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1. Background and specific business of the chosen company

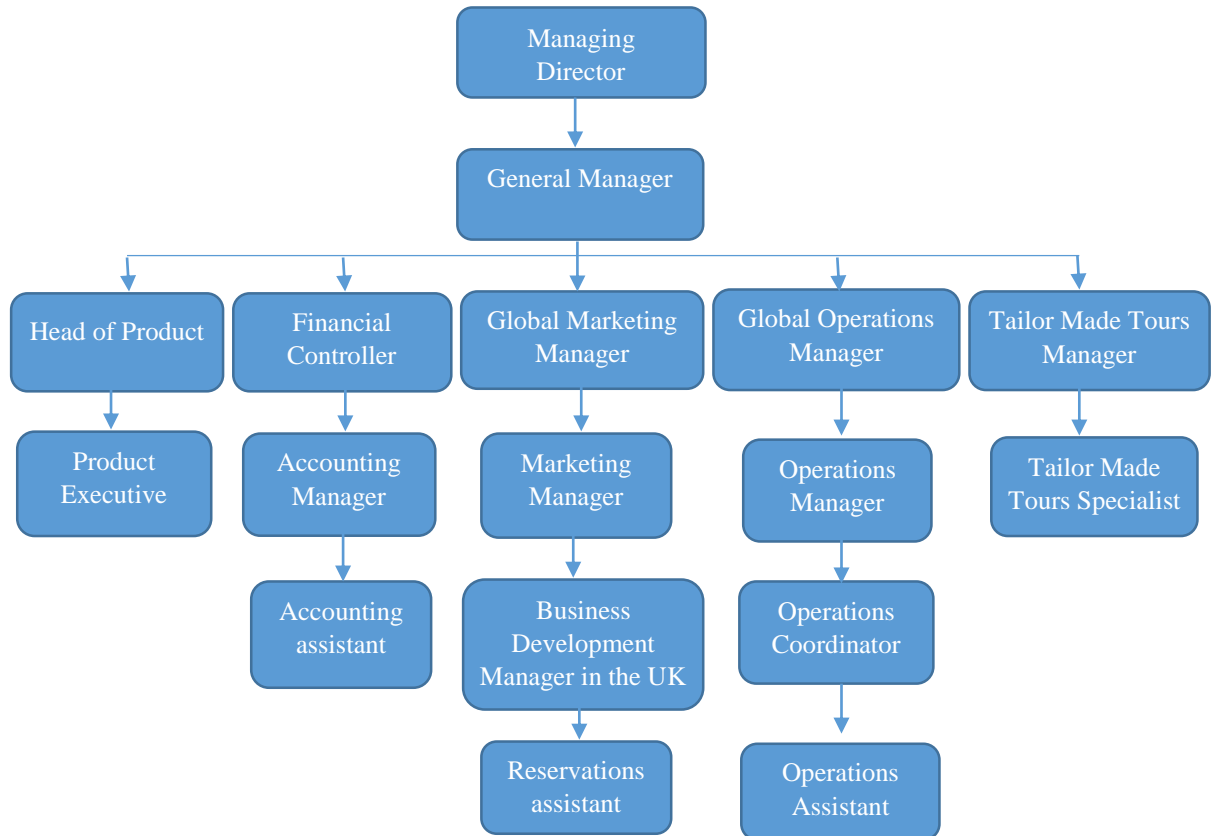
1.1. Back Roads Touring and traineeship

Back-Roads Touring Ltd. (www.backroadstouring.com) is a tour operator with the head office based in west London where this research took place. The company has an office in Brisbane (Australia) and partner with DH Travel, a Canadian wholesaler.

Most of the sales comes through the travel agencies and wholesalers rather than from direct clients. This is partly due to the fact that the company has a very good links with the most important travel agencies in the area. This has mostly been achieved through having BDM (business development managers) who basically go to the travel agents and wholesalers promoting the company's tours. Back- Roads Touring has one BDM in New Zealand, 5 BDM in Australia which are divided by the geographical regions, one in the USA and one is in the UK. As a result, the company is mostly known in Australia and New Zealand as such most of the sales come from that region.

The company has started as a small tour operator 26 years ago. It has grown into a medium size tour operator which carries approximately 8000 passengers per year and the head office team structure is represented in Figure 1. The owner and director of the company, James Nathan who owned the largest number of shares of the company, has recently resigned and sold most of his shares (having just a minor number of shares left to himself) to the Flight Centre - the biggest Australian tour operator. Thus the company is expected to steadily grow in the next 5 years. There are plans of expanding the product range and enter New Zealand and Canada markets.

Figure 1: Back- Roads Touring head office (London) team structure



Note: BDMs, reservations' team in Australia and BDM in the USA is not represented in the scheme.

Source: Author

The company offers small group tours with a specialized tour leader /and a driver (up to 18 passengers) in a mini-coach along the back roads in Europe and there is a new tour going to Morocco (Africa) which came only this year. All the tours are offered only in English language, thus targeting only English speaking countries.

In 2016 season, there were 52 tours in total which were divided into summer tours, winter tours, barge tours and battlefield tours (especially focusing on Commonwealth participation in the WWI and WWII). The biggest number of tours (40 tours) operate in summer period, which is called the high season (April to October). The most popular

tours are the ones that have the biggest number of departure dates in a season. Thus, the biggest sellers are tours in Italy, England, Ireland and France. Private tours are available all year round upon request, however they are usually more expensive than scheduled tours.

Each tour has to comply with the key aspects which sets the company apart (Table 1).


Table 1: *Key aspects of a Back-Roads Tour*

<i>Travel in a mini-coach avoiding the highways and going along the back roads where the big coaches could not enter.</i>
<i>Small groups (up to 18 passengers)</i> Note: On barge tours there is a maximum of 22 passengers as it is the full capacity of a barge
<i>Charming accommodation, trying to avoid big chain hotels, rather choosing 3-4 star small scale boutique hotels with a local character</i>
<i>Authentic local experiences</i>
<i>Culinary experiences</i>
<i>Leisurely paced (not driving for longer than 4-5 hours per day, starting at around 9am and ending at around 5pm)</i>

Source: Back-Roads Touring website

Besides these key aspects the company has a full website page dedicated to sustainable tourism practices that a company engages in (Appendix 1). As well, it has won a Green Silver award for a business scheme and the criteria for the Silver classification may be seen on Table 2.

