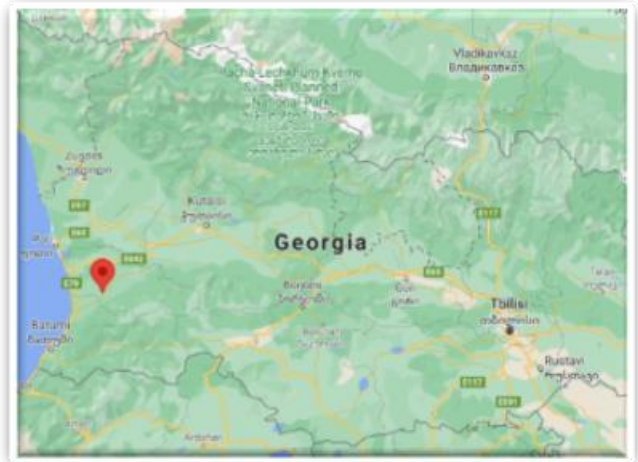




KOMLI

Location: Georgia/Guria,
Ozurgeti

Key words: agritourism farm, culinary offers,
cultural tours



Agro-tourism guesthouse "Komli" is arranged with original and ethnographic elements. The family owns up to 1 ha of land with residential area of 100 square meters. Kvevri wine and tea, as well as vegetables, nuts and jams are produced in "Komli" for visitors and for own consumption. Creativity and individualism of the family are felt. They created glamorous camping (glamping) in "Komli" - a barrel shape bedroom, an old granary was transformed into a cottage. They started to build a hobbit house with the ground architecture. To realize new ideas, the family plans to arrange a summer kitchen, additional bedroom-barrels and tree houses. The head of the family, Mrs. Mery, has a long experience of working at the Scientific-Research Institute of Anaseuli Tea and Subtropical Cultures. She managed to restore the forgotten tea culture in "Komli" and integrate it into touristic offers. The approach of "Komli" hosts is a good example of filling and using the space with new ideas.

The history of "Komli" is about daring and creative women. According to the host, during the Soviet period, when the Scientific-Research Institute of Anaseuli Tea and Subtropical Cultures was of the USSR-wide importance, Ozurgeti was a typical academic town with several scientific buildings, house of culture, shops and dormitories, where post-graduate students from all parts of the world, mostly from Sri Lanka and India used to arrive to study the tea culture.

Initially, the business idea of the Tea Route came to mind of the American son-in-law of the family. He learnt about the history of the tea culture in Georgia (the date of its origination is considered to be the year 1847) from the head of the family. Thereafter, he personally found additional information about the tea tradition and started thinking about its restoration. Mrs. Mery was pessimistic about this idea and did not believe in restoration of this culture and especially, starting the business. According to the family members, the "dream" of the American son-in-law came true ten years later when Guria Municipal and EU Project "Participatory Principles in Development of Tourism in Guria" was launched. The family won a small grant within the framework of this project and started to arrange the Tea Route and Tea Tour.

The hosts say that receipt of tourists is not their end in itself. They want to restore the former appearance of their household. First of all, they want to restore the initial appearance of the wine-cellar and grow a vineyard to produce collection wines. They have a small collection of unique Gurian grape species yet: Kamuri, Sakmiela, Badagi, Mtevandidi. But the vineyard is too young yet, so they purchased grapes and made wine for the first time after so many years. Meanwhile, they created a logotype of "Komli" and bottled the wine - 400 bottles in total. Out of these, they exported 252 bottles to the USA.



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Marketing approach

The family uses personal contacts - friends and acquaintances, social network, as well as Airbnb, Booking, TripAdvisor platforms to sell their product. They have a webpage - <http://komligeorgia.tilda.ws>. "Komli" is a member of agro-tourism network and will use this platform in the future.

One of the most emotional stories told by the family is related to the life of ancestors of the hostess, namely, their political imprisonment and the period of their participation in World War II. This makes the political-historic events of the country clear. Visitors view the historic photos and the old letters (some of them were transformed into cards and the visitors may take them in memory).

Success factors and challenges

According to the hostess, the main idea is to feel harmony with the nature and create a space for happiness and cognition, be able to share the cultural traditions to others in a new way.

Diversity and traditions are the main resources of the

family; however, the key to success is the creativity of this hostess and her own interpretation of the product. The family found the history of the Georgian tea. For example, the visitors are told about Lao Jonjao who was the largest project according to the family. After the hostess shares the history of tea to the visitors, she takes them to the tea plantation, teaches them how to collect tea and thereafter the visitors taste the tea collected on their own. The visitors return with fantastic emotions and continue to communicate with the family. The received impressions push them to new things and inspiration.

Plans for the future development

Hosts of "Komli" have ambitious plans - to continue export and supply Washington restaurant. The organization tries to expand the community-based activities and therefore, enhance communication with people engaged in the community, motivation and activation of the team.

The village faces the problem of irrigation. The region is abounding in water, but they still have a problem

with water. Currently, they are using a well, but the well dries up during the draught and is not enough for large consumption. There is a large water supply pipe on the main road of the village which supplies Ozurgeti but it is an expensive project and the families could not afford using this pipe.

They want to use Kikvata River for irrigation and not have to irrigate with artesian water. Finally, they want to make all this as dynamic as an eco-village - do everything as it was two centuries ago, but now with modern knowledge and approach.

The central sewage system is also problematic. In the modern conditions, soil and waters are contaminated with household waste. The knowledge of composting is lost. "Komli" already has a properly functioning septic system with the support of the UN Women's Fund Project, an initiative group of women living in rural areas was created for raising awareness about the need and usage of the septic toilet and responsibility in general. The family also plans to use the solar energy resources to the maximum extent possible.



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GALLERY:



Source of the images: <http://komligeorgia.tilda.ws>



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