNESCO (2010) and Spencer-Oatey (2008) are not identical, they share similarities and can be understood as sharing the same ideas. Both concepts include the ideas that culture can be seen as a set of ideas defined by people on a specific society. These ideas can shape and influence the lives of the individuals that participate in a certain culture and. It is also important to understand that cultures need to be respected and that every aspect of culture can be interpreted in diverse ways.

By the UNESCO (2010) definition, it is possible to understand that culture is one of the main aspects of society. In fact, it is very present in the daily lives of people, and this leads to a strong influence on the individuals of any society. Thus, people behave as they are expected to in a given situation because they have internalised the norms and values, the culture, of society (Billington, Strawbridge, Greensides, & Fitzsimons, 1991). This same “standardized” behaviour of people in a certain society is what leads to its stability and to the creation of relationships between its participants.

This balance and this establishment of society through culture can lead to the creation of an identity. Identity is defined and contrasted with culture by Kidd & Teagle (2012, p. 27) as:

“If culture is how we behave as a member of a group, then the word ‘identity’ relates to how we think about ourselves as peoples, how we think about other people around, and what we imagine others think of us. ‘Identity’ means being able to ‘fix’ or ‘figure out’ who we are as people. Identity can be expressed through culture.”

Furthermore, Kidd & Teagle (2012) state that culture is like the cement of society which bonds individuals together. As the individuals share and understand a set of

collective symbols and customs, it can shape their lives in similar manners. This shaping and moulding leads to the rules and laws by which the lives of humans have been governed throughout time. Culture paired with identity can be identified as an omnipresent aspect in any society that structures all systems of people.

As seen previously in the concept of culture given by UNESCO (2010), development is also one of the main aspects that can be related to it. Development can take various forms depending on the context. The arising importance of considering culture for development can also be attributed to several reasons as stated by Radcliffe (2017, p. 16):

“In current understandings, development includes the reworkings of relations of production and reproduction, and of sociocultural meanings, resulting from planned interventions and from uneven political economies [...] In order to explain development's "cultural turn," commentators identify five main reasons for the recent prominence of culture as a key concept in development thinking. These reasons include the failure of previous development paradigms; perceptions of globalization's threat to cultural diversity; activism around social difference (gender, ethnicity, anti-racism); the development success stories in East Asia; and the need for social cohesion.”

According to the author, nowadays development does not only consider money and a well-structured project. Any given development project must consider the culture in which it is included, and all the meanings and specificities must be considered. Apart from this, the five reasons that are given for the failure of previous development are still present in today's society and still should be dealt with to achieve better cultural cohesion and better understanding between the participants of any society.

Therefore, it is possible to look at culture as more than just customs and practices that take place from time to time in a specific place. Culture needs to be seen as an essential component in every single matter of life, and thus, of business. Culture is present in thought, but culture can also be represented and shared. Given this specificity of culture, it can also be standardized and sold to people that want to have access to it.

1.1.2 Cultural Resources

The standardization of culture is what leads to the development and creation of opportunities within any given culture. Looking at the definition of cultural resource, according to Kietumetse (2014, p. 71) “Cultural resources are tangible, and intangible

remains of societies' past activities on the biophysical environment which when re-visited, re-evaluated, re-used and re-constructed transform into various forms of cultural heritage.”

Having said this, it is possible to understand how a “piece”, or the remnants of a culture can be considered to be a cultural resource and how it can be turned into something of cultural interest. As stated above, cultural resources can be transformed and reused in diverse ways, leading to the increase of the cultural heritage available to anyone who would want to have access to it.

Getting to a more touristic and more economical side of the cultural resource, Ivanovic (2008, p. 23) states that “a cultural resource can be defined as any cultural feature, tangible (material) or intangible (non-material), available within a country, region, or area, which makes a positive contribution to cultural tourism.”

This second definition takes into consideration that exploring culture, finding its resources, will lead to a greater benefit for the area in which it is contextualized. Besides that, cultural resources occupy a central position not only in tourism development but also in marketing as well as being the main catalysts for tourist experiences and the main motivation for tourism travel in the first place (Ivanovic, 2008). This has led to changing how we talk about culture and cultural assets. We no longer discuss them as expressions of imagination or creativity, we talk about “product”; we are no longer moved by the experiences the arts have to offer, we “consume” them (Ho & McKercher, 2004).

1.1.3 Culture in Tourism

Keeping in mind the notions of culture and cultural resources, it is clear that culture has an important impact in tourism. There has been an increase of interest in the relationship from organizations in both the cultural industries and tourism and the relationship is one that is actively encouraged (Hughes, 2002).

Apart from that, the broadening cultural field created by the growth of popular cultural consumption and increasingly omnivorous cultural behaviour is also leading to the development of a number of discrete market segments in cultural tourism (Richards, 2015).

It also can be said that, although cultures exist independently and for reasons other than tourism, there is a clear role for tourism in the process of expressing culture and

cultural difference (Yaekob, 2020). Apart from that, culture and tourism have a mutually beneficial relationship which can strengthen the attractiveness and competitiveness of regions and countries (OECD, 2009).

This means that culture is constantly present in any area of activity of tourism, as it is through culture that tourism can develop itself. This also brings to attention the importance that culture has for tourism. This is shown through the existing and ongoing development. This growth needs to be sustainable, while expressing the true meanings of the existing symbols and specificities of any given culture.

1.1.4 Commodification of Culture

Keeping in mind the aforementioned notions of cultural resources and culture in tourism, it is possible to understand that sometimes the conjugation between these subjects might not be the most harmonious.

Even though tourism can bring many benefits to culture and help in its expansion, it is imperative that both sides of the coin are considered, because as stated by Cole (2007), “authenticity and commodification are central to academic debates in tourism.”

First of all, we must start by defining very simply what culture commodification is. Culture commodification, in its broadest sense, means the act of turning culture into a commodity. This means that, in a sense, culture can be sold (Macleod, 2006).

On the one hand, cultural tourism can stimulate a revival of local interest in traditional cultural forms, thus both strengthening cultural bonds and providing local actors access to material benefits through purchases from tourists in the local markets (McKean, 2002). On the other hand, this view does not consider that local actors can easily distinguish between what is “sacred”, something less touristic, from what is more commonplace and more open to commodification (Picard, 2002).

This leads to the argument that culture can suffer from erosion due to the touristic demands. This is due to the “need” of the tourist to have a symbol, a mark, of the destination with not much interest in having something genuine. In some sense, however, this interest in having something from the destination is what can inspire local craftsman and long dormant cultural symbols and aspects to resurge, even though in a more commercial way.

This does not mean that the origin, significance or object of these symbols and processes should be completely disregarded. It should be argued that there should be a middle ground between total commodification and total symbolism that can only be offered to the population of the destination itself.

1.2 Tourism

1.2.1 Defining Tourism

One of the first things that must be established to understand tourism, is to define it. Nowadays, tourism is found in some form or other and, to some degree, in every country of the world (Robinson, Lück, & Smith, 2020). Also, tourism has grown significantly in both economic and social importance (Theobald, 2005). Therefore, having in consideration tourism's impact on the economy and society, it needs to have an important focus in this report.

These aspects make tourism a highly complex phenomenon and that can be fully understood only by adopting a multidisciplinary approach (Candela & Figini, 2012). As tourism is such a broad concept, it cannot be defined without having first looked at the concepts of destination and visitor.

A destination can be analysed as a geographical area of variable territorial scale, where tourism is a predominant activity both from a demand-side and a supply-side perspective (Papatheodorou, 2006). However, as Candela & Figini (2012) state, tourism is not necessarily a predominant economic activity in all destinations. This means that, even though tourism can be considered as an important activity for a certain destination, it might not always be the main focus.

Having established what a destination is, it is necessary to establish what a tourist is. A tourist is established as a subset of traveller. A traveller is someone who moves between different geographic locations, for any purpose and any duration (UNWTO, 2008). And from traveller, there is another subset that can be established which is that of the visitor or tourist. The UNWTO (2008, p. 21) refers to a visitor as:

“A traveller taking a trip to a main destination outside his/her usual environment, for less than a year, for any main purpose (business, leisure, or other personal purpose) other than to be employed by a resident entity in the country or place visited. These trips taken by visitors qualify as tourism trips. Tourism refers to the activity of visitors.”

Even though the definitions of destinations and tourists might be defined, tourism still is a concept that cannot be encompassed in a single definition. This has led to an evolution of its general idea throughout its years. Some definitions prevail over the economic aspects, others the social and cultural side of it, others the anthropological effects, and even the geographic aspects. Fundamentally, tourism is a large combination of very different phenomena (Tribe, 1997). The perception of tourism as a new human activity generating multiple effects was slowly formed, but the first attempts to define it emerged in the transition period from the 19th to the 20th century (Cunha, 2008).

One of the first concepts of tourism appeared by the hands of Hunziker & Krapf (2012, p. 101) which stated that:

“Tourism is the sum of relations and phenomena resulting from the travel and stay of people outside their usual place of residence, provided that these travels and experiences are not used for the practice of a main lucrative activity, permanent or temporary”

Even from such a young notion of tourism, there are many ideas that are relevant for the definition of tourism. It is stated that tourism is an amalgamation of relations and phenomena, which are not specific, but it gives the idea that there is an underlying system in tourism. Apart from this first idea, Hunziker & Krapf also refer to the change of location of any person who would be engaging in active tourism, and that this location would have to be outside of their primary residence. There is also a relation established between the motive to travel and that for it to be considered tourism, this motive cannot be for remunerated work. However, this definition does not take into consideration any type of duration of stay and it is stated that it can even be permanent.

A few decades later, Mathieson & Wall (1982) attempted to define tourism with their own ideas:

“Tourism is the temporary movement of people to destinations outside their usual places of residence and work, the activities undertaken during the stay and the facilities created to cater for the needs of tourists”

Analysing this more recent definition than the previous one by Hunziker & Krapf, some similarities can be found between them. Both of the definitions keep in mind the aspects of movement and change of location; the remuneration aspect; and the system. But in this latter concept of tourism, there is mention of activities and facilities created for the needs of tourists. This last aspect is the significant difference between these two

definitions, as Mathieson & Wall consider that tourism is a system and that there is offer and demand in tourism.

Ultimately, with the establishment of an international organisation for tourism, the United Nations World Tourism Organisation, a more standardised definition was adopted, and it is the most accepted nowadays. The UNWTO (2022) defines tourism as being:

“A social, cultural, and economic phenomenon which entails the movement of people to countries or places outside their usual environment for personal or business/professional purposes. These people are called visitors (which may be either tourists or excursionists; residents or non-residents) and tourism has to do with their activities, some of which involve tourism expenditure.”

As it is possible to analyse in the definition above and the previous two, tourism is a phenomenon that encompasses many distinct aspects and processes. Tourism is also, simultaneously, an agent of cultural change while also being connected to leisure and fun (Cooper & Hall, 2008) and this makes tourism unique.

1.2.2 Cultural Tourism

Having defined tourism, it is also necessary to understand what cultural tourism. cultural tourism is one of the many “niches” of tourism and it is focused on what is more culturally attached and motivated.

One of the definitions of cultural tourism, according to Richards (1996) is the movement of persons to cultural attractions away from their normal place of residence, with the intention to gather new information and experiences to satisfy their cultural needs.

This definition is very vague in the definition of what cultural needs may be and that the main purpose of visit is only to gather new information and to acquire new experiences. This definition of cultural tourism has expanded throughout the years, reaching a more specific target and more in-depth notions of the needs to be satisfied culturally. According to the UNWTO (2022):

“A type of tourism activity in which the visitor’s essential motivation is to learn, discover, experience, and consume the tangible and intangible cultural attractions/products in a tourism destination. These attractions/products relate to a set of distinctive material, intellectual, spiritual, and emotional features of a society that encompasses arts and

architecture, historical and cultural heritage, culinary heritage, literature, music, creative industries and the living cultures with their lifestyles, value systems, beliefs, and traditions”

In this definition, cultural tourism is related to more specific ideas of culture – those which are more tangible like heritage, but it also has a focus on non-tangible aspects of culture, which are more unique to each culture. These aspects tend to adapt a more educational direction. However, cultural tourism has come to mean a great deal more than education about the past (Rothman, 2003).

Keeping in mind that cultural tourism is a part of the overall touristic sum, there are specificities that can give cultural tourism a better focus. The main qualitative drivers of cultural tourism might therefore be:

- Growing interest in popular culture, or the ‘[life] day culture’ of the destination.
- Growing consumption of intangible heritage alongside museums and monuments.
- Growing role for the arts in cultural tourism.
- Increased linkage between tourism and creativity, and the growth of ‘creative tourism’.
- Growing omnivorousness of cultural consumption. (Richards, 2015)

As it is possible to understand, cultural tourism is widely regarded as a growing and particularly beneficial element of tourism. A diversity of tourist interests and experiences and of attractions’ drawing power is currently concealed within the all-embracing use of the term cultural tourism (Hughes, 2002).

Therefore, it is possible to understand that even though cultural tourism is a part of tourism, it is one of the more encompassing and more typical types of tourism that can be found nowadays.

1.2.3 Growth of Tourism

Having established what tourism is, it is possible to understand that its many dynamics can bring benefits. One of the main benefits that tourism can bring is the support for the economic development of both local community and the economy of a country, through earnings from domestic or foreign visitors (Bunghez, 2016). Due to these factors,

the promotion of tourism has become a popular economic strategy for many communities (Matarrita-Cascante, 2010).