Table 2: Green Tourism Silver criteria

<p style="text-align: center;">Silver – Progressive, Excellent</p> <p style="text-align: center;"></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Shares its values in going green to both staff and customers• Significant use of recycled products as well as recycling to close the loop• Sources supplies from ethical and/or local area extensively and is working to green its whole supply chain• Energy and water efficiency are key issues. Evidence of heating and lighting changes to become more efficient• Monitoring of resource use such as energy, water and waste is helping to deliver significant changes.
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Source: www.green-tourism.com

A medium tour length is a week, however the battlefield tours are usually shorter and last for 3 days. A tour price varies from 500-4000 British Pounds per person and it falls within a higher market tours. The price usually includes a tour leader/and a driver for the whole tour, a vehicle, accommodation in 3-4 star hotels with breakfast, couple dinners, some attractions and entrance fees (e.g. a wine tasting, a cooking class, a guided museum visit, a castle entrance fee, a lake cruise, a church visit).

The company has 9, 16 and a 19 seater mini-coaches that are based mainly in London and Amsterdam. The smaller 9 seater is used for the tours that do not fill all the available spaces. Thus, most of the tours that travel in the UK and partially France use company's coaches. DMC's (Destination Management Company) and/or local coach companies are used in other parts of Europe. Tours usually start from the main cities like London, Rome, and Barcelona as they offer good air connections and usually end in the same city. It is

important to note that most of the clients come on long haul flights to Europe and quite often also travel on short haul flights to get to the starting point of a tour.

The majority of the clients come from Australia and New Zealand followed by Americans, Canadians and quite few British. Most of the clients are retired and the tours are not promoted for families with young kids. Single travelers are welcome and if there is a group of 6 passengers then there is a suggestion to book a private tour instead. This is in order to guaranty the equal cohesion of a group which is a very important aspect of a tour (Table 1).

1.2. Trainee's role in the company

The trainee and author of this report was employed on a full time basis as a tailor made tours specialist (in tailor made tours department directly responsible to tailor made tours manager) at the company's head office in West London since May 2015. Simultaneously the author was a student on the second year of Master's in Sustainable Tourism Management. After getting to know better the company and the role, the trainee has decided to conduct a research at the company. The company practiced some sustainable principles which the trainee found particularly interesting, especially looking at the effect they had on its clients. The traineeship took place from October 2015 until September 2016.

The role duty was to deal with private tours from the start until the end. This included dealing with potential clients and drafting / creating private tour itineraries, doing budgets, once the tour was confirmed then booking accommodation, attractions, preparing tour leaders for the tour, sending and checking invoices, doing cash floats of the tour and dealing with the last minute changes. All the private tours have to comply with the key aspects of the company.

1.3. Research topic justification

The research topic was chosen for a number of reasons. First of all, the company currently uses a questionnaire (Appendix 2) which mainly evaluates the success of a specific tour. The biggest focus is on accommodation, tour leader and overall tour satisfaction. The

provided information is firstly used to grade the tour leaders' performance and their payment depends of the rate they get. Secondly, it acts as a main justification to change hotels (if there are some unsatisfactory feedback), attractions and overall tour experience (to add extra day, exclude a destination in order to make it more leisurely paced). The changes may not be implemented immediately as this varies depending on the possibilities at a given moment.

The trainee felt that the current questionnaire focuses too much on a particular tour (does not try to understand its clients better), also on emerging trends and general experience with Back-Roads Touring given the fact that the company has a lot of returning clients. Furthermore, it was important to understand if the clients are seeking for more sustainable tourism practices than they currently are being offered to. The company is not promoted as a pro-sustainable tourism follower, although, the key aspects of each tour have a lot of sustainable tourism influences (such as small groups, mini-coach, back-roads not freeways, food experiences, etc.), thus it would be interesting to find out the importance of sustainable tourism practices to the clients. This is especially valuable to find out as the company is growing and the sort of changes it needs in order to meet the future clients' expectations and stay competitive in the rapidly changing market.

Moreover, the trainee felt the need to evaluate a Back-Roads tour in order to understand its positive and negative impacts throughout major states of a tour (pre tour, on tour, after tour). Fisher's (2014:80) trip evaluation schema was used as a basis, as it offered a simplified overview of a given trip's negative and positive impacts on environment, society and economics, which could be easily evaluated. Fisher's (2014) evaluation scheme comprises of 10 items (divided into environmental, social and economic impacts) which are evaluated on a scale from 1-5, where 1 represents the most unsustainable option and 5- the most sustainable option (Table 3).

Table 3: *Back Roads tour using Fischer's (2014) evaluation schema*

Impact: high - low	1	2	3	4	5
Journey to/from destination: long distance - short distance Fisher's proposed categories	Intercontinental flight (distance >3000km), often with one or more stop-overs	Intermediate flight (distance 500 to 3000km), usually with a continent, without stop-overs, or a long haul trip using an uneconomic car	Long-haul car trip (distance 2000km or more)	Long-haul trip by train, or short-haul car trip	Short-haul trip by train and /or other local transport systems, or bicycle
Where Back-Roads Touring stands in	Long haul flight to get to Europe and usually a short haul flight to get to a starting point of a tour				
Travel at the destination : highly - little energy consuming Fisher's proposed categories	Using fuel-guzzling vehicles (e.g. cross country vehicles, motorbikes, quads, motorboats), usually not with the aim of reaching another place but for having fun	Using vehicles like convertibles, motorbikes or quads for the pleasure of driving, but also as a means of transport	Renting car(if arriving by air) similar to the one at home with the purpose of visiting natural, cultural or recreational attractions, or using own car at the destination	Renting a small, economical car (if arriving by air) with the purpose of visiting natural, cultural or recreational attractions, or using own car for exploring the vicinity	Mainly walking, hiking and riding a bicycle, occasional use of buses and other local transport systems in order to reach interesting places
Where Back-Roads Touring stands in				Travel by mini-coach not longer than 4 hours per day along the back	
Accommodation: comfort high - low, owner's external – local	First class holiday resort with swimming pools,	High standard hotels or resorts, in urbanized	Private owned big hotels and /or restaurants,	Private owned small hotels, guesthouses, or cottages	Tents, cabins, research stations