Also, there is a multiplier effect that results from the succession of expenses incurred by tourists, and which indirectly benefit sectors connected with the tourist activity, generating favourable effects for development (Cabral, et al., 2010).

Source: Statista (2022)

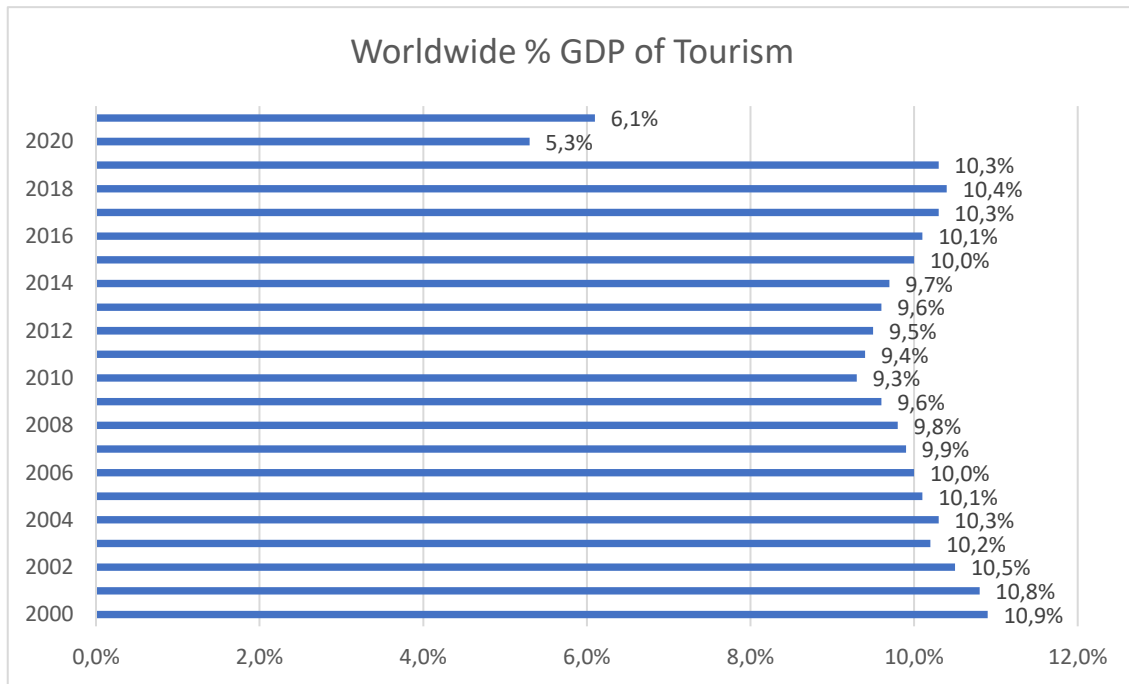


Figure 1 - GDP Weight of Tourism

As represented in the chart above, tourism has a substantial impact on the world economy. At the beginning of the millennium, and the years after, tourism represented between 9% and 11% of the global GDP. This would mean that 1 in every 10 dollars generated by any country comes from travel and tourism.

The decline seen in the chart in the years of 2020 and 2021 is no surprise as these were the years that were most impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Even with this disruption, tourism and travel still managed to account for 5,3% and 6,1% in the respective years.

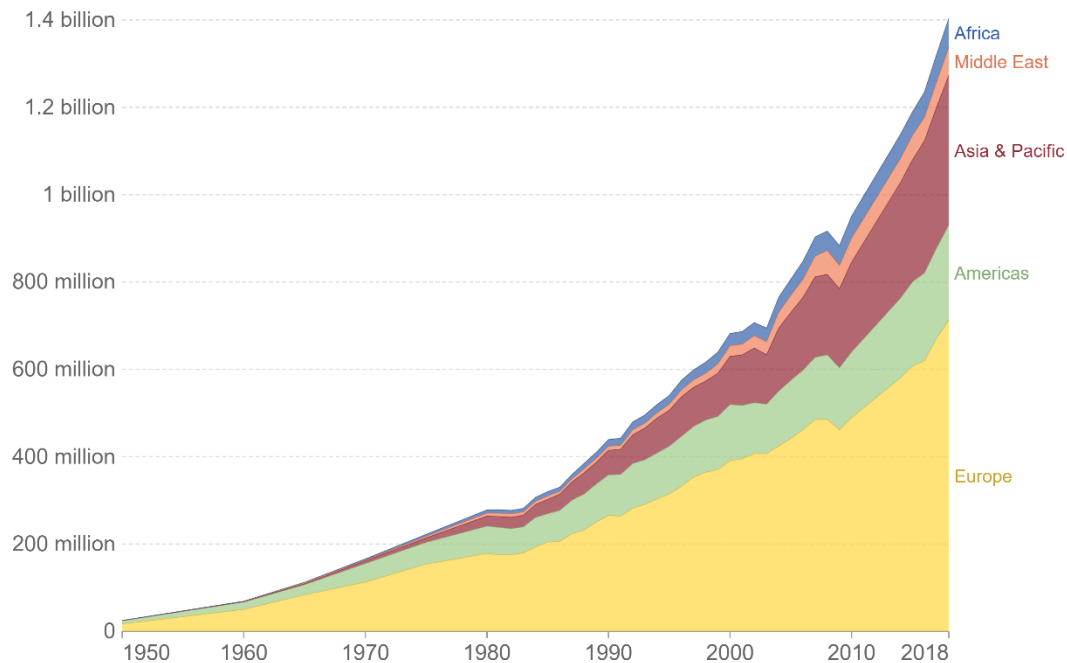


Figure 2 - International Arrivals per Year

Source: Our World in Data (2022)

Covid, also impacted the number of tourist arrivals during these years, but as it is possible to see in the graph above, before 2019, international tourist arrivals were at an all-time high and on a constant growth, with the exception of some periods. Some regions, like Europe and the Americas had been growing the most and had the highest volumes of arrivals for several decades.

The other three major regions represented, also had seen a steady increase in their arrivals, even though not having as much volume as the other two regions. Having said this, it was tendentially true that tourism would continue growing if the pandemic had not hit the world by surprise and with such impact.

In 2020, the UNWTO had foreseen catastrophic consequences for any economic activities related to tourism. These were the main predictions that were made for the tourism industry:

- Tourism is one of the sectors most affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, impacting economies, livelihoods, public services, and opportunities on all continents. All parts of its vast value-chain have been affected.
- Export revenues from tourism could fall by \$910 billion to \$1.2 trillion in 2020. This will have a wider impact and could reduce global GDP by 1.5% to 2.8%.
- Tourism supports one in ten jobs and provides livelihoods for many millions more in both developing and developed economies.
- In some Small Island Developing States, tourism has accounted for as much as 80% of exports, while it also represents important shares of national economies in both developed and developing countries (UNWTO, 2022).

These impacts turned out to be real and affected all tourism directly and non-directly related activities. However, as the UNWTO (2022) also states as of a more recent report, there has been an awakening of tourism:

- International tourism continued to show a strong and steady recovery in January-May 2022, with arrivals reaching almost half (46%) the levels of the same five months of 2019.
- International tourist arrivals (overnight visitors) saw a strong rebound in the first five months of 2022, despite important economic, health and geopolitical challenges.
- International arrivals more than tripled (+221%) in January-May 2022, compared to the same period of 2021, but remained 54% below 2019 levels.
- Nearly 250 million international trips were recorded worldwide in the first five months of the year, more than three times the number of arrivals recorded in the same period of 2021 (77 million).
- Europe accounted for over 60% (154 million) of the 250 million international arrivals recorded in January-May 2022.
- April and May showed a particularly stronger performance, though compared to weak results in the same months last year. In April and May 2022, arrivals stood at -49% and -46% respectively versus 2019, climbing above 50% of 2019 levels for the first time since the beginning of the pandemic.
- An estimated 127 million international arrivals were recorded in April and May combined, over three times the numbers seen in the same two months of 2021.

- International arrivals improved from -65% in January 2022 (over 2019) to -49% in April and -46% in May, as an increasing number of countries eased travel restrictions.

These more favourable conditions after the stabilization of the COVID-19 pandemic have re-enabled the possibility of growth of tourism again. If the trends are re-established and tourism picks up again, it should reach the levels that were previously seen in the charts above and keep its latter momentum.

1.2.4 Tourism in Portugal

Tourism is a major export industry for many countries and cities (Romão, Leeuwen, Neuts, & Nijkamp, 2015) and this is also the case of Portugal. The country has benefited from its tourism activity for many years now and it has become a renowned destiny for many.

Promoting the development of tourism in Portugal came up, essentially, from the need to solve the financial problems that the country was facing in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century (Cunha, 2010).

This touristic activity has always been planned and attached to a specific course of action. In 2017, the Portuguese Government launched *Tourism Strategy 2027*, to drive economic, social, and environmental development throughout the country and to position Portugal as one of the world's most competitive and sustainable tourism destinations. It contains five strategic pillars:

- Value resources: drawing on historical and cultural heritage, preserving its authenticity and improving the product to better match visitors' needs.
- Boost the economy: increasing the competitiveness of the tourism sector, promoting innovation, and attracting foreign investment.
- Promote knowledge: putting an emphasis on skills, quality jobs and the dissemination of insight throughout the tourism sector.
- Generate connectivity: improving air access and promoting networks between stakeholders.
- Promote Portugal: improving Portugal's positioning as an attractive destination to visit, invest, live, and study (OECD, 2022).

This plan, in turn, saw a noticeable growth in Portuguese tourism the years after. According to Turismo de Portugal (2022) the year of 2019 showed that, in terms of demand, historical highs were reached with 70.2 million overnight stays, which compares to 2018 with a growth of +4.6% and 27.1 million guests that represents a growth of +7.9%, also comparing to 2018.

This growth was noticeable both in the domestic and foreign markets as there was a faster growth in the domestic market with an increase of 8.1% in national guests. In turn the foreign market grew by 7.8% which is comparable to the growth of the internal market, even though it was marginally lower. Even after considering the greater growth of the domestic market, foreigners were responsible for 71.2% of the occupancy, against 28.8% of nationals (Turismo de Portugal, 2022).

Unfortunately, this situation changed dramatically after 2019 with the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic, which affected all areas of tourism. This, in turn, led to the digression of the numbers that had been seen in Portuguese tourism in the last decade.

In 2021, regarding the main tourist markets in Portugal, the internal market provided 22.5 million overnight stays, corresponding to 52.8% of the total, and registered an increase of 33.2% from 2020, which was still a -13.9% decrease relating to 2019 numbers. Overnight stays from the external markets registered a higher growth than the Portuguese one with an increase of 50.1%, but a higher margin when regarding to 2019 with a total difference of -61% and reached 20.1 million overnight stays, which equates to 47.2% of the total (INE, 2022).

Of these 47.2% of the total stays, in 2021, it was estimated that the number of non-resident tourists arriving in Portugal will have reached 9.6 million, corresponding to an increase of 48.4% compared to 2020, one of the worst years for Portuguese tourism this decade, representing only 39.0% of the value obtained in 2019, which was 24.6 million (INE, 2022).

Regarding the main markets for Portugal, Spain remained the main outbound market with 30.2% of the total foreign tourists, having registered an increase of 57.3% from the year of 2020. The French market achieved 16.1% of the total and remained in second place, increasing by 46.2%. UK tourists, with 10.6% of the total quota, also saw a positive change, with a 24.0% increase in 2021, while the German market, one of the

largest world outbound markets, with 8.0% weight in Portugal grew by 39.1% in 2021 (INE, 2022).

In the first seven months of 2022, there has been a more optimistic trend in Portugal regarding tourism. The tourist accommodation sector registered 3.0 million guests and 8.6 million overnight stays in July 2022, corresponding to increases of 85.4% and 90.1%, respectively. Comparing these numbers to July 2019, there were increases of 6.3% and 4.8%, respectively (INE, 2022).

In July, the domestic market contributed with 2.9 million overnight stays. That means a total increase of 9.1% in the internal market and the foreign markets totalled 5.7 million overnight stays, which totals to an increase of 205.2%. Compared to July 2019, the domestic market grew 15.8% and the external markets reached the same level as in 2019 (INE, 2022).

Also, in the first seven months of 2022, overnight stays increased by 194.3%. This was an increase of 58.5% for residents and a monumental 406.2% growth in non-residents. Compared to the same period in 2019, overnight stays decreased by 4.4% (Turismo de Portugal, 2022).

1.2.5 Tourism in Porto

To better understand the company, we must first look at the area where they operate. The whole operation is focused on the city of Porto. Porto is increasingly included as an anchor destination in the Northern Region of Portugal (Liberato, Alén, & Liberato, 2018). The reasons for this success are many. As stated by Martins (2019):

“The city of Porto and the North of Portugal have demonstrated an incredible tourist potential. This is due to the fact that the territories are rich in history, traditions, and nature. They have a vast monumental heritage. Generally, it is a territory that manages to unite countryside and city, mountain, and sea, in a scenario full of uniqueness. It also stands out for producing green wine, which is unique in the world, and to produce, in the Douro region, the most well-known wine in Portugal: Port wine”

Therefore, it is through its culture that the city of Porto can become successful in many tourism industries. As stated previously, culture is the main driving factor for any city that wants to develop its tourism activities, and this must be done the right way. Apart from culture, the city of Porto also benefits from four pillars of development and

attractiveness, which are the economy, the quality of life, the infrastructure, and the talent (EYGM Limited, 2019).

Apart from this, Porto has also been reinforcing its position as a smart tourist destination by betting on the digital channels of dissemination of its heritage, resources, and tourism products, while also developing its communication channels with its real and potential demand, in different stages of the tourism experience (Liberato, Alén, & Liberato, 2018).

But this success is not based on something new. This work of “painting” the city as something magical did not start recently. According to Silva, Ribeiro, & Araújo, (2019, p. 111):

“A process of urban renewal has been deployed in Porto over the last 2 decades, stimulated by the tourism development in the city. This renovation has resulted in tradition and authenticity mixing with modernity and innovation.”

Even though this renewal can be seen as something good, it can also be seen as something negative, as changes in the city affect not only tourists, but mainly the residents of the city. This has to be kept in mind as around 80 % of Europe’s population lives in cities and towns, making Europe the world’s most built-up continent and the urban question one of the serious issues for future years (Galdini, 2007).

This has been the case of Porto which is being renovated all the time to enhance its infrastructure and its organization, be it to make the tourists happier or the residents happier. This growth leads to a tendency of framing it as enchanted like so many others in Europe. It has been honed and transformed to meet the tourists and tourism alike needs (Silva, Ribeiro, & Araújo, 2022).

1.3 Reservation Platforms

The rise of the internet has managed to ease the access to most of the things known to any person. This is also true for the tourism industry, which has been deeply affected by the changes in the way people make reservations. Tourism has become reliant to the use of technology and the accommodation industry is the biggest case of this. With the transition from manual reservations and reservations made through a phone call, to reservations made through a given online reservation platform, this change is clear.

This has changed the way hotels and smaller accommodation enterprises operate on their daily basis, as giants as Booking.com and AirBnb become more and more influential with their reservations and ratings systems. This chapter will target these new currents to understand the impacts and the importance of these online reservation platforms.

1.3.1 Alojamento Local

To better understand the area of operation of the company where the intern had the opportunity to develop themselves, it is crucial to understand the concept of Alojamento Local (AL). AL is a type of accommodation that is guaranteed by the Portuguese Law. As Turismo de Portugal (2021) states:

“Alojamento Local establishments are those that provide temporary accommodation, namely for tourists, for remuneration, and which bring together the requirements set out in the Decrees that regard Alojamento Local. Exploration of Alojamento Local is not allowed for establishments that meet the requirements for be considered touristic developments.”

All AL units must follow the same guidelines of Turismo de Portugal to be considered as such and not a touristic development, which is a larger scale establishment like a hotel. The main condition for this regards the capacity of the accommodation. The maximum capacity of local accommodation establishments is nine rooms and 30 users, with the exception of 'hostels', which have no capacity limit, and 'rooms' that have a limit of three rooms per unit (Turismo de Portugal, 2021).

As seen above, in AL, there are specific categories that can be adopted for the activity of accommodation. These categories are:

- House: AL establishment whose accommodation unit consists of an autonomous building, of a single-family character.
- Apartment: AL establishment whose accommodation unit consists of an autonomous fraction of a building or part of an urban building susceptible of independent use.
- Lodging establishments: AL establishment whose units of accommodation are made up of rooms, integrated in an autonomous fraction, in an urban building or part of an urban building susceptible of independent use. (Lodging establishments

may use the name "hostel" when the unit's predominant accommodation is a dormitory.

- Rooms: exploration of AL conducted at the holder's residence, when the accommodation unit has no more than three rooms.

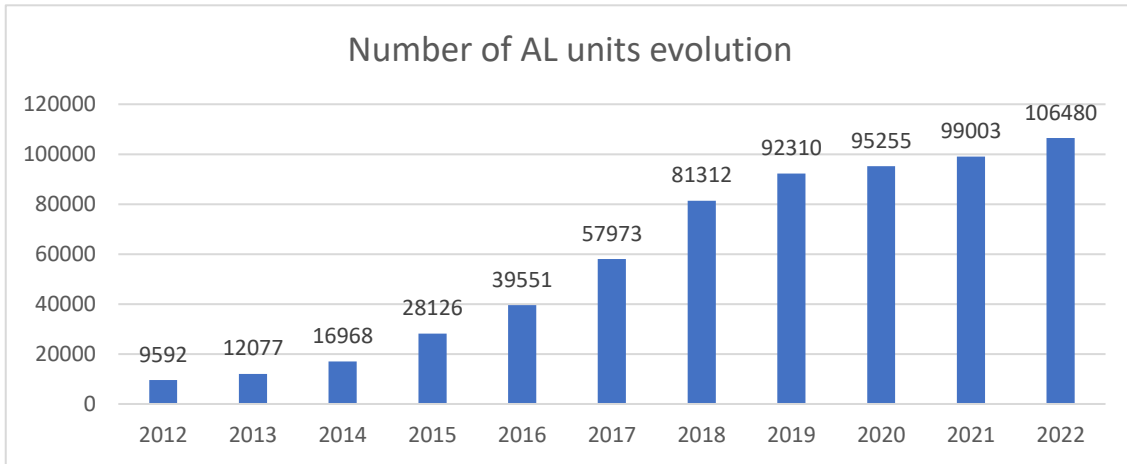


Figure 3 - Number of AL Units overtime

Source: Power BI by Turismo de Portugal (2022)

The AL accommodation category appeared first in 2008 with a new Decree of the Portuguese Law. This type of establishments were not as popular as they are now, as it is possible to see in the graph above.

Analysing a period of 10 years, it is clear that there has been a consistent growth in the number of AL establishments over the years. In 2012, there were 9592 individual AL units registered in Portugal and 10 years later, in 2022, this number has grown to 106480 AL units, which is a total growth of about 1110%. In the graph it is also possible to see that there are years of greater growth than others. In absolute numbers, the years of larger growth are 2017 and 2018, which, respectively, grew in 18422 units and 23339 units. In percentage, the years of larger growth are 2015 and 2017, which had a growth of 66% and 47% each.

Apart from this, in 2021, tourist accommodation establishments registered 14.5 million guests, which provided 37.3 million overnight stays, reflecting growth of 38.6% and 44.7%, respectively, which in turn compares to -46.7% and -46.8% from 2019, in the same order (INE, 2022).

It is also possible to consider that there was a slowing down of the growth by 2019 until 2022, when the total numbers of registered AL stagnated. This immobility in the growth might have been caused due to the more recent COVID-19 pandemic that disabled all touristic activity. This in turn might have led to the closing down of existing units and the opening of less new AL units.

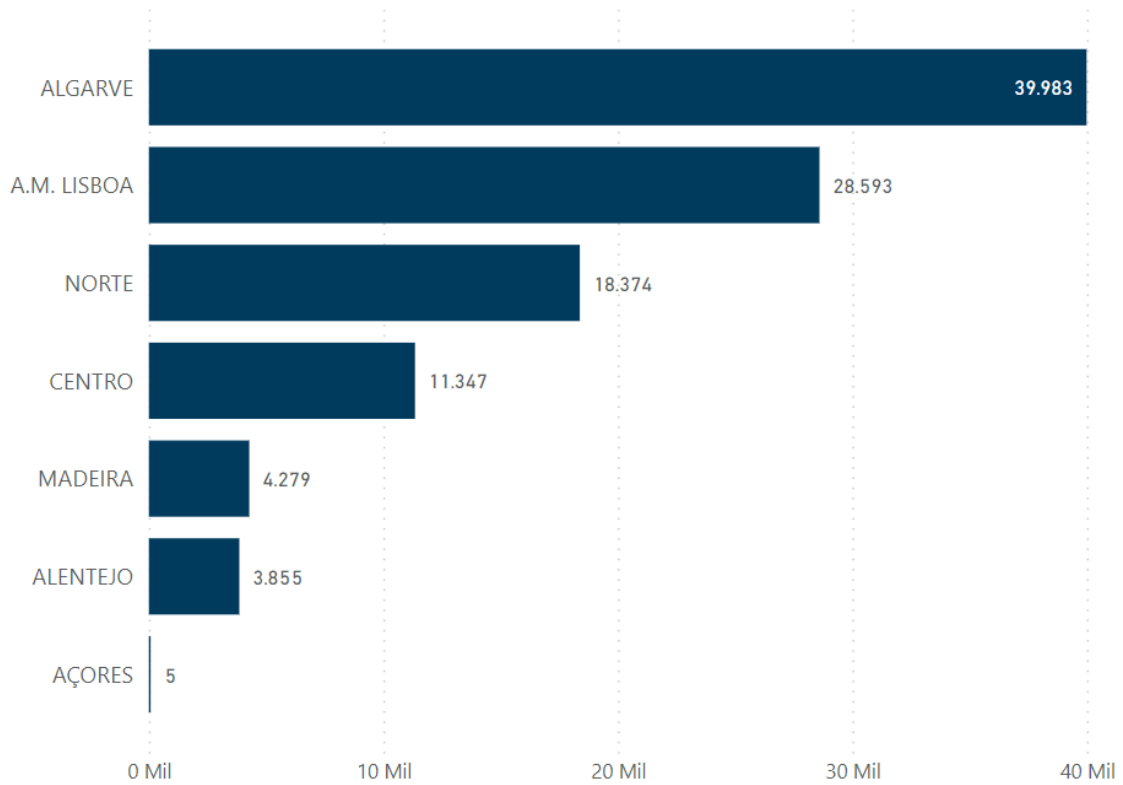


Figure 4 - Number of AL Units per NUTS II

Source: Power BI by Turismo de Portugal (2022)

Analysing the year of 2022, the Portuguese region with the most AL units is Algarve with 39983 individual registered AL units which represents 37,5% of all establishments. This is followed by the Lisbon Metropolitan area with 28593 units which represents 26,9% of AL units in Portugal. The third area with the most AL units is the North of Portugal with 18374 AL units, with a total weight of 17,3% in the total of establishments. The remainder of the regions in Portugal, Central Portugal, Madeira, Alentejo and Azores retain the remainder of AL units with 18,3%. From all of these AL units, there are 245545 rooms and 410502 beds which belong to 64324 entities that explore these spaces (Turismo de Portugal, 2022).

In the Porto District there are 12188 AL units, and 9178 in the municipality. These are scattered all over the city of Porto and are distributed among its parishes. The parish with the most AL units by far is the union of parishes of Cedofeita, Santo Ildefonso, Sé, Miragaia, São Nicolau e Vitória with 6810 establishments which comprises 74% of the total AL establishments in the city of Porto. The second parish with the highest number of registered AL units is Bonfim with 1167 units which represents about 12,7% of all AL units. The remaining parishes of Porto, Campanhã with 171 AL units, Paranhos with 296 AL units, Ramalde with 123 AL units, Aldoar, Foz do Douro e Nevogilde with 195 AL units, and Lordelo do Ouro e Massarelos with 416 AL units which represent the remaining 13,3% of establishments (Turismo de Portugal, 2022).

The highest number in AL numbers in the two parishes with the most registrations of AL units might be caused by the higher number of touristic attractions in these areas and the more central locations. This in turn has led to the concentration of these units in these areas and the growth has been proportional by parish.

1.3.2 AirBnb

The emergence of the internet since the 1990s has been transforming the way that products and services are distributed to customers around the world (Berne, Garcia-Gonzalez, & Mugica, 2012). This is also true for the tourism industry and, more specifically, for the accommodation industry.

To understand the current forms of accommodation, it is imperative to look at the current most used platforms of reservation. One of these platforms is AirBnb, one of the largest sharing economies that exist today.

A sharing economy is an economic activity in which web platforms facilitate peer-to-peer exchanges of diverse types of goods and services (Aloni, 2016). This is also the case of companies like Uber or Lyft, but instead of vehicles, AirBnb uses living spaces. The rapid growth of sharing economy and its dramatic impacts on various aspects of today's social economic system have stimulated growing public interest in the past 10 years (Belarmino & Koh, 2020).

Airbnb is the leading provider of travel accommodation within the sharing economy (Andreu, Bigne, Amaro, & Palomo, 2020). As one of the main tools during the internship was the AirBnb platform, it is important to understand its dynamics and its

impact on tourism in the present. First of all, it is necessary to understand what the platform is. As one of the fastest growing reservation platforms ever, AirBnb (2022) themselves state that:

“Airbnb began in 2008 when two designers who had space to share hosted three travellers looking for a place to stay. Now, millions of hosts and travellers choose to create a free Airbnb account so they can list their space and book unique accommodations anywhere in the world. And Airbnb experience hosts share their passions and interests with both travellers and locals.”

Since 2008, AirBnb has grown exponentially, having six million active listings worldwide in 220 countries and totalling more than one billion total guests over their existence (AirBnb, 2022). What AirBnb has enabled is the matching between demanders and suppliers of short-term housing rentals (Franco & Santos, 2021).

Easing this peering between apartment owners and tourists is what has helped the AirBnb community grow. As these units are, on average, more affordable than more conventional accommodation, some tourists opt for this alternative. It is also due to the community that has grown around this site that people have become more connected to it and more used to searching for accommodation in the site.

The growth of the site has led to major changes in the way that touristic accommodation is now looked at. As Franco & Santos (2021, p. 26) state:

“The large difference between the returns of short- and long-term rentals has also created an incentive for local and foreigner property owners to rent entire buildings/dwellings as short-term rentals. In 2016, at least 73% of the Airbnb properties on offer in Lisbon were entire apartments with an average daily rate of 84€/night. In contrast, the average long-term rental price in Lisbon in 2016 was 28€/night (830€/month). Hence, a dwelling on Airbnb for 10 days/month would yield pretty much the same income/month as a long-term rental”

Having said this, it is possible to understand that AirBnb is a big player in the accommodation sector and that it has gained influence over its existence. This has led to the awakening of other more traditional reservation platforms like Booking to adapt its style of accommodation and enter in this new market that AirBnb has opened.