Fisher's proposed categories	international restaurants and international food, bars, shopping center, sometimes with a casino, often conceived as isolated unit enormous quantities of energy and water producing a lot of waste	tourism destinations with restaurants, discos and shopping centers, or large recreational vehicle	or small caravan	managed by locals	
Where Back-Roads Touring stands in				Small scale boutique hotels, usually up to 70 rooms, 3-4 stars	
Authenticity: not important - important Fisher's proposed categories	Same comfort, food, drinks, and music as at home, or higher comfort, more food and especially more beer/drinks than at home, local food, spices, music and culture is of no interest, and neither is the landscape, as long as there is sea, sun and sand	Similar comfort as home (or better), partial interest in folklore, whale-watching, a trip by cable car to the top of nearby mountain	Enjoying the local culture and tradition, local food, history and buildings, interest in how people live at the destination	Interest in local food, visits to museums or natural history and on the culture of the visited area, reading books about the destination and enjoying the landscape	Wilderness, or living with or in ways the locals do or did
Where Back-Roads Touring stands in			Food and local authentic experiences are included in each tour, but there is time to explore things on your own too		

<p>Activities: artificial - nature based</p> <p>Fisher's proposed categories</p>	<p>Events and fun: visiting discos, dance parties, entertainment, fun parks , and other events with no relation to the destination's culture and tradition, driving high speed cars, motorbikes, quads or motorboats, not leaving the resort for the entire duration of the holiday, maybe with the exception of a few hour's safari</p>	<p>Doing sports that requires, e.g. physical strength (i.e. cross country cycling, cross-country skiing, or paragliding), spending the evenings with dinners and discos</p>	<p>Leaning (a little) about the nature and/or culture of the destination by visiting natural and cultural highlights, but also swimming, sun-bathing and relaxing</p>	<p>Hiking, swimming, visiting museums, mountain climbing, and –among other things – sunbathing</p>	<p>Long distance hiking, staying overnight in the wilderness, watching or studying animals, taking pictures, learning about local nature and culture</p>
<p>Where Back-Roads Touring stands in</p>			<p>Some visits to important parks/palaces/castles is organized as well as local guides in some places</p>		
<p>Impact on ecosystems at the destination: high – low</p> <p>Fisher's proposed categories</p>	<p>Hotel resorts built on the best beaches (best for tourist), not respecting requirements of the nature (e.g. destroying important breeding places for sea turtles), high water consumption, often in dry areas, resorts and access roads intersecting or totally destroying natural</p>	<p>Existing settlement enlarged for tourists, energy-saving infrastructure, but nevertheless destruction of the local environment close to the tourist center</p>	<p>Medium-sized hotels with moderate road access, need of children's paddling pools, hiking on trails or roads, moderate soil erosion on mountain tops, where many people stay on unpaved ground</p>	<p>Small roads only, causing little soil erosion, staying on hiking trails</p>	<p>Staying outside, sleeping in cabins, no littering, no collecting or rare and/or endangered plants, no disturbance or feeding of wildlife</p>

	ecosystems, production of large quantities of waste, airport and access roads close to the tourist center				
Where Back-Roads Touring stands in			Medium sized hotels, combining popular tourists destinations with lesser known rural places		
Protection activities (indirectly/directly) supported: no - yes Fisher's proposed categories	No support of protection measures in the region	Part of the visitor's money used for leaflets on the beauty of the region/the region's ecosystems	Indirect support of nature protection measures by bringing money to the region, or direct support due to entrance fees to national parks	Indirect support of nature measures by bringing money to the region, in addition m use of a par of the (visitor's money) for improving the ecological situation, or tourist have to pay fees (e.g. for visiting a national park), and nearly all of the money goes to the protected area's administration for improving protection	Indirect support of nature protection measures by bringing money to the region plus use of most of the (visitor's taxes) (and maybe additional government money) to establish a well-working public transport system for both locals and quests to improve the ecological situation, or tourist have to pay fees (e.g. for visiting a national park), and nearly all the money goes to the protection area's administration for improving protection

Where Back-Roads Touring stands in			Direct support due to entrance fees to national parks/churches/palaces		
Impact on socio-cultural structure: high – low Fisher’s proposed categories	Touristic centers: highly attractive for job seekers, complete change of the local communities’ structures due to foreign influence, local people change their behavior (e.g. farmers become waiters), traditions are commercialized and are no longer part of the daily life of the local people, local people are urbanized with respect to physical and social structures, prostitution	Tourist resort and hotels are large compared to the size of the local community, they are only partly integrated in the social structure of the community, a trend towards urbanization is clearly visible	Villages have been enlarged by tourism, more and larger hotels, guesthouses, and restaurants have been built, but most of the jobs are held by people from the region, local culture is not fundamentally changed	Villages still have their regional character, special places for events (disco, open-air cinema) are scarce or nonexistent, the region is neither overcrowded by foreign guests nor by job-seekers	Few tourists, therefore little impact on local culture, farmers remain farmers, local people retain old traditions
Where Back-Roads Touring stands in			Mixture of well-known destinations and lesser known places		
Money flow to : international companies – local Fisher’s proposed categories	Most of the money goes to airlines and international travel agencies or hotel chains, only a small share goes to local people (e.g. tips, badly paid	Most of the money goes to airlines, national transport companies, national or international travel agencies, owners of large hotels	Most of the money goes to hotels, owners of park lots, privately-owned restaurants	Most of the money goes to the (local) owners of small hotels, guesthouses, cottages, restaurants and to local guides (e.g. museums)	Most of the money goes directly to privately owned local hotels, restaurants, cottages and food shops, to shops offering local handicrafts,

	unqualified jobs)	with their head-quarters often at the economic center of the country			and local guides
Where Back-Roads Touring stands in		Most of the clients are indirect, thus big commissions goes to their travel agents back at their home countries. DMC (destination management company) is used for certain destinations, thus majority of money goes to them.			
Education efforts: none - a lot Fisher's proposed categories	No educational facilities/activities offered, and none demanded	Folklore events, public evening presentations offered and demanded	Half- or one-day trips to touristic attractions offered, many tourist are interested, leaflets and booklets, information panels	Guided tours not only to the touristic main attractions, but also to more sophisticated destinations (e.g. churches, vineyards, breweries, honey-farms) offered and made use of	Museums and /or information centers, research stations, guided tours, information sheets, information boards and booklets available, everything intensively used by tourist
Where Back-Roads Touring stands in				Specialized tour leader accompanies the tour who has an in depth knowledge of the areas visited. However, not necessary a local one. Wine tastings	

				and food presentations/cooking classes usually included in each of a tour. As well a local guided tour of an important attraction is included.	
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Source: Fischer's (2014) table, author

From the table it could be said that in general a Back-Roads tour has a medium to small impact at a visited destination with the highest negative impact being journey to/from a destination and money flow. This is due to the fact that the biggest number of clients are not from Europe, thus automatically their share of travel to a destination will be the highest. In regards to the money flow, this is mainly for the reason that most of the clients are indirect, thus a good share is left for home travel agents' commission. Furthermore, some of the DMC (destination management companies) are not even based in a visited destination, which means that a lot of money stays with them and only a small portion is left at a visited destination.