1.3.3 Booking

To understand the importance of Booking in the tourism sector, and more specifically in the accommodation sector, it is necessary to contextualize what it is. As Booking.com (2022) states:

“Founded in 1996 in Amsterdam, Booking.com has grown from a small Dutch start-up to one of the world’s leading digital travel companies. Part of Booking Holdings Inc., Booking.com’s mission is to make it easier for everyone to experience the world.”

Also, Booking.com is available in 43 languages and offers more than 28 million total reported accommodation listings, including over 6.2 million listings alone of homes, apartments, and other unique places to stay (Booking.com, 2022), just like the previously mentioned AirBnb.

Booking.com is the world leader in booking accommodations online (Martin-Fuentes & Mellinas, 2018). It is also the leading OTA in most European countries with 62 per cent of global market share (Mantovani, Piga, & Reggiani, 2017). This shows the importance that Booking.com has and how impactful it can be in the accommodation industry.

Both AirBnb and Booking.com have shown how consumer trends can change and how impactful the internet can be in the tourism industry. As seen in the data presented previously, both these platforms are now huge stakeholders in the tourism industry.

1.3.4 Customer Journey

Keeping in mind that the internship was going to approach customer service through AirBnb and Booking, it is also essential to acknowledge the importance of the customer journey. Having said this, customer journey has become an increasingly important concept to understand complex customer behaviours and get insights into their experiences (Tueanrat, Papagiannidis, & Alamanos, 2021).

This need for the understanding of the customer experience emerged in the 1960s and 1970s, in response to the emerging “consumer society” and the marketing philosophy of customer orientation (Crosier & Handford, 2012). And the term itself, customer journey, refers to a process or sequence that a customer goes through to access or use a product or service of a given company (Følstad & Kvale, 2018) and it is also

described as a strategic process for creating holistic customer value, achieving differentiation and sustainable competitive advantage (Rajnish, Aagja, & Bagdare, 2017).

By understanding the concept of customer journey, it is possible to argue that this way of looking at the more contact-based part of the business keeps the customer as the core. This helps in the shaping of the customer journey itself to fit the needs of the customers and evaluate its success.

It is also through the establishing of a customer journey that a company can have a greater control over its service or product and how it is manifested to their customers. Having said this, it is possible to understand how the customer journey can greatly impact the experience in the tourism industry and mainly in the accommodation industry, as tourism is a sector in which intensive encounters between customers and service providers constitute the experience itself (Sørensen & Jensen, 2015). Therefore, it is of extreme importance to understand that the customer journey is an integral part of any touristic activity.

It should also be noted that the customer journey should be considered as an important tool when working with the aforementioned reservation platforms as they are used prior, during and after the reservation is made. This means that the reservation platforms encompass the whole process from the minute that the potential customer sees the ad until he makes the reservation, leaves the accommodation and writes a review.

1.4 Research methodology

This part of the report will present the various methodological elements that were used to carry out this internship report. Considering the context of this report and its objectives, the different phases of the process will be presented.

Due to the nature of the internship report, the research methodology used comprises both theoretical and practical methods.

The methods used for the development of this report are the analytical and empirical methods. According to Mishra & Alok (2017), in analytical research, the researcher can use the facts, information, and data which is already available, and analyse these sources to make a hypothesis to evaluate the existing material.

This method is more related to the first chapter of the internship report, the literature review, and concept definition, which was developed in the subchapters above. These techniques were used as a basis for further investigation. Apart from this more theoretical part, there is also a need to develop the more practical and field related part of the report, which will come after the end of this chapter.

As mentioned previously, there was also a focus on the observational method. Regarding this method, Mishra & Alok (2017, p. 4) state that “[This] research relies on [...] observation alone. It is a way of gaining knowledge by means of direct and indirect observation [...]. In such research it is necessary to get the facts and data firstly, their source, and then actively engage to doing certain things to stimulate the production of desired information.”

This method is mostly related to the later part of the report, where there is a need for a more detailed explanation of the processes that were carried out during the internship. This data was acquired through participant, or direct, observation and task description.

CHAPTER II – THE HOST INSTITUTION

To have a better idea of the area of operations of the company, a contextualisation will be developed to understand some details and specificities. This starts by giving a brief explanation of how the company came to be, its corporate culture, the apartments available, the team at the company and its hierarchy, and the main nationalities, or markets that used the company's services during the internship.

2.1 Tripas-Coração

2.1.1 History of the Company

Tripas-Coração is a company that was founded in 2015 by three friends from Porto, graduates in Economics from the Faculty of Economics of Porto, with thirteen years of professional experience in management consulting at McKinsey & Co, Deloitte, and Accenture.

In the last twenty years the founders travelled extensively, both for leisure and professionally. They were able to experience different countries (together, they visited more than 80), cultures and ways of receiving. They founded Tripas-Coração with the aim of contributing to the responsible conservation of Porto's heritage, promoting local products, and improving the experience of tourists who visit Portugal, focusing on authenticity and the art of hospitality.

At Tripas-Coração, people want to ensure that at the time of departure each traveller takes with them a little bit of the city and country that welcomed them.

They observed the recent demand for Portugal as a tourist destination, and the city of Porto in particular, as an opportunity to promote the development of the local economy far beyond the rehabilitation of the real estate heritage of the historic centres. The authenticity of a holiday destination does not end at the place chosen for the stay. For Tripas-Coração this is just the beginning.

2.1.2 Culture of the Company

Vision – The company's vision is to be recognized as the best tourist accommodation provider in the city of Porto while promoting the development of the local economy by supporting national furniture producers/creators and decoration.

Mission – Raise the quality of good service, make traditions and places of the city of Porto and the North region more known to national and foreign tourists, disseminate quality design and promote access to international markets for small national producers.

Objectives – Strategic objectives:

- To be recognized as a company of excellence in the management of tourist apartments in the city of Porto within 3 years
- To be recognized as promoters of quality architectural recovery in the city of Porto
- Function as a vehicle to promote Porto and the North region through the dissemination of local producers and authentic experiences
- Contribute to the reduction of the seasonality of tourism in Porto and the North region through the active search for new customer segments
- Reduce dependence on capturing bookings from current apartment rental platforms

2.1.3 The Apartments

At the beginning of the internship, the company had 30 different apartment units dispersed in eight different buildings:

- Santa Catarina (Rua da Firmeza) – 5 apartments
- Cordoaria (Campo Mártires da Pátria) – 8 apartments
- Clérigos (Campo Mártires da Pátria) – 1 apartment
- Santa Teresa (Rua de Santa Teresa) – 1 apartment
- Sá da Bandeira (Rua de Sá da Bandeira) – 6 apartments
- Taipas (Rua das Taipas) – 2 apartments
- São Bento (Rua das Flores) – 5 apartments
- Breiner (Rua do Breiner) – 2 apartments

These were the initial 30 apartments that the intern had the chance to get to know during the first month of the internship. Further into the internship, three new listings were added to this list. These new apartments were:

- Taipas (Rua das Taipas) – +1 apartment in the existing building
- Almada (Rua do Almada) - +2 apartments

This growth happened due to the continuous aspirations of the company of becoming one of the major players in the self-catered apartments in the city of Porto. As of the end of the internship, six more apartments were being negotiated to be added to the existing portfolio of 33. All of the apartments were rented and then repurposed for Alojamento Local.

The apartments from each building were very different from each other and this caused them to have different audience targets. Santa Catarina, having the more spacious and more luxurious apartments was targeted for a wealthier segment than all the others. Then there was another more specific case with the Breiner apartments, which were more targeted for families as these two units had two double beds and were in a much more silent area than the others.

All the other apartments were more oriented for short stays of up to five days for a younger target. These other apartments were generally small studios in a very central area of the city, which made them attractive for people who would really like to experience the city itself.

2.1.4 The Team

The team at Tripas-Coração is composed mainly by two different segments. There is a more office focused team and a more field focused team. The first team was composed by seven total members, which dealt with all the more office-oriented issues. This team was then divided into two different levels. The first office team, was the managerial team, composed by the three original partners of Tripas-Coração. The second office team, was composed, including the intern, by four people.

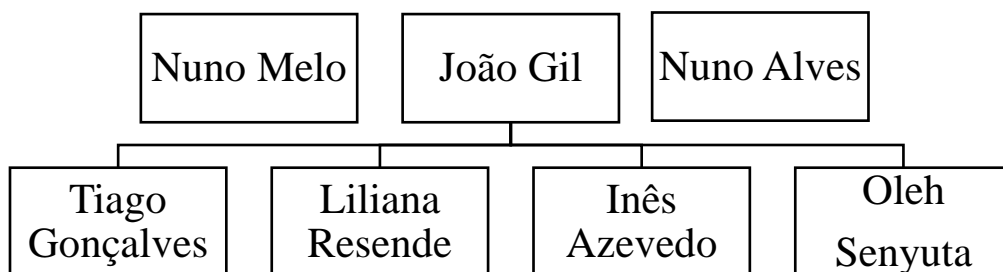


Figure 5 - Hierarchy I

The managerial team (as seen above on the upper level) was represented by Nuno Alves, the most present of the members of this first team. Nuno dealt with all issues that were more closely related with investments in new opportunities and contractual matters. Nuno Melo, on the other hand, was more responsible for the marketing at Tripas-Coração and for the optimization of the image. João Pedro was more specialized in technologies that were implemented in the company and other informatic aspects that were developed in the company.

The second team, which collaborated more closely with guests and with matters concerning the immediate issues and workflows, was represented by Tiago. This member of the team was the one responsible for the financial aspects of the company and dealt with invoicing, production of financial reports and payment of services and goods in the company. After Tiago comes Liliana, the operations manager of the company, which was responsible for the organization at Tripas-Coração. This organization concerns the calendarization of check-ins and check-outs and also working closely with the internal housekeeping department of the company. Inês was responsible for the Marketing area and for bureaucratic processes like dealing with the SEF and with the Municipal City Tax. Apart from this, Inês also worked on a different schedule from the rest to complement the hours after the others, which made her deal with customer care also.

The intern had the chance to work with all the aforementioned people during all 6 months and in all the areas that concerned the members at Tripas-Coração. This opportunity was crucial to understand how it was possible to help in any way possible and what the company would need in these aspects.

Four different people composed the more field focused team. As said previously, Liliana collaborated closely with this other team composed by maintenance and housekeeping.

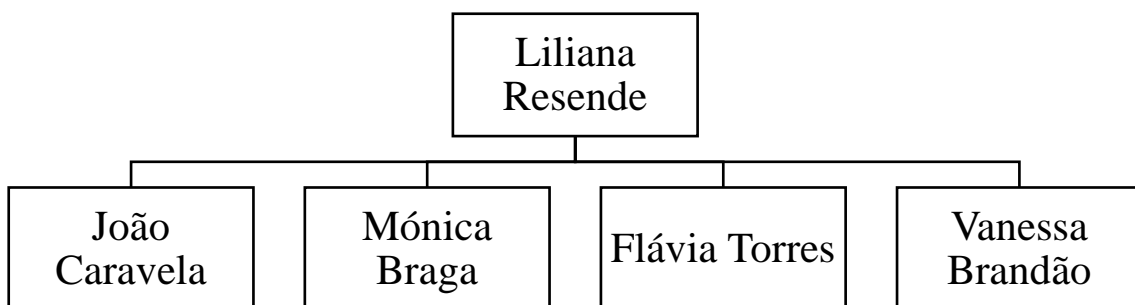


Figure 6 - Hierarchy II

This team was new in the company when the intern had arrived at the company. On the first day of the internship, only Mónica was already working at Tripas-Coração. This growth in this team resulted in the needs that arose from the growth of the company and the new opportunities that were appearing after the mitigation of the COVID-19 pandemic.

This growth and these opportunities led the company to establishing an internal housekeeping team and internal maintenance to solve the more easily fixed issues. These new needs opened an opportunity for the arrival of the other 3 members represented in the scheme above.

One of the main needs at Tripas-Coração that developed the internal housekeeping team was the need for the external housekeeping validation. As the external service was not always dependable, the creation of an internal team was seen as the solution for this issue. The development of the housekeeping team enabled for less of the cleaning to be made by the external team and therefore, the reviews that guests would leave regarding the cleanliness of the apartments would be enhanced.

This meant that Tripas-Coração was composed by 11 different people at the time of the internship. The management realised that the number of members would keep growing as long as the number of apartments would grow too.

2.1.5 Main Markets

During the internship, it was possible to analyse the main markets of the company when looking at the number of reservations per nationality. This data was made available on the reservation platforms used by the company. From the beginning of the internship, in March, until the end of the internship, in September, there were a total of 1173 reservations.

From these 1173 reservations, 614 reservations were from the Booking platform, with a total weight of 52,3% of the reservations. Also, 497 reservations were made on the AirBnb platform, with 42,4% of the total. The remaining 62 reservations, or 5,3% of the reservations, were made on other platforms like Expedia and VRBO, or directly on the website of Tripas-Coração.

Now looking at [Appendix I](#), it is possible to see the number of different nationalities that made reservations for the different units available. During the internship,

guests came from 46 different countries. The graph in the appendix also shows the number of reservations per nationality. Analysing this, it is possible to see that the market with the most reservations is the United States with a total of 288 reservations which in turn represents 24,5%, which is almost one in every four reservations of the total.

The second market with the highest representation is the United Kingdom with 183 reservations total. This number is equal to 15,6% of the total number of reservations and also shows the importance of this market.

Then, three other important markets follow, with Germany having 122 total reservations (10.4%), France with 83 reservations (7.1%), and Spain with 80 reservations (6.8%). These 5 main markets, together, represent 64.5% of all reservations, with the remaining 41 countries having 35.5% of the share of reservations.

Previously in this report, it was possible to understand that four of the main inbound Portuguese markets were Spain, France, the UK, and Germany, which is also represented in this case, with proportional numbers. However, the United States is not as representative to Portugal as it is to Tripas-Coração in the period that is being analysed. Also, it was stated that the Portuguese market represented 52.8% of all overnight stays in the Portuguese territory, but looking at the aforementioned appendix, Portugal represents only 1.62% of all reservations, which is a noticeable difference.

This chapter will develop the more practical and technical aspects of the internship that took place at Tripas-Coração. These aspects include a detailed plan of the whole internship with characterization of the several phases of the intern in the company. After this, a contextualization of the objectives and expectations will be made to better understand the expectations of the intern prior to the internship, and which were the aims. Lastly, this chapter will end with the description of the several tasks that were developed all along the internship.

3.1 Internship Plan

The initial internship plan contemplated a work week of 25 hours with a total amount of 600 hours from the 1st of March until the 1st of September. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the start of the internship was postponed 1 week, therefore starting on the 8th of March instead of the 1st of March.

On the first day of the internship, the first contact between the company and I was established at the headquarters of the company. This first contact was made to introduce the context of the company to the new intern and to better understand the objectives of the company and the aims of the intern. This way, a first informal plan was established for orientation purposes of both parties.

It was established as a priority that I would have to be introduced to several new concepts and platforms that would be used daily. Apart from that, it was imperative that the main “product” of Tripas-Coração, their apartments, would be visited to have a better sense of the company’s environment. During this first contact there was also a focus on the aspects that would be important for my growth in the company.

On the following week of the internship, a more specific organization of the plan was developed to understand the timings and the needs of the company and me. This plan would start with a formation phase of about one month, when there would be less autonomy from my part, and I would be more closely followed by other members of the team. This phase would include a trial of all the areas of the company. These different areas had a different focus each and were related to financial aspects, customer care, cleaning operations, developing apartments, marketing, and maintenance.

To have a better understanding of the internship plan and a more visual approach, a small summary of the internship was developed and went as follows:

- 8th of March – First contact with the company
- 15th of March – More specific calendarization of the plan
- 22nd of March to 22nd of April – Introduction to the company on the several areas of work; Becoming responsible for invoicing and city tax matters
- 23rd of April – More definitive tasks are delegated
- 2nd of May – Delegation of the responsibility for customer care and check-ins with tourists
- 9th of May – Developing new apartments
- 17th of June – Overhaul of the automatic messages system
- 1st of July – Changes to the check-in sheet
- 15th of July – Implementation of new Wi-Fi passwords
- 15th of August – Designing QR Codes
- 1st of September – Last day of the internship

3.2 Main Functions and Tasks

Having in mind that the tourism industry is very practical and customer oriented, the context of work tends to be active and with no moment for rest. This includes a more office-oriented type of work and field work. In this segment of the work, the several tasks that were performed during the internship will be described. This description will be made with detail to better analyse my development and integration in the company.

3.2.1 Invoicing

One of the first tasks that was taught was on how to make invoices. According to Investopedia (2022):

“An invoice is a time-stamped commercial document that itemizes and records a transaction between a buyer and a seller. If goods or services were purchased on credit, the invoice usually specifies the terms of the deal and provides information on the available methods of payment.”

Taking this into account, there were two main types of invoices. These types were differentiated by the booking site which the tourists had used to make a reservation. The only booking site that declares Municipal City Tax to the city of Porto is AirBnb and, therefore, this item would not be included in the invoice of a customer from this same platform. This was not the case for all the other reservation platforms which do not declare

Municipal City Tax prior to the guest's arrival. This meant that this would have to be an item added to an invoice of such a reservation.

Then, the items that would be present in a AirBnb reservation would be:

- Cost of accommodation with VAT
- Cost of cleaning with VAT

The items present in the invoice of a non-AirBnb reservation would be:

- Cost of accommodation with VAT
- Cost of cleaning with VAT
- Cost for the Municipal City Tax

These invoices were declared on a website app called “Magnifinance” which could then be downloaded in a PDF file to the computer. These files would then be stored in a specific folder for future consultation and to keep record of the number of reservations and income of any month.

This task was developed two times every week due to the number of check-ins and check-outs that happened during the internship, which were around 200 check-outs on average per month. This would equal to one-to-one ratio for invoices, which would make about 200 invoices per month. These invoices would then have to be organized and sent to the supervisor to later be sent to the company's accountant.

3.2.2 Municipal City Tax

Another task was to check and pay for the municipal city tax of the city of Porto. As stated in the description of the previous task, this task was closely related to invoicing, as it was declared in the invoices for every reservation. As stated by (Câmara do Porto, 2022):

“The Municipal Tourist Tax represents a contribution by users of Tourist Resorts and Local Accommodation in the City to the sustainability of Porto as a tourist destination, allowing the Municipality to better respond to the wear and tear inherent to the tourist footprint in the City.”

This tax is €2 per person/per night in all tourist resorts and local accommodation establishments, up to a maximum of 7 (seven) consecutive nights per person, per stay. (Câmara do Porto, 2022)

This means that a two-day reservation for two people in one of the units of Tripas-Coração would lead to the payment of 8€ of the Municipal City Tax. If the reservation would be of eight days for two people, this would mean a total fee of 28€ and not 32€ as the maximum fee charged is for seven consecutive days.

As mentioned previously, AirBnb users would have already been charged by the reservation platform and the fee would already be in the hands of Porto City Council. Guests from any other reservation platform would have to pay this fee to the company which would then be redirected to the Porto City Council.

To make sure that the guests of every non-AirBnb reservation would pay the tax, an envelope was left at the apartments so that the tourists could leave the due cash in them for a later payment. Even with this method, there were still people who would not pay for the Municipal City Tax and would then be reminded through a message sent directly to them to pay through other channels.

Then at the end of every month, a document would be made to track which reservations had paid the fee and which did not. This would then be stated on the website of Câmara do Porto for every single apartment separately and paid.

3.2.3 Working with Guesty

One of the most important tools for the internship at Tripas-Coração was a web-app called “Guesty”. As (Guesty, 2022) itself states:

“Guesty is the ultimate property management platform for short-term and vacation rentals. Our end-to-end solution simplifies the complex operational needs that property managers face on a daily basis – from guest communication to task assignment to payment processing. With Guesty, property managers save time so they can focus on what matters most: growing their business.”

The main purpose of this app, as stated above, was to unite all the reservation platforms to have one single dashboard where people can see all the properties and reservations at any given time. Therefore, Guesty serves as what is called a channel manager. Apart from uniting all the reservation platforms, Guesty had other functions available to any of the employees.

This union of the different platforms allowed the employees at Tripas-Coração to have access to a dashboard where they could see check-ins and check-outs in real time. This dashboard looked like this:

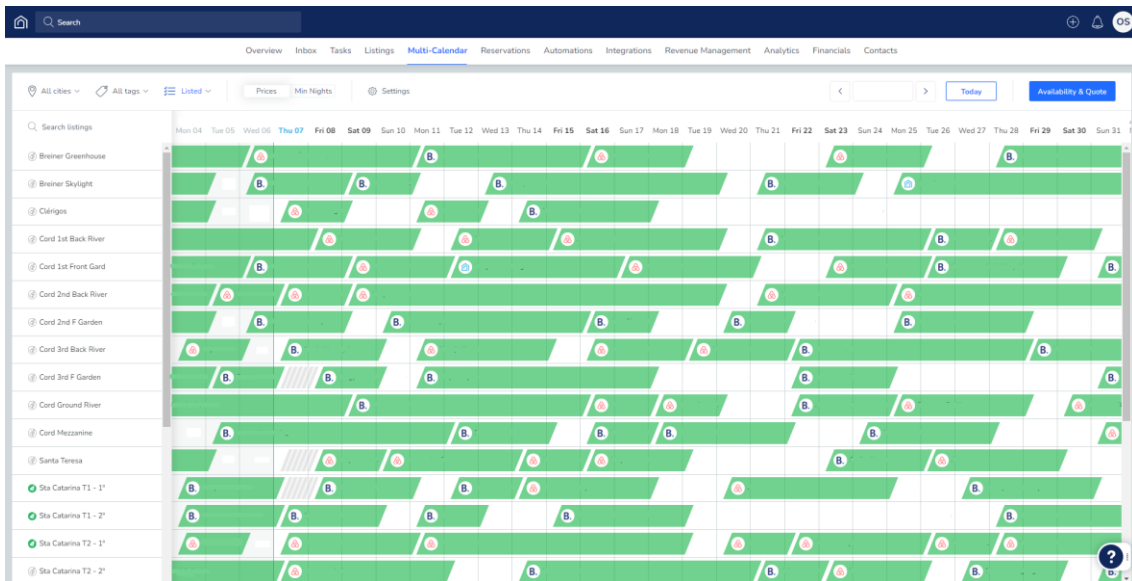


Figure 7 - Gesty Multi-Calendar Screen

Starting from the top left side, there is a search bar that lets the user find any of the functions that Gesty offers, apart from those that can be seen in the white toolbar below the blue bar. This search bar was used to find reservations, properties, guests, contacts, users, owners, vendors, marketplace, views, and more.

Then, the aforementioned white toolbar has different buttons that can be pressed that will give access to the user to different options. This white bar includes functions like:

- Overview
- Inbox
- Tasks
- Listings
- Multi-Calendar
- Reservations
- Automations
- Integrations
- Revenue Management

- Analytics
- Financials
- Contacts

The screen above is the one that can be seen when the user clicks on the Multi-Calendar option. This was one of the most useful tools created by Guesty. Through this screen it was possible to see all the reservations in a specific space in time. As possible to see in the last image, each green bar represents one reservation. The bar starts at the check-in day of the guest and ends on the check-out day. This beginning and end is represented through the diagonal cuts in the bar. Inside the bar, the first element that will appear is the platform where the reservation was made, and it is shown through a little logo of the platform inside a white circle.

Apart from this, it is not shown in the image due to the privacy of the guests, but it would show the complete name of the guest making the reservation. In the white spaces between reservations, the price per night would also appear but it is also not shown for privacy of the financial aspects of the company.

On the left side of the screen, the different names of the apartments are displayed. These names for the apartments are the internal names, so the ones that are used to identify the different units inside the company. These names do not match the names of the apartments displayed in the reservation platforms. This difference in names was due to marketing reasons, as the internal names were not as marketable as the ones shown on the different reservation platforms.

The first thing that I would do when starting the day at the internship would be to open the Multi-Calendar function of Guesty to check on any new reservations and to see what the same day and following days would look like. This helped in many other tasks that are going to be described in this chapter.

3.2.4 New Employees

About 3 months after the beginning of the internship, new members joined Tripas-Coração, so they needed to have specific training. Even though I was new to the company, as the information given to me was fresh, it was possible to reproduce and give relevant feedback and context.

One of the most important pieces of information that needed to be given to the new employees was the location of the buildings and the apartments. This would also lead to the contextualization of the specificities of each of the thirty units available at Tripas-Coração.

Apart from that, a little introduction to Guesty was given so that the new members of the team would know how to work with the app. This would lead to a better information flow between all members, new and older, as everyone had access to the needed information for each role.

These two aspects of informing and briefing were developed by me during the internship to four new members. Two of the members were part of the internal housekeeping crew, so the most valuable information for them was the apartments and their specificities. Then, another member that was responsible for the more logistical and maintenance part of the company also needed to acquire these introductions to the company, so I was tasked with it. Finally, another office member joined the team, so there was also a need to provide these pieces of information.

3.2.5 Setting up new Apartments

The setup of new apartments was more demanding than the usual operation at Tripas-Coração. This was due to all the processes it involved, and luckily, I was able to participate in the setup of the Almada apartments.

3.2.5.1 Contracts and Services

The first part in the setup of the apartment consisted in the signing of the rent contract and setting up all the services necessary. This would mean establishing a contract with electricity, water, and internet/television services.

There was a need to compare prices between the different options that existed in the market and establish which was the best option. This was done for all the services involved and after the approval of the supervisor, I would have to contact these services and establish a contract. This was done for the three newer units at Tripas-Coração.

3.2.5.2 Alojamento Local and Municipal City Tax

Another important aspect before being able to market any apartment in the reservation platforms would be to register them on the RNAL (Registo Nacional de Alojamento Local) and to the Municipal City Tax site of Porto.

I was able to perform these registrations through the respective websites of these entities by providing the necessary details asked in each site. The RNAL registration needed to be done first as it took more time, and it provided the Alojamento Local number that was needed for the Municipal City Tax and for other further registrations.

After waiting for about two weeks, the RNAL would send a notification of confirmation of the requests sent by the intern. This notification would contain the registration number necessary to provide accommodation legally in self-catered apartments.

After this, the Municipal City Tax could also be registered to the apartments in question and would ask for the Alojamento Local registration number which looked like this:

XXXXXX/AL

Having filled all the details, the apartment was bureaucratically ready to be marketed in any website, but there were some things that still needed some attention by the Tripas-Coração team.

3.2.5.3 Furniture, Appliances, and Decoration

I was also involved in the choices of furniture, appliances, and decoration of the new apartments. The main topic was appliances, and they were chosen according to previous choices for the other existing apartments.