2.Theoretical Research

2.1. Literature Review: General framework of sustainable tourism

Sustainable development has been discussed excessively by the politicians and academics over the past decade as a new mean of future development due to the challenges that the world starting noticing now (e.g. climate change, deforestation, environmental degradation at the world level). Tourism has played a big part in developing and generating economies (e.g. especially in the Mediterranean region, South East Asia, Caribbean region) in many countries around the world in the past fifty years, therefore there has been more attention shifted towards the sustainable tourism development. According to UNEP /WTO report (2005) the sustainable tourism is the one that ensures economic, social and environmental sustainability of a destination.

It is often more known and referred to as responsible, green, eco, alternative, ethic, slow tourism. They are all part of sustainable tourism, but mainly focuses on one of two aspects (usually being environmental and/or social impacts) instead of all three (Table 4). Waever (2012) even talks about the sustainable mass tourism and suggests that it is an evolutionary rather than revolutionary process and offers three ways to achieve it: organic (market driven), incremental (regulation-driven) and induced (government – driven, instant resort).

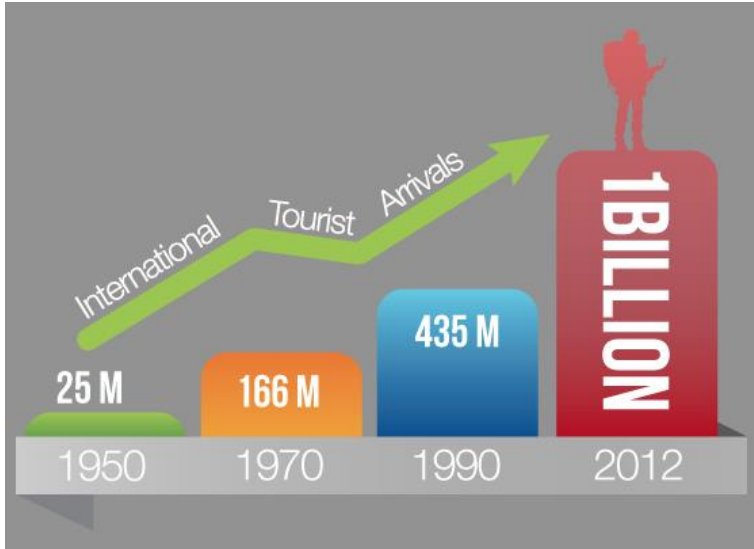
Table 4: *Forms of tourism*

Tourism form	Definition
Alternative tourism	Any kind of tourism that differs from mass tourism, usually pursued by small(er) numbers of people than mass tourism
Nature-based tourism	Tourism with focus on certain elements of the natural environment
Environmentally and socially friendly tourism	All kinds of tourism that try to minimize the ecological footprint as well as negative social structures / cultures at the destination
Ecotourism	Low impact tourism, inspired primarily by the natural history of an area but also by its cultural heritage. It aims at reducing the environmental, social and cultural damages to a minimum, contributes to the long-term protection of the area through generating revenue for both local administration of the protected areas as well as for the local communities, and offers learning opportunities

Source. Adopted from Fisher’s table (2014:35)

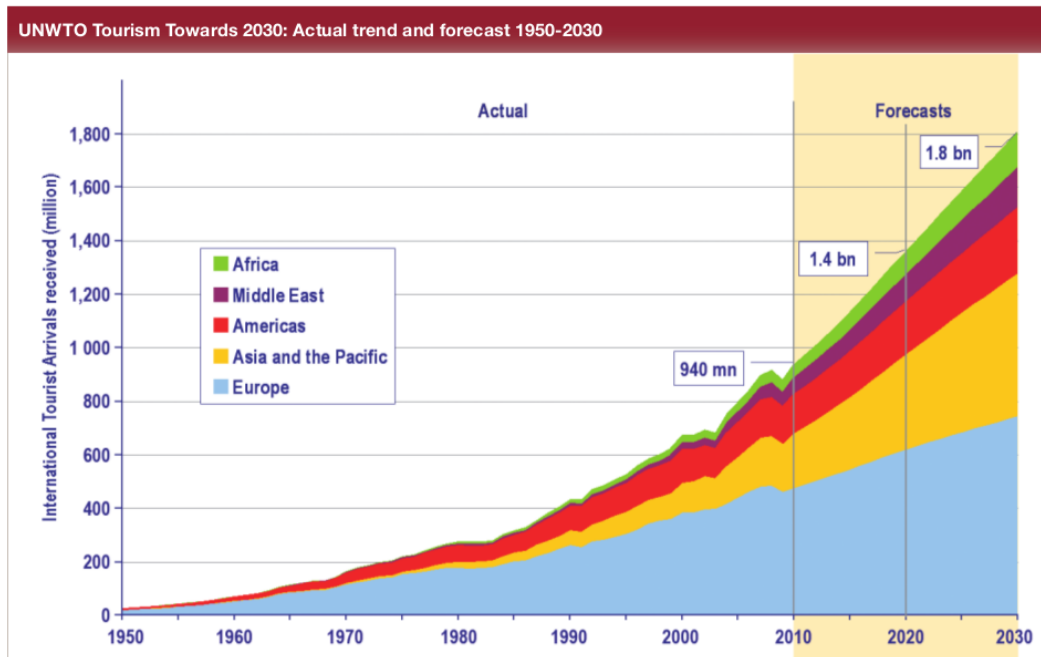
There are plenty of reasons why tourism industry should focus on sustainability. First of all being the massive increase of tourist arrivals in comparison to an early XX century until now (Figure 2), and in addition to, it is forecasted to grow steadily in the future according to the UNWTO statistics (Figure 3). This all means that the tourism impact has grown and will continue growing, therefore we have to make sure that the positive impact take bigger part than the negative.