As there was an existing list from a previous apartment setup with prices, this was very useful for reference. I updated the list with the current prices and compared them with the previous ones to understand the total cost of the setup in the end.

After all the more material aspects of the apartment were bought and dealt with, a decorator would put the items in the most harmonious way and add some of their touches to the overall design of the apartment. This would mean that all matters related to bureaucracy and apartment setup were finished.

3.2.5.4 Scheduling Photography Sessions

One of the most impactful things that would lead the potential guest to turn into an actual guest would be the pictures of the ads of each listing. The pictures needed to be taken by someone professional and experienced in the field to be as captivating as possible and this was the norm at Tripas-Coração.

After the setup was totally completed, I was in charge of contacting the photographer that had taken all the other pictures of the apartments and schedule a photo session of the new apartments.

The photographer would take a lot of photos in many different angles and all members of the company would have a say on which photos would be best to publish in the new ads of the new listings. Once chosen, the pictures would return to the photographer who would edit them and return them to the company again. These photos would then be used to create the different listings and be used for different marketing campaigns.

3.2.5.5 Creating Automated Messages and Templates

I was also tasked with the creation of automated messages and templates in the Guesty platform. This was an important part as these messages would be directed to the guests and potential customers of the company.

The automated messages were based on all other messages that already existed for other listings. These messages were more informative, and each message related to the different phase of the stay of the guest.

The templates were pre-created messages that were stored and could be used at any time by any user. This was useful as it would save time when answering to frequent questions. The templates for new apartments would also include the self-check-in instructions.

3.2.5.6 Evaluating the Apartments

To understand the specificities of each apartment, they would need to be assessed and checked to see if everything would work as expected. I had the opportunity to evaluate two of the three new apartments.

This would mean that the I would have to become a guest for one or two nights and test everything in the apartment. Here is a list of all the things that needed to be evaluated in each apartment:

- Kitchen appliances and utensils
- Water pressure of all faucets and shower
- Comfortability of chairs, sofa, and bed
- Television and internet connection quality
- Noise produced by outside sources
- Easiness of self-check-in procedure
- Check if anything basic for any stay was missing

These would be the basic aspects to understand if the apartment were ready or not for the guests and to open the dates on Guesty. If everything were up to standard, the dates would be opened, and customers would start making reservations from the date the apartments were open on.

3.2.6 Creating/Modifying Apartment ads

Another relevant aspect that needed to be taken care of during the internship, was the tailoring and creation of new ads for the units available at Tripas-Coração. The ads are the first thing that the guest sees prior to making a reservation, so it is very important to have something that captivates the potential customer.

As told to the intern, some of the ads were not updated in a long time and need some refreshing and some more captivating copywriting to bring more potential views and reservations to the company. The changes made to the existing listing ads were minimal, but they were important for the correct marketing of each apartment.

One of the most common complaints when guests would arrive to the apartment would be that there was no elevator in the building. The other most common complaint was that there was no air conditioning in the apartment. Therefore, there was a necessity to include in the ads that the buildings did not have an elevator and that most of the apartments did not have air conditioning. Apart from this information, some minor language changes were also made.

Even though these changes could be made through Guesty itself through the listings tab, this would not synchronise correctly sometimes. To change the information

for one apartment, I would have to access all the sites where the unit was posted in and change the information manually. Most of the apartments were only listed on AirBnb and Booking, and the changes were made quickly and without any problems. There were some apartments that were also listed on a reservation platform called VRBO which also needed changing, but this led to the discovery of some syncing issues and was postponed for another time.

Apart from that, some new ads needed to be created as the company had arranged contracts with new apartments. This was done from scratch with some help from other employees of the company.

The creation of an ad is different from only changing some information of an ad and required more time and more processes. One of the processes that it involved was one related to one of the tasks previously mentioned. This was to take the pictures edited by the photographer and uploading them to the new listing being created.

After uploading the pictures, I would have to fill the location details of the apartment, followed by the license number provided for Alojamento Local. After that, there was a long list with amenities that could be ticked if they existed in the apartment. This needed to be checked as amenities are also important for marketing purposes and for bringing more customers and more revenue to the company.

Having done this, I would then have to specify the minimum number of nights, which was 2 for any apartment, the maximum, which was 180 nights due to the renting law requirements, and also the base price for the night.

Having taken care of all these other processes, the integration of the listings for the reservation platforms would start. This would have to be done through the Integrations function of Guesty. This was a simple process that involved clicking on the icon of the platform where the listing was going to be integrated to and filling out all the missing information that is specific to each platform. This needed to be done for two platforms, AirBnb and Booking, and it was all automatic. After a few days of waiting, the ads would be created, and guests could start making their reservations.

3.2.7 Customer Care

One of the most important tasks that was given to me, was to take care of the customer care of the company. This task could be done through 3 different ways, which

were personally, through messages or by phone calls. This was one of the most delicate of tasks as every guest is different from each other, so the responses and the solving of issues and doubts needed to be tailor-made for each and every customer at Tripas-Coração. Apart from this, all customers received automatic messages that needed to be tinkered and well optimised for each case.

3.2.7.1 The guest's journey at Tripas-Coração

The first part of customer care concerns to the first contact that the company has with the possible guest. This is done, as stated previously, through the ads that the company has on the different platforms for the reservation of accommodation units. But, once the guest had already made a reservation with Tripas-Coração, they need to have important feedback to know that everything is in order and that the reservation has come through.

I was tasked with creating or modifying the existing messages and to create a sort of path for the guest with messages. The first message that the guest receives is what is nicknamed as “Welcome” and this message is equal for all apartments, with slight changes. This message can be seen in [Appendix II](#).

Thus, the first contact that the guest had directly with the company was the “Welcome” message providing important information for the customer. This message is different from the message that originally existed before the arrival of the intern. This is due to the partnership with a transfer service and the change of the registration link that was available previously. Apart from that, some other minor changes were made by me to the language used for better understanding by the guests.

This “Welcome” could lead to five different outcomes from the guest. These outcomes could be:

- The guest has seen the message, has given his estimated time of arrival and filled the registration form.
- The guest has seen the message, has given his estimated time of arrival, and has not filled the registration form.
- The guest has seen the message, has not given his estimated time of arrival, and has filled the registration form.
- The guest has seen the message and only informs that they have seen it.

- The guest has not seen the message and no other feedback is given.

All cases except the first one, the guest that provides all information, would then be sent an automatic message created by the intern. The message can be read in [Appendix III](#).

This message was created with purpose of having more information available for each reservation. This information would be crucial later for the organization of every week. This was due to the large number of requests by guests to check-in earlier than the usual hour at the company (3pm).

Closer to the guest's arrival date, I had the task of sending another message that was not automatic. This message was a template which was already done and could be sent with two clicks. This was not the case as many of the times soe other information was added to the template message. This message was the "Self-check-in" which is different for each of the 30 units of Tripas-Coração. This message had all the information necessary for the guests to check-in by themselves with no further assistance, except if there was some issue. These issues would be solved as soon as possible through a phone call of through messages in the Guesty platform. This message can be seen in [Appendix IV](#).

After the "Self-check-in" message, 24 hours after check-in, another automated message that was created by me is sent. The purpose of this message resides in knowing if the guest has arrived well, and if the apartment is up to standard and according to the expectations of the guest. The message can be analysed through [Appendix V](#).

Having made sure that everything was according to normal with the guest and the apartment, the guest would receive no further automated messages. The customers could receive a message if there was, for example, some malfunction with the internet service in the area, or, in the case of the São João festivities in Porto, guests had to be made aware of the noise conditions that the street would have. Apart from that, the messages sent during the period between check-in and check-out were always answers to questions from guests.

One day before check-out, the guests would receive all the instructions necessary to check-out by themselves, with no further help from the employees of Tripas-Coração. The structure of this message can be seen in [Appendix VI](#).

As it is possible to see, this message contains all the necessary aspects for a successful self-check-out. One important contribution that this message would give to the overall operation would be if the guest told the company their check-out hours. This was important for the acceleration of the cleaning process. When the guests would let Tripas-Coração know about their departure hour and it would be earlier than the usual check-out hour (12pm), the housekeeping team could start working right away.

After this message, another message was created by me to complement the end of the stay of any guest. This message had the purpose of making the guest feel more special. This message can be analysed in [Appendix VII](#).

This message was not automated, as the context for this message was more specific and could not be sent without previously knowing the state in which the guests left the apartments. This message was created by me when some of the members of the Tripas-Coração Team had suggested it would be a good idea.

The last message that the guest was ever supposed to receive was a review reminder of the stay. This was a very important message as it was only through the reviews that the company could have any feedback of the different aspects of the guests' stay. This last review message can be seen in [Appendix VIII](#).

The minimum number of messages per reservation would therefore be of seven. At the time of the internship, there was a discussion in which it was agreed that the number of messages could increase due to new projects. These new messages would follow the established structure and vocabulary of the messages previously shown.

3.2.7.2 Inquiries

Another type of message that would be very frequent among the normal operation of the company would be the inquiries. These were messages sent by potential guests wanting to know more about the apartments or wanting a discount.

The inquiries were the most important messages received at Tripas-Coração and they had a different focus from the ones that were to solve problems or issues in the ongoing reservations. This was due to the potential profit that the company could have if they converted an inquiry into an actual reservation.

Therefore, the first times that the intern performed this task, it needed to be closely monitored. This was because sometimes the questions asked by the potential guests were very specific and needed to be answered with special consideration.

After these first times, inquiries then felt like another message related task, just with some higher diligence. These more specific messages with very specific questions arrived in the inbox about once every day, sometimes maybe more times and were answered as soon as possible.

3.2.7.3 Optimization of Automation

During the internship, there was a big change on the automation end of the Guesty platform. This was related to the automated messages that have been described earlier in this report. Before the changes made to Guesty, each listing, or apartment, had different automated messages and they were all scattered.

After the change, a new general tab appeared on the Guesty platform that reunited all the automated messages. This new tab gave the opportunity to have one group of messages per building instead of having 8 groups of messages for 8 different apartments in the same building.

This was a task developed by me right after these changes were made to the channel manager. At the beginning of the process there were 118 groups of messages for 31 total apartments and 8 total buildings. These 118 groups of messages were then labelled and united to make a total of 28 groups of messages.

As stated above, this process started with labelling each of the message groups with the given name of the message followed by the name of the apartment. For example, there were 31 different welcome messages, and they were not labelled for which apartment they were. This would mean that I had to open each individual message and check what apartment was the message intended for. The labelling of a message would look something like this: “Welcome Sta Catarina T2 1^o”.

After having labelled every message that existed, I started to create groups for each building and uniting the messages. This would mean, for example, taking the “Welcome Sta Catarina T1 1^o”, “Welcome Sta Catarina T1 2^o”, “Welcome Sta Catarina T2 1^o”, “Welcome Sta Catarina T2 2^o”, “Welcome Sta Catarina T2 3^o” and creating a

unique message called “Welcome Sta Catarina”. This was possible by using the new system of variables from Guesty.

The variables were a piece of “code” that any user could create inside the channel manager. These variables would then show the information that the users would feed them. One of the examples of variable that was already created by Guesty was the address variable. The variables would take a format like this in the automated messages:

Detailed apartment address: {{address}}

This piece of “code” would then be transformed into the address that was previously given to Guesty. Therefore, combining all the “Welcome” messages was no longer an issue as Guesty would fill out the information that it had.

This new feature led to the creation of other variables useful for the automated messages. One example of this would be the Wi-Fi information for the apartments. I was tasked with the creation of two variables so the guests could receive this information automatically without having to send it manually every time.

To create a new variable, any user would have to click on the top left icon of the screen, the initials of the user, and access an option “Account Settings”. From there, there was another option to choose called “Custom Fields”. This would enable the user to create a brand-new variable and choose the format of the variable. These formats would be numerical or textual.

3.2.7.4 Problem Solving

One of the main aspects about customer care and the one that needed to have as much attention as inquiries was problem solving. Problems with apartments or guests were not a given or a constant at Tripas-Coração. However, when an issue arose in any of the cases, it needed to be solved.

These issues were classified as being more or less urgent, depending on the magnitude of the problem. The more urgent matters would be attended right away personally by any member of the team. One of the most persistent problems would be when a guest would leave their keys inside the apartment or on the door from the inside. This would result in calling a locksmith company that could fix the issue in a matter of minutes.

If the issues were less urgent, and had a more maintenance focused aspect, like fixing a shutter of a window or painting a wall, these issues would be placed on the maintenance file and be attended when the guests would check-out.

I would only deal with the more urgent issues and those that could be fixed by calling someone or helping the guests directly. The most common issues, apart from the previously mentioned problems with keys would be:

- Not seeing the message with the access codes to the apartment
- Not being able to open the doors with the key provided
- Problems with the Wi-Fi network
- Guests finding the apartments in a bad cleaning state

All of these issues would be taken care of as soon as it was possible, as each guest was different, and they would react to the issues in different ways. If it were possible, I would have a video call with the guests through WhatsApp and try to fix the problem that way, without having to go the site.

When the apartments were found in a bad cleaning state, the members of Tripas-Coração recommended that one should always maintain calm and act rationally. The standard way at the company was to apologize for the state of the apartment and offer a bottle of wine to the guest, while also sending someone to correct the cleaning.

3.2.8 Organization

One of the base processes that Tripas-Coração needed to have always in consideration was their organization. Dealing with so many different companies and guests, all dynamics needed to be established and well planned for every day.

When I had arrived, the office of Tripas-Coração had 2 blackboards with the information of check-ins and check-outs written on them. This was a manual process and therefore it was deemed as inefficient. This was not changed immediately and later during the internship; I had the task of making this written blackboard into something of easier access from anywhere and more digital.

This was done through the reports that can be exported from Guesty. From those reports, having all the information wanted and necessary for the “digital blackboard”, an Excel document was created with the organization of check-ins and check-outs of any

given day. Every day would then be turned into a table format and inserted on a Power Point file. This file would then be turned into a video format and sent to a television at the office. This way, everyone at the office had easy access and could look at the information going through the television sequentially.

This “digital blackboard” then had several updates according to the needs of the members of Tripas-Coração. By the end of the internship, this document had reached a set form and could be made much faster than writing all the information manually in the blackboards.

The “digital blackboard” looked like this:

CHECK IN	GUEST	LISTING	CHECK OUT	LISTING	GUEST
13:00 11/07	Name	Breiner Greenhouse	12:00 11/07	Breiner Greenhouse	Name
14:00 11/07	Name	Clérigos	12:00 11/07	Breiner Skylight	Name
20:00 11/07	Name	Cord 3rd Back River	12:00 11/07	Cord 1st Back River	Name
16:30 11/07	Name	Cord 3rd F Garden	12:00 11/07	Sá da Band. Duplex	Name
19:00 11/07	Name	São Bento Duplex	00:00 11/07	São Bento I	Name
13:00 11/07	Name	São Bento I	00:00 11/07	Sta Catarina T1 - 1º	Name
11:30 11/07	Name	Sta Catarina T1 - 2º	12:00 11/07	Sta Catarina T2 - 1º	Name
15:15 11/07	Name	Sta Catarina T2 - 1º			

Figure 8 - Digital Blackboard

As seen above, the table has six columns for every day of the week. The first three columns are related to the check-ins that would occur during that day, in this case, the 11th of July. The last three columns were about the check-outs that would also happen during that same day.

Regarding the check-in columns, the left-most column shows the hour that the guest had provided, hence the importance of the ETA message mentioned in the guest’s journey at Tripas-Coração, with the date. This was really useful as any person who would look at this field of the table would get a clear idea of how late or how early the cleaning

needed to be done. This column was also helpful in the process of defining which member of the team would check-in the guests at Santa Catarina.

The middle columns in both the check-ins and check-outs sections are the name of the guest, which is hidden for privacy reasons. This was helpful for the identification of reservations and if any of them would call, it would be easier to understand who they were, where they were going to stay and when they would check-in.

The listings columns were the same for both sections and they showed the apartment regarding check-in or check-out. In these columns there are certain red coloured cells. The purpose of this was to identify the apartments that would have a check-in and check-out on the same day, so these apartments had priority in the cleaning schedule.

Apart from the organization of check-ins and check-outs, I also had the opportunity to help in the organization of the housekeeping service. This encompassed the internal and external housekeeping teams.

Looking at the digital blackboard and the “Multi-Calendar” function of Guesty, the cleaning teams needed to be organized. This scheduling would be made for about a week and then it would be looked at every day. This continuing revision of the cleaning plan was necessary as the cancellation of existing reservations and new reservations coming in every day were a threat for the normal operation.

I had the opportunity to organize the cleaning for one week to have this experience of planning. This organization of the cleaning teams was done through several Excel documents that were shared on an online platform. Tripas-Coração worked with three teams during the internship. These teams were divided between internal and external. One of the teams was internal and the other two were external, so the dynamic was a little bit different.

The Excel documents were organized in a grid format in which the names of the apartments were organized in a column and the days of the week were on the top line of the document. These cells that coincided with the apartment that needed to be cleaned and the given day in which the unit was going to be cleaned were filled in a certain way.

The cells could be filled in several ways, depending on the information that the company had about the check-ins and check-outs. If an apartment had a check-out and a

check-in on the same day, the cell would be filled with an orange colour and with the hours that the guest would leave. On a note in the cell, if the guest were coming from a Booking reservation, the total amount of the city tax would be put so the cleaning services would know what to expect. If there was only a check-out, the cell would be filled with a green colour and also with the check-out hour of the guest leaving the apartment.

As for the scheduling of the cleanings for the internal team, this was communicated in a more direct and personal manner. The organization would also be made in an Excel file and what needed to be cleaned would be communicated through a meeting in the morning, through a phone call or messages.

These were all very manual processes which ended up being changed after a while for a more automated system. This system was integrated with Guesty and would allocate the cleanings automatically depending on the information that was fed to it. If, for example, the app was given the information that each apartment could be cleaned in about 45 minutes, it would allocate all the workforce resources automatically for the day and distribute all resources for all the apartments that needed to be cleaned.

3.2.9 Financial Reports

During the internship, I had the opportunity of helping in the development of small financial reports regarding the profitability of specific apartments. The type of reports developed were called “P&L”. According to (Hales, 2005) a “Profit and Loss (P&L) Statement—Measures the operating success and profitability of a business.”

These reports were made once every month for the apartments in Santa Catarina and Sá da Bandeira. This was due to an agreement made between the company and the property owner to split these profits and expenses. Therefore, all expenses and profits needed to be specified in the document produced. This document was an Excel sheet which had the reservation statements for these apartments and the revenue generated by each unit in the aforementioned buildings.

I had the task of checking every reservation for a given unit on a given month and write down the revenue generated with that reservation. This revenue needed to be reviewed as it included VAT and the values should not show this tax. Therefore, I had to divide the value of accommodation by 1.06, as the VAT value for accommodation in

Portugal is of 6% and 1.23 for the cleaning as the VAT value for cleaning in Portugal is of 23%.

After having all these values taken into consideration, they would be added up and considered in other calculations. These other calculations included the overall price of each apartment per night, the overall price of each occupied price per night and the occupation rate for each apartment. These values would then help in the creation of graphs for the visual analysis of each indicator.

3.2.10 Housekeeping Validation

The housekeeping validation was one of the first processes that was explained to the intern. This was due to the unreliable service that the cleaning teams would sometimes provide, and this needed to be a focal point of each day during the internship.

As mentioned previously in this report, validation of the cleanliness of the apartments was necessary as this was one of the most recurring issues on the reviews left by the guests at Tripas-Coração.

I was tasked with this in the beginning of the internship as all other members of the company. The validation would take between fifteen to twenty minutes and there needed to be a minimum of requirements for the apartment to be considered clean.

Apart from cleaning aspects, I would also have to check if the amenities and the welcome packs that were left in the apartments were replenished and in place. The amenities included things like toilet paper, kitchen paper, shower gel and shampoo. The welcome pack by Tripas-Coração was always displayed on a little tray and included a small bottle of Port wine, a small bottle of water, tea bags and four capsules of coffee.

Having said this, here is a list of the things that needed to be validated before deeming the apartment appropriately clean and ready for the next customer:

- **Kitchen:** Understand if all the appliances, plates, utensils, and countertops were clean and verify if everything was refilled.
- **Bathroom:** Check if the shower base was clean, verify if dispensers were full and see if the due rolls of toilet paper were in place.
- **Living room:** See if anything was left between sofa pillows.
- **Bedroom:** Check pillows and towels for hairs and stains.

Apart from the individual divisions, on a more general note, there was a need to look for dust, hairs that were left on the ground and check if all amenities and the welcome pack were in place.

If all the things were in place, and the guest going to the apartment requested an earlier check-in, I would send a message to inform that they could already enter the apartment with no further disruptions. If the apartment lacked in cleanliness or if it lacked any of the replenishable items, the cleaning service was called again to the site to correct the details that were lacking.

Therefore, housekeeping validation was an important process inside the company, as it had direct impact on guests.

3.2.11 Check-ins

Check-ins were a process conducted at least once a day. As explained earlier in the report, most of the check-ins at Tripas-Coração were self-check-ins performed by the guests themselves. However, there were some exceptions to this.

One of the exceptions was when the guests specifically asked for a presential check-in and one of the members of the team would go and welcome them. This would then lead to the employee helping them get to the apartment with luggage and showing them around the apartment. This would also involve giving them some recommendations like restaurants, supermarkets, and bars.

Another exception to self-check-ins were the check-ins performed in the apartments at Santa Catarina. As these units were positioned to be as more luxurious than the others at Tripas-Coração, the company required a more personal touch.

3.2.12 Check-in Sheet

At the later phases of the internship, I was tasked with updating the check-in sheets of all 33 apartments. The check-in sheet was an informative text left in all the apartments so when the guests would check-in, they knew about certain specificities of the apartment.

These specificities would be to explain how the welcome pack worked at Tripas-Coração and that it was free of charge, as many guests would ask for this information after checking out.

Apart from this, this sheet also informed the clients to fill the aforementioned SEF sheet that was required. Also, it would inform about the existing Wine Bar in each apartment and acknowledge that these wines were not part of the welcome pack and needed to be charged after the stay.

Then, at the end, the sheet had the Wi-Fi information, which needed to be updated and the necessary contacts to reach Tripas-Coração. The existing information of the existing sheets was outdated and needed an overall revamp.

I synthesized the information that was already available to the guests and put it in a more friendly format, while also taking care of the graphical aspects. One of the things that I was tasked with at the same time, was to establish a new system for the Wi-Fi networks of each apartment.

This would lead to the creation of an Excel file containing all new network names and passwords. This information would then be written on the new check-in sheets and the router configuration for every apartment would also be changed as soon as it was possible. An example of this informative sheet can be seen in [Appendix IX](#).

3.2.13 Review Management

Review management was an important process at Tripas-Coração. This was the most direct feedback that guests would leave for their overall stays and these reviews would be public for potential guests to see.

The reviews were analysed for AirBnb and Booking by building and apartment and would be compiled for a monthly basis. The information compiled from the reviews would be the “stars” or the grade that the guest would leave, and the comment left with this classification.

For AirBnb, the review had a total of six specific parameters that would lead to an average amount of stars. These parameters were related to the precision of the advert, which included photos and the descriptions; a score for the check-in procedure; a grade for the overall cleanliness of the unit the guests were staying in; the communication aspects which included availability and the average time of response; the location; and the quality-price relation according to the notions of the guest.

These six parameters were measured by the guests from one to five stars, and they were essential for anyone at the company to understand what was good and what needed

to be enhanced or altered. If the score of any of the reviews left would be less than an overall five star, anyone at the company would try to understand what happened during the stay and what could be done to mitigate these issues in the future.

The Booking reviews were different from the AirBnb reviews, but they followed a similar structure for guests to leave their thoughts about their stay. Like AirBnb reviews, Booking reviews had a comment section followed by six parameters also. These parameters were the cleanliness of the space; the location; a score for the employees; the comfortableness of the apartment; the available commodities nearby and the quality-price relation according to the notions of the guest.

Similar to the procedure with AirBnb reviews, these scores would be from one to ten, and guests would leave their scores according to their experience. If the overall score would be less than a nine, then it would be normal for anyone of the Tripas-Coração team to try and talk with the guests to understand what went wrong and what could be done to optimise a future stay with Tripas-Coração.

Apart from this, from the reviews left on both platforms, one of the parameters shared, the one related to cleaning, was more thoroughly analysed. This was due to the aforementioned issues that could sometimes be found in the apartments that needed to be taken care of. I would compile these scores for the apartments to talk with the different cleaning services. This was done to give them an idea of how their cleaning was felt by the customers and what could be done better in the future.

CHAPTER IV – THE DEGREE AND THE INTERNSHIP

This chapter will offer an assessment of the overall experience of the internship. This will start with the evaluation of its success and the achieving of the goals previously established. Also, there will be a connection with the master's degree and how it influenced and helped during the internship, while also making a recap of the master's degree itself. Finally, there will be a brief consideration of future projects and how this experience has impacted this outlook.

4.1 Analysing the Internship

This internship was a great opportunity for me to understand how a smaller scale tourism company works and the specificities that go into it on an internal and external level. It was also gratifying to know that the work that was developed, all throughout the six months spent at the company, helped in the developing of new processes and the firmer establishment of existing ones.

This development was also acknowledged by the completion of the objectives that were set even before the internship started. As presented previously, these were the goals that the internship had:

- Have the vision of the company profile
- Acquire knowledge about booking management
- Get a better sense of communicating with guests in intercultural environments
- Acquire knowledge in managing back-office processes and stock management
- Creation of new business opportunities

On a general basis, these aims were met with success and, as these objectives could vary with the needs of the company and the intern, more aims were established along the internship.

To better understand the degree in which these aims were explored and developed, they are going to be framed one by one to be framed in a better context. I believe that the first aim of having the vision of the company profile was met with great success. It was due to the understanding of the operations necessary in a small tourism company that this was achieved and the feeling of belonging and cooperation at Tripas-Coração.

This also helped in the second objective of acquiring knowledge about booking management. It truly is harder than it looks like from the outside, but the consistent

managing and organization of check-ins and check-outs with guests and cleaning services really helped in the understanding of a booking process.

Communication with guests of intercultural environments is where the biggest advance happened for me, as, tendentially, I am a shy person with little impact on conversations with new persons. However, during the internship, having to exit the comfort zone really helped me in developing communication skills, both with fellow colleagues at Tripas-Coração, and guests from different backgrounds. This applies to speaking and writing, mainly, in English and Spanish, as these were the languages that the intern knew beforehand, and a clear improvement was noticed by using these languages on a day-to-day basis.