Figure 2: *Marking 1 billion tourist arrivals*



Source: UNWTO

Figure 3: *Forecasted tourism growth*



Source: UNWTO

Moreover, the tourism growth goes in parallel growth with the world's population and consumption habits. Global Footprint network (Fischer 2014: 25) states that by 2050 we would need two and a half planets Earth in order to satisfy our demand if we do not change our habits. This is a very visual expression to state that the current consumption habits have to follow the sustainability pathway and tourism is no exception to this.

Another important point to note is the apparent number of destinations that have been impacted negatively by the uncontrolled mass tourism, to the point where the damage is irreversible (Table 5) identifies some destinations that have been badly affected by tourism and clearly identified by different authors for this reason. As a result, attentions onto sustainable tourism have gain power as a model to save a destination and to secure a prosperous future.

Table 5: *Tourism destinations badly affected by tourism*

Destination	Negative tourism impacts	Resource
Tenerife	Environmental degradation, excess in supply, social and security issues	Rodriguez, J.R.O., Parra-Lopez, E., Yanes-Estevez, V. (2008)
Maldives	The rubbish island with toxic and plastic waste which leaks into the ocean. The biggest number of rubbish arriving from the luxury hotel resorts.	Indian Ocean with Simon Reeve (2012)
Galapagos	Invasive species, negative impact of cars (killing the birds), bigger than required tourists number, poverty in local community as such comes domestic violence and drug abuse, illegal fishing.	Kueffner S. (2013) Epler B. and Proano E. (2006)
Venice	Receives around 30 million tourists per year with a population of nearly 60,000 permanent residents which clearly exceeds its carrying capacity. It also is a UNESCO site which supposed to protect the area from negative impacts however the generating capital from tourism has transformed the city into the ‘Disneyland park’ where even the locals are skeptical of any possible solution and the government clearly gave up on major recovery actions	Mayr, (2013)

Source: Author

Another factor that influences tourism to adopt sustainability practices, is the changing tastes, market trends and innovations from both supply and demand side. For example, Costa Rica is an inspirational success story with innovative at the times green leaves certification and focus on conservation of its main tourism product – nature (Haaland and Oystein, 2010).

The consumers are demanding more sustainable tourism products as Prud'homme et al (2013) research found out. According to this study, the customer satisfaction is positively influenced by hotels' adoption of sustainable development practices. In addition to this, sustainability is seen as a success factor as Chen et al (2011) discuss sustainable tourism as a competitive tourism strategy in order for a destination to grow and be prosperous.

There are many ways in which tourism could incorporate sustainability, however it is important to note that 100% sustainability is hardly possible to achieve, however it is important to aim to achieve as much as possible. One of the most important sustainability measurements report was published by UNEP and WTO (2005) and has extensively described the 5 instruments for sustainable tourism development (Table 6).

Table 6: *Five instruments for sustainable tourism development*

Name of the instrument	Tools
<i>Measurement</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limits of acceptance change • Carrying capacity
<i>Command and Control</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legislation, regulation, licensing • Land use planning • Development control (zoning)
<i>Economic</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taxes and charges • Financial incentives and agreements
<i>Voluntary</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidelines and codes of conduct • Reporting and auditing • Voluntary certification and voluntary contribution
<i>Supporting</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure provision and management • Capacity building • Marketing and information services

Source: UNWTO

From Table 3, it becomes clear that many stakeholders are involved in order to achieve sustainability. It usually represents a demanding challenge, which is to find a way to involve all the stakeholders and make sure that everybody follows the same model.

2.2. Sustainable tourism critique and limitations

Sustainable tourism gets a lot of critique both from the academic and the business world. This has to do a lot with its limitations and various interpretations over its description, as well as its ambitious aims.

Sustainable tourism came to an attention after the famous Rio Conference in 1992 which recognized the need for sustainable development. Yet, 20 years have passed and at the UN Rio + 20 conference the problems were pretty much the same. Kettunen (2012) criticizes the UN Rio+20 conference for the lack of conviction, commitments, implementations, concrete actions and timelines. This is an inherent problem of sustainable tourism, it is discussed a lot however there are not so many successful concrete actions done in order to strive for it, especially from those, who hold the higher positions such as politicians. Sharing this perspective, Bondeanu (2007:499) mentions the ineffective 'existing initiatives are missing customers' attention, discouraging industry and governments to continue promoting sustainable tourism'.

Another important issue comes from the tourists themselves who are not educated enough in order to support it. Yet, this is a quite complicated issue as on one hand they are not educated enough, but on the other hand, they do not want to be educated further. Bundeanu (2007) agrees by saying that the lack of tourist knowledge and ability to understand the consequences of their own behaviour are yet another fact which leads to unsustainable tourist behaviour. Likewise, Garavaglia et al (2012) research showed the lack of knowledge and understanding of the climate change impact in the mountainous area.

An interesting point is made by Wheeler in Butler's (2006) book which gives a critical review of the sustainability in a light of product life cycle stating that, in the end, tourists prefer superficially versus authenticity and stated versus actual, therefore the principles of sustainability are only part of the niche market rather than mass. Yet, Waever (2012) does not agree with this point and talks about the sustainable mass tourism and suggests that, it is an evolutionary rather than revolutionary process, which denies the idea of sustainable tourism being a niche market.

Coming back to the tourists, Beattie (2010:237) observes that there is a feeling of learned helplessness that surrounds the whole sustainability issues. Furthermore, he points out that 'the evolution has prepared us to survive now and here, not in century's time'. In addition to, in Ram et al (2013) it is suggested that tourists' search for happiness is the main cause for their unsustainable behaviour which is hard to combat.

Furthermore, there are views that sustainability is a utopian idea with inherent issues. For instance, Beattie (2010) reflects on his observations in underdeveloped countries that there is not so much of green conscious when you are so poor. This leads to another inherent problem - the westerners wish to force their viewpoint onto the undeveloped countries. Hanna (2013:46) makes an important statement that 'in our drive to preserve the natural environment we are attempting to freeze or fix biodiversity to what science currently deems as normal'. Also, she adds that 'this preservation of authenticity can be seen in terms of sustainable tourism applying pressure and thus power to keep cultures in particular way and removing the choice and agency of that culture, which reiterates the unequal power relations reminiscent within the colonial period'.