The fourth aim of acquiring knowledge in managing back-office processes and stock management was also met quite successfully, more on the back-office processes than stock related interventions. The back-office was the backbone for the whole operation. It was something that was worked on every day at any given time, which gave me the knowledge of the overall operation. As previously mentioned, I had the opportunity to be involved in the invoicing, the city tax declaration, or the development of financial reports, which also helped me in the understanding of the more economic sense of Tripas-Coração. Stock management was a little bit harder to manage as the stocks available were intangible and tangible. The intangible ones are related to the booking part of the operation and was already managed when managing guests. The tangible part was more related with the ordering and transporting of amenities and laundry. Regarding this part, there weren't many opportunities to participate in this management of stocks and, unfortunately, it was not explored as much.

As for the fifth goal of creating new business opportunities, this was the one where the opportunities for me lacked the most. As the three new units that were registered during the internship were already arranged at the time, and new partnerships had to go through a bigger scrutiny, I did not have the chance to explore this field, even though it would have been a valid area of development.

Besides the aims mentioned above, intermediate goals were set both by the company and me to improve several aspects. These objectives were more task related, like the automatization of messages, or achieving a higher conversion rate for inquiries,

but it helped me in the organisation of my schedule and the overall organisation of the company.

In a general view, the internship was a fantastic opportunity for me to develop on a professional and personal level and overcome smaller and bigger barriers. It was all worth it and that it was beneficial both for the company and me. However, this does not mean that there were no hardships along the way that made specific processes more cumbersome than others, but it was during these periods that the most development was felt. It was during these times that growth in processes, the company and me happened.

Regarding the tasks performed, with the updating of the more technological aspects and helping with all other aspects at the company, I believe that the work done will go a long way in the company and will help in the future.

4.2 The Master's Degree and its influence on the Internship

Taking in consideration that the curricular aspects of the master's influenced the choice of company for the internship, it is important to relate these two aspects. First of all, the degree in Intercultural Studies for Business opened a new array of ways of thinking since the very beginning. Having courses like German, English and Mandarin Culture is relevant for the creation of notions of multiculturalism and how to deal with the various aspects that a new culture may bring. In this cultural sense, the master's degree is truly developed, and it makes sense for the current globalised society.

Having studied all of these cultures, using English as a primary language, and having the opportunity to gain experience in the basics of Mandarin, in my case, has made me understand that there is much more to interculturalism than the coexistence of different cultures at the same time. This idea is fomented in the degree until the end, and it really helps understand the dynamics of culture and to understand other peoples and their points of view. This understanding and openness helps in the opening of new opportunities and new challenges which might have never been so easily achieved if not for the master's and its structure.

It is also through the teaching of cultures and its specificities that it is possible to interact with people from different background in a "correct" manner. This knowledge is really important for the adaptability to new contexts and the creation of new intercultural and international relations. This can lead to better business opportunities, better jobs and,

overall, better understanding among peoples. This comes at a crucial time when fluxes of vastly different people come and go in every single nation.

Even though the cultural aspects of the master's degree are well developed and ingrained in the curriculum, the business part might be a bit lacking. Even though notions of micro and macro economy are given, there should be something else to it to compliment with the needs of a company. This would mean a slight detour to financial aspects like reports and data analysis that can be helpful in any field.

Relating the master's to the internship and acknowledging the context of constant contact with people from different countries, it is possible to say that the structure of the degree truly helped in a real-world context. All the cultural notions were there to understand a different person and their motivations. This was crucial at times when considering that each person, even from the same country of origin or the same culture can be driven by completely different motives. Taking this into consideration, one must adapt themselves to each situation and analyse their options and the contexts that exist.

As said previously, even though the more business and financial parts of the master's degree are not as developed as the cultural one, they also helped when aiding in the development of financial reports and understanding what all the numbers meant in the end.

In a more general tone, the master's degree matched my expectations from the beginning and the knowledge received all throughout really helped in achieving a positive result from the internship. This sense of achievement and of opening of new opportunities would have not been possible if not for the master's degree and its structure.

4.3 Future Aspirations

Regarding the future, it is something that is really hard to decipher and predict, but I intend to keep working in the field of study of the master's degree. It was through the internship that I was able to understand that to speak with people from diverse backgrounds and establishing relations is one of my passions and that it is something that I want to pursue in the near future.

Unfortunately, in this near future, the field of tourism, my bachelor's background, will not be followed as was planned. Even though this is the plan for now, it is in no way

and impediment to work in the area, but as of recent, the existing opportunities are not what I expected when accessing the bachelor's degree.

It would be of interest to work in an area where there is constant contact with people of diverse backgrounds and enable business opportunities. This is more in line with the master's degree and with the newfound passion that awoke in the midst of the internship, while dealing with different contexts.

Having said this, it is important to explain that this opportunity only exists because of the master's degree and that it has opened new horizons. Even though I come from a very multicultural background myself, I would have never imagined the number of new paths that have been presented in the last year. This was only possible due to the knowledge and the practices transmitted along the master's degree and I can only be thankful for all the people that helped shaping it this way.

Culture is an integral part of everyone's lives. It is through and with culture that people express themselves on a daily basis, sometimes without noticing. And even though the concept of culture is sometimes restricted to the fine arts, it is important to acknowledge that culture is much more than just punctual expressions of art. Culture needs to be seen as something that can be defining in many diverse ways and that impacts each person differently.

This promotion of culture, nowadays, is mostly used for touristic purposes. This can have negative effects for the identification of the culture, as images and symbols can become more banal and lose their original meanings. However, with careful consideration and with sustainable development of the culture through tourism related activities, something greater can be achieved.

Tourism has been a major player in the economies of most of the countries in the world. Also, tourism cannot exist without culture attached to it. In this sense, tourism is quite unique, in the way that it can combine business and cultural aspects in the same space.

There are also other things that should be acknowledged when talking about tourism, which is its connection to technology. Even though the act of being a tourist is mostly an analogic process, the preparation phases and sometimes even when in a new place, people tend more and more to resort to technology. Online reservation platforms are the main proof of this, as manual reservations are less frequently used and almost obsolete in some types of accommodation.

During the internship at Tripas-Coração, it was possible to understand these dynamics between tourism and culture, and how they can generate business. Moreover, during the internship, having this more practical side to it, it was greatly beneficial for the assimilation of concepts that were lectured in the master's degree and during previous phases of education.

It was also during this stage that it was possible to understand the impact of the pandemic in the touristic sector. At the beginning of the internship, there were already signs that Tripas-Coração would be facing a year that would be more economically sound and with more arrivals than ever. This showed how much a sector can change over a year and how volatile some aspects in business can be.

Also, the internship allowed for the development of many different aspects in the intern, be them personal or professional. This was because of the constant challenge of being outside the comfort zone and by facing new tasks every day. It was through this process that growth could be achieved, and it was truly a great opportunity to understand how the professional world works.

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Appendix I – Tripas-Coração Reservations

Nationalities	Number of Reservations	%
United States	288	24,55%
United Kingdom	183	15,60%
Germany	122	10,40%
France	83	7,08%
Spain	80	6,82%
Canada	65	5,54%
The Netherlands	53	4,52%
Switzerland	39	3,32%
Brazil	26	2,22%
Australia	24	2,05%
Portugal	19	1,62%
Belgium	18	1,53%
South Korea	17	1,45%
Italy	15	1,28%
Israel	13	1,11%
Austria	11	0,94%
Poland	11	0,94%
Denmark	10	0,85%
Ireland	7	0,60%
Estonia	7	0,60%
Slovakia	7	0,60%
Finland	6	0,51%
Singapore	6	0,51%
Sweden	6	0,51%
New Zealand	5	0,43%
Mexico	5	0,43%
Ukraine	4	0,34%
South Africa	4	0,34%
Norway	3	0,26%
Turkey	3	0,26%
Colombia	3	0,26%
China	3	0,26%
Argentina	3	0,26%
Thailand	3	0,26%
Slovenia	3	0,26%
India	3	0,26%
Saudi Arabia	2	0,17%
Russia	2	0,17%
Czech Republic	2	0,17%
Georgia	2	0,17%
Romania	2	0,17%
Chile	1	0,09%
Serbia	1	0,09%
Greece	1	0,09%
Luxembourg	1	0,09%
Malta	1	0,09%
Total	1173	

Appendix II – Welcome Message

Dear (guest's first name),

Welcome to our apartment! :)

Detailed apartment address: (Address of the apartment)

In order to prepare for your arrival, could you kindly provide us some additional information (estimated time of arrival and guest registration details) by filling the form below?

(Link to a google forms where pertinent information is asked)

How to get to the apartment:

(Link to a google document with different means of transportation for the guest to get to the apartment. This link would change according to the apartment that the guest had booked.)

If you are looking for a more personal touch on how to get to the apartment you can consider our airport transfer service partner:

(Link to a partner transfer service)

If you need any additional information, suggestion or recommendation don't hesitate to contact us.

Looking forward to host you in our apartment.

Kind regards,

Tripas-Coração Team

Appendix III – ETA Message

Dear (guest's first name),

In order to have everything ready for your stay, could you kindly provide us your estimated arrival time to the apartment?

If you have also not filled our registration form yet, we kindly ask you to complete it through this link:

(Link to a google forms where pertinent information is asked)

(If you have already given us your ETA or if you have already completed the registration form, we ask you to ignore this message.)

Thank you in advance,

Tripas-Coração Team

Appendix IV – Self check-in Message

Dear (guest's first name),

We normally prefer to welcome our guests face to face, but we kindly ask you to use our self-check-in instructions to access the apartment. Check-in will be available from 3pm onwards.

Our self-check-in system is easy to use, but, if you need anything, we'll be available to assist you.

How to get to the apartment

(Link to a google document with different means of transportation for the guest to get to the apartment. This link would change according to the apartment that the guest had booked.)

If you are looking for a more personal touch on how to get to the apartment you can consider our airport transfer service partner:

(Link to a partner transfer service)

Here are the self-check-in instructions:

Apartment Address: (Address of the apartment)

Best reference: next to (store name) on the left side, and (store name) on the right side.

To enter the building use the code, (code) and push the door.

Your apartment door is the door on your right on the first floor.

Next to the apartment door you'll see a box on the wall. Inside there's a safe box with the apartment keys inside.

Insert code (code) and to open press the 2 side buttons.

Apartment Key: silver key

Front door building: blue key

When opening the apartment door, pull the door while turning the key, just a little so you can open it easily.

Let us know if you need further information prior to your arrival.

If you need any assistance, you can reach us through this message box or call us at (phone number)

We hope this is ok with you and please confirm you saw this message. Thank you :)

Kind regards,

(name of the member of the team)

Tripas-Coração Team

Appendix V – Checking Message

Dear (guest's first name),

We hope that you have settled in all right and that you are enjoying your stay.

Please let us know if there is anything you need or if we can assist you in any way.

Kind regards,

Tripas-Coração Team

Appendix VI – Self check-out Message

Dear (guest's first name),

We hope that you are enjoying your stay.

Sadly, tomorrow is your last day with Tripas-Coração.

We really hope you had a wonderful time in Porto and that next time you are around you remember us!

Just a couple of notes regarding the checkout procedure:

- Checkout is until 12.00 (unless we have confirmed a different checkout time in advance)

- If you are checking out before 12.00 you would be a star if you could tell us at what time you are leaving – this makes a real difference for us to be able to potentially provide an earlier check-in to other guests: today it's them, tomorrow it's you!

- Leave the keys inside the safe box.

- Check that no belongings are left behind.

- If you had any wines, please leave the amount on the wooden box.

- Turn off all appliances/lights and close the door when you leave.

If you need a transfer service, we suggest our transfer partner service:

(Link to a partner transfer service)

Please let us know if there is anything you need or if we can assist you in any way.

Always here to help,

Tripas-Coração Team

Appendix VII – Farewell Message

Dear (guest's first name),

Thank you for your message :)

We hope we have given you an excellent place to stay and that you have had a great experience in our city. You are always welcome to stay with us again and we hope to see you soon!

If you have any other questions, please let us know.

Kind regards,

(team member's first name)

Tripas-Coração Team

Appendix VIII – Review Message

Dear (guest's first name),

We truly hope you had a wonderful time and have felt at home!

If you enjoyed your stay, we'd like to kindly ask you to please leave us a review at your earliest convenience.

Could you also copy & paste your review and send it to our Google page?

(link of the review page)

We would be thrilled and thankful :)

We hope to have the pleasure of hosting you again in the future.

All our best,

Tripas-Coração Team

Appendix IX – Check-in Sheet



Olá! Welcome home!

We are truly excited to host you in our apartment! Here you have some useful information about your home in Porto for the next days:

Welcome package – a little gift from us to you 😊

On the table you have our welcome package with coffee, tea, Port Wine, and a bottle of water. Please leave the empty bottle in the counter for us to recycle it.

SEF Form

You will find the SEF form which needs to be filled (if you haven't filled the registration form). This information is required by law, and we must submit it to the border and foreigners service, so we kindly ask you to fill it. Thank you!

Wine Bar

We have a Wine Bar at your disposal with a selection of Portuguese wines for you to enjoy. You can find the price marked in the bottle and you may leave the amount in the wooden box next to it.

Wi-Fi

Network name: TripasTaipasRC

Wi-Fi Password: Trip@sTaipRC!

Our Contacts

If you have any questions, feel free to contact us through your reservation platform. If you have an emergency, please call us on +351 962 708 740.

Please keep in mind that: from 10am till 10pm we are always available, from 10pm till 10pm we are available for emergency situations only.

We wish you a wonderful stay in Porto!

Tripas-Coração Team

 @tripas_coracao_porto

 www.tripas-coracao.pt

 ola@tripas-coracao.pt