On this same issue, Ram et al (2013) talk about the current tourist mobility matters that are unsustainable, especially if we are looking at the growing demand for tourism in general. Further, Fischer (2014:8) in his book about sustainable tourism focuses a lot on carbon footprint and questions if some business deserve eco label 'if they involve elements that heavily contribute to environmental degradation'. Also, he adds that ecotourism will fail to become a hard-core sustainable due to the cost of getting there (CO2 emission).

There is also a confusion in the industry over which term (wherever sustainable, green, eco, ethic, responsible, etc.) a business should use, which leads to the manipulation of the term. For example, at the World Tourism Market (2015) seminar it was discussed that the word 'green' is preferred by clients as it is easier to comprehend opposed to the term 'sustainable'. This was followed by the explanation on how to communicate a message about green practices without leaving a client feeling guilty if they do not follow the instructions for green procedures. It is interesting to note that the industry does not want

to educate their clients by using a correct term and explaining the value of being a sustainable tourist.

To sum up, it could be seen from above that there are many inherent problems and issues with sustainability which are hard to combat. Therefore, this study is aiming to contribute to the better understanding of sustainability as far as tourists are concerned.

2.3. General characteristics of a sustainable tourist

As this report aims to study the perspective of the tourist, regarding sustainability practices, a brief analysis of the concept of sustainable tourist becomes mandatory. Generally, a sustainable tourist is a person who consistently seeks sustainable tourism experiences. This idea is supported by Hanna (2013) who says that cultivation of yourself as an ethical subject is a sustainable tourist and reintroduces this term which has its roots from the Ancient Greek philosophy. The term basically means to give meaning to the things that you do and make conscious choices and always reflect on how things went. The critical reflection and education are seen as pillars for sustainable tourism promotion. Whereas, Lopez-Sanchez (2015) introduces a term of sustainable intelligence as a way to indicate a sustainable tourist. His research showed that the pro sustainable tourists were older, having the highest earnings in comparison to others, stayed in 3-4 star hotels and were willing to pay more for sustainable tourism. Yet, this is quite a stereotypical description assuming that sustainable tourism is higher end market tourism.

A problem that is usually noticed regarding sustainable tourism is that people verbally support it, however do not act on it, so called behaviour-attitude gap. According to Beattie (2010:28) an attitude 'is an internal state of mind affected by what we do which affects our behaviour towards the world around us' and attitudes are activated outside of our conscious attention. Following Beattie (2010), we have an inner drive to keep all our attitudes, beliefs and behaviours in harmony avoiding dissonance. This is a common problem once talking about sustainable tourism and tourist as tourists tend to explicitly agree with the idea of sustainable tourism, but they fail to act once needed. Juvan, E. and Dolnicar, S. (2014) Australian study investigates tourists who behave environmentally friendly at home but during holidays engage in activities that damage the environment. The study concludes that tourist experience a cognitive dissonance of environmental

sustainability of tourism and they come up with a lot of explanations to justify their negative behaviour during vacations.

Apart from the dissonance, the issue has a lot to do with resistance, a wish to act opposing of what one is expected to. Interestingly in Hanna's (2013:249) research it was found that the researched sustainable tourists did not purchase the products that were explicitly marketed as ethical, but they 'defined their holidays as sustainable or responsible and offered accounts that resisted dominant understanding of being ethical'. Miller et al (2010) research conducted in England found out that there is a lack of tourism impact awareness among the tourists. Also, that there is a resistance to change their behaviour into more sustainable, as the respondents felt they had a right to have holidays but did not feel that they had any responsibilities. Sense of disempowerment was also registered wanting more action from governing level.

Furthermore, Bondeanu (2007:505) talks about 'conflicts between motivations for tourist choices and environmental ones have the potential to hinder sustainable tourist behaviour'. Weaver (2012:1031) goes further and states that most of 'consumers are superficial environmentalist who are concerned but reluctant to participate in personally inconvenient actions'.

Lastly, Doran et al (2013) research supports the fact that tourists hold an overly positive view of themselves about sustainability means they tend to express a desirable viewpoint accepted by the society. Chate (2005) is among many researchers, (examples) whose research focuses on tourists' willingness to pay more for sustainable products, however it does not convert into an action. Which could be explained that tourist want to appear better than they are in social circumstances, however once it comes to the action they fail to do it because it does not match their implicit attitudes which are found in unconscious mind. Thus, as Fischer (2014) acknowledges that the wanted change in sustainable tourism only will occur once tourists will change their attitudes and behaviour.

However, as the industry tries to define and offer what it can to the so called sustainable tourist it lacks its attention to the very core of sustainable tourism -sustainable tourists and their insight into the sustainable tourism. Lopez-Sanchez (2015) agrees that tourists

play a lead role in achieving sustainable tourism and that there is lack of studies that discuss awareness and valuation of sustainability by the tourists. Likewise, Weeden (2014) acknowledges the gap of responsible tourist behaviour studies in tourism. This is also supported by Ruhanen et al (2015) who overviewed the past papers on sustainable tourism and also share the opinion on that there has been a little research done about the tourists' behaviour.

Furthermore, Kang and Moscardo (2006) emphasize that little attention has been paid on whether or not eco-tourists actually behave in a responsible way. Similarly, Caruana et al (2014) acknowledge the gap in the research about responsible tourism accounts from tourists' perspectives. They also suggest that the concept of responsible tourism is not coherent, stable or conclusive, because the tourists acknowledge responsible tourism in different ways which sometimes could be even contradictory to the main principles of the concept. This is indeed a very interesting point which questions the whole sustainability idea.

On the contrary, Dodds et al (2009) researched tourists' willingness to pay a tax that supports sustainable practices on the islands and found out that most of the tourists are prone to pay the tax as they saw the importance of sustainable practices on the islands (especially clean beaches). Yes, a clean beach is a very visual and important aspect of the tourists' experience on the island, as a result their willingness to pay a tax that would ensure clean beaches was eminent.

Overall, it becomes clear that more academic research is needed in order to understand better the complex relationship between tourists and sustainability. Thus, this research aims to contribute to a better comprehension of sustainable tourism.

3. Methodologies

3.1. Research setting and data collection

A quantitative method (Table 7) was chosen for this research as it provided a way to collect a large amount of data that was needed in order to answer the 4 objectives (Table 8) of this research.

Table 7: The Comparison of Qualitative and Quantitative Methods

	Qualitative	Quantitative
Objective/purpose	To gain an understanding of underlying reasons and motivations; to provide insights into the setting of a problem, generating ideas and/or hypotheses for later quantitative research; to uncover prevalent trends in thought and opinion	To quantify data and generalize results from a sample to the population of interest; to measure the incidence of various views and opinions in a chosen sample; sometimes followed by qualitative research, which is used to explore some findings further
Sample	Usually a small number of non-representative cases Respondents selected to fulfill a given quota	Usually a large number of cases* representing the population of interest; randomly selected respondents
Data collection	Unstructured or semi-structured techniques, e.g., individual depth interviews or group discussions	Structured techniques* such as on-street or telephone interviews
Data analysis	Non-statistical Statistical	data is usually in the form of tabulations; findings are conclusive and usually descriptive
Outcome	Exploratory and/or investigative; findings are not conclusive and cannot be used to make generalizations about the population of interest; develop an initial understanding and sound base for further decision making	Used to recommend a final course of action

Source: J. Park and M. Park (2016)

Following this, a questionnaire was chosen as an instrument in obtaining the wanted data.

Table 8: *Research objectives*

1. *Which tourism practices are identified as more important by tourists during Back-Roads tour?*
2. *Which tourism practices do tourists identify as sustainable tourism options?*
3. *Which tourism practices will be most important in choosing to travel again with Back-Roads Touring and which are the least?*
4. *Do tourists value sustainable tourism certification?*

Source: Author

At first it was considered to have a paper questionnaire distributed by the tour leaders to the customers while on the tour. However, after taking into the account the time it would take to collect the questionnaires back (only some of the tour leaders come to the office once in a two months), the tour leader's willingness to participate as they already have to distribute the company's feedback forms, the money it would involve (printing out and distributing, probably posting the questionnaires to the tour leaders), thus as a result, it was decided to use a digital questionnaire instead. The benefits of the digital questionnaire is that it is quick, it could reach a vast amount of people, and the results could be tracked live.

Google Forms platform was used to create the questionnaire and track results. It is a free questionnaire platform (you have to have a google mail account) which is accurate and easy to use. The results could be tracked live once the account is opened. It has a function of providing individual results and group results which is very useful. Also, it only counts results from the questionnaires that were submitted, which means that the respondents who have not responded to all the compulsory questions (if you do not respond a compulsory question you can not move to another question) are not counted in, and it automatically eliminates unfinished questionnaires. In addition to, it also runs an excel sheet with all the results (with timeline) which could be easily used for the graphs and tables. Lastly, it has a function of regulating the number of ticked responses per question (which is very useful for the questions that asked to mark a specific number of choices).

Word Cloud technique (www.wordclouds.com) was chosen for the comment section, as it provided a way to extract the most repeated words and demonstrate the most important words or idea that were mentioned by respondents. The technique is use to use, a full text

has to be pasted onto the Word Cloud website which then automatically draws an image (of multiple choice) with the most common words.

The permission to perform a research was received from the General Manager of Back-Roads Touring and the Global Marketing Manager was delegated to assist with the delivery of the digital questionnaire as she has an access to the consumer data. A meeting was arranged to discuss the research with the Global Marketing Manager during which the Global Marketing Manager suggested to contact 2015 clients for the research as the current 2016 clients were already getting a Feefo review system's email. Therefore, it was agreed to randomly use only 2015 client's' email database. The Google Forms questionnaire link was incorporated into the Back-Roads email together with the link of the newly released 2017 brochure link. (Appendix 3). The respondents had to click on the link which automatically redirected them to the Google Forms questionnaire.

3.2. Population and sample

A convenience sample was used in this research. It is a non-probability process that enables a researcher to collect data from respondents who are easily accessible. The advantages are that it is not time consuming, easy to implement, the respondents are ready to participate and it is cost efficient (www.convenientsampling.net).

The respondents for this research were clients who travelled on at least one tour with Back Roads Touring in 2015. 272 clients were chosen for the pilot study, which was carried out on the 22nd of July 2016. The first results came on the 23rd of July and continued until the 25th of July. In total there were 40 responses collected from the test phase. As all the questions were responded, it was decided to continue with the same questionnaire and include the test phase results into the total counting.

The final questionnaire were sent to 1050 clients on the 28th of July. The first results came on the 28th of July and continued until the 29th of August. In total there was collected 142 results from the final stage. During the final stage couple of emails (Appendix 4) were received from concerned clients asking if that was a genuine survey. The emails were responded by the trainee explaining why they have received a survey and confirming that it is a genuine one.

In total there were received 182 valid questionnaires (40 during the test phase and 142 during the final phase, out of 1322 emails sent (272 during the test phase and 1050 during the final phase), which represents 14% of the population.

3.3. The limitations of the research

Without a doubt, it is important to note that the research was carried out contacting the clients from 2015, which obviously affects the number of respondents received, as they are requested to reflect on a trip that they took a year ago. Therefore, this provides the biggest barrier in reaching a high percentage of the responses. Secondly, the senior respondents are usually more conscious on filling out online surveys, as they are afraid of scams and this research is no exemption .

Furthermore, this research is focused on senior travellers, which means that the proposed approach may not be suited for a much younger clients (for example, students). As well, it is important to acknowledge the fact that the online surveys do not provide a function that enables respondents to participate twice in the research (e.g. a respondent may have multiple email accounts allowing him or her to participate in a research multiple times and there is no way to enable this).

3.4. Questionnaire design

A short questionnaire of 12 questions was created (Appendix 5). It was aimed to be a quick one so that respondents would be willing to fill out in the first place, as well as not tiring respondents so that they provide honest and quick answers.

A short introduction was provided at the beginning of the questionnaire stating that the research author is working on a full time basis at the Back-Roads Touring head office in London and simultaneously is finishing Master studies at the IPL in Portugal therefore a client is being contacted in order to help with the research. On the next paragraph it was provided a blank space to enter an email for those who would wish to receive the research results. This was followed by a personal photo of Cabo Carvoeiro where the IPL ESTM campus is based on.

The questions were divided into four sections. The first section of respondents profile consisted of 6 questions of which 4 questions were closed ended and the remaining two were open ended. This was a mandatory section in order to obtain a base information on the respondents' profile. The first three questions were demographic asking about the gender, age and the home country. The remaining three questions were about the education level and profession.

The second section was directly related to the research objective number 1 about the most and the least important tourism practices on a Back-Roads tour. Section II comprised of two questions. The first question was to find out on which Back-Roads tour the clients went on. This was an open ended question as the company has over 40 tours. The second question was a multiple choice question which requested to choose top 5 reasons for booking with Back-Roads Touring. In total there were given 15 choices (table 9) that referred directly or indirectly to the tours sustainable practices. The 15 choices were a combination of the key aspects of a Back -Roads tour (Table 10) and a literature review.

Table 9: 15 choices that were used in questions 8 and 9

15 Options	Relations with sustainability
1. All inclusive package	Fisher's (2014) money flow (the number of items that is included and the amount of money that goes to a destination)
2. Price	Fisher's (2014) money flow (the amount of money from the tour price that is left at a destination)
3. Specialist tour operator	Fisher's (2014) educational efforts (for example, battlefield tours)
4. Back - Roads' Touring reputation	UNEP/UNWTO (2005) Voluntary instruments (Silver Green award)
5. Having an experienced tour leader	Fisher's (2014) educational efforts (for example, battlefield tours)
6. Tour leader's performance	Fisher's (2014) educational efforts (experienced tour leaders who have a deep knowledge of a destination, especially in battlefield tours)
7. Local food experience	Support local economy and the local community Eurico, S. (ed) (2016).
8. Visiting small/ local business	Support local economy and the local community Eurico, S. (ed) (2016).
9. Travelling in a mini-coach	Fisher's (2014) journey from/to destination (travel by a small coach on a tour)
10. Learning about the visited destination's present challenges and issues	Fisher's (2014) educational efforts (visiting local business and hearing the challenges their face in order to survive)

11. Donating money to local charities that support conservation/ social projects in the area	Fisher's (2014) support of protection activities (entrance fee to visit a castle/palace/church includes a contribution to conservation) Customers ecological footprint (Customers should be encouraged to reduce their ecological footprint, for example, by offering the possibility to pay for the compensation of CO2 emissions produced or donating money to environmental/conservation projects) Eurico, S. (ed) (2016).
12. Small group touring	Engage customers - Offer customized services for the needs of the customer (including seniors, clients with special needs, etc.); Eurico, S. (ed) (2016).
13. Meeting and making connections with locals	Fisher's (2014) impact on the socio-cultural structure at the destination (visiting local business and meeting people that work there, buying their products and making connections)
14. Recycle / re-use practices	UNEP/UNWTO (2005) Voluntary instruments (codes of conduct at a protected area like national park)
15. Other	Not applicable

Source: Author

At this stage the respondent is not aware of the sustainable tourism implications of this question. This question made respondents reflect on their experience with the Back-Roads Touring and choose the aspects which were the most important to them.

Section III is a reflection of the section II, however with a direct emphasis on the sustainable tourism. In this section a sustainable tourism description (UNEP/WTO, 2005) is presented for those who may not be aware of the term. This section made of only one question which is linked to the objective number 2, which talks ask clients to identify the sustainable tourism options of the tour. The same 15 choices (Table 9) from the section is given with the task to identify as many as they feel to be true. Basically this question empowers the respondent to show their understanding of the sustainable tourism practices and it enables us to understand what they think is sustainable tourism from the Back-Roads tour perspective.

Section IV is the final section which is dedicated to understand the future travel options of the respondents. At this stage the respondent is aware of the sustainable tourism description (given in the section II) and its possible options, thus it is very interesting to find out if that affects his or her future choices which are presented in section IV. The section has 3 questions of which 2 are close ended and 1 is a likert scale question. The

number 10 is a hypothetical question asking the clients to mark the tourism aspects in a level of importance which would lead to travelling again with the Back-Roads. This question is directly linked to the objective number 3 which enquires which tourism practices will be the most and the least important in choosing to travel again with the same company. It is important to note that the company has a lot of returning clients thus this question is quite a realistic one. The question 10 comprised of 15 aspects (Table 10) which are asked to be evaluated on the likert scale from 1-5, where 1- being not important at all, 3- indifferent and 5 - extremely important.

Table 10: 15 aspects provided in question 10

15 aspects	Relations with sustainability
1. Leisurely paced nature of the tour	Fisher's (2014) travel at the destination (slow mode of travelling, taking time to enjoy the scenery and experience a destination)
2. Learning something new in a cooking class	Fisher's (2014)educational efforts (visiting a farm and attending a cooking class that uses local products)
3. Learning something new in a language course	Fisher's (2014)educational efforts (short language course to get to know better the culture)
4. Learning something new in a photography workshop	Fisher's (2014)educational efforts (appreciating the different scenery)
5. Finding out about the local traditions and customs	Fisher's (2014) activities (visiting local farm and finding out about the local cuisine)
6. Being in a nature (forest, river, lake, mountains...)	Fisher's (2014)support of protection activities (visiting national and regional parks)
7. Service quality (transport, accommodation, local guides, restaurant)	Fisher's (2014) accommodation (small, boutique hotels with the local character) and authenticity (local restaurants)
8. Same level of comfort and facilities as back home	Fisher's (2014)authenticity (quality accommodation and services)
9. Part of your tour price going towards support local charities/ non-profit organizations	Fisher's (2014)support activities (visiting independent museums)
10. Part of your tour price going towards support environmental / heritage conservation projects	Fisher's (2014)educational efforts (visiting national parks)
11. Socializing and meeting new people	Fisher's (2014) impact on the socio-cultural structure at the destination (visiting local business and meeting people that work there, buying their products and making connections)
12. The opportunity to buy local products	Fisher's (2014) authenticity (visiting local farms and purchasing their products)
13. Tour price	Fisher's (2014) money flow (the amount of money from the tour price that is left at a destination)
14. Tour package that includes the certified eco-friendly services (accommodation, transport, restaurants...)	Fisher's (2014) money flow (the number of items that is included and the amount of money that goes to a destination) UNEP/UNWTO (2005) Voluntary instruments (Silver Green award)
15. Other	Non applicable

Source: Author

Questions 11 and 12 relate to the objective number 4 which asks to find out of the clients' value the sustainable tourism certification. This is in relation to the Green Travel certificate that Back-Roads Touring has been awarded to. Question 11 is asking the respondents if they are aware that Back -Roads Touring has won this award, whereas the question 12 wants to find out if the knowledge of the award influence their decision to travel again with the company. In other words this question tries to see the impact it may have on customer to travel again with the company.

The questionnaire is ended with an open ended comment section for those who would wish to share their thoughts. Then it is followed by the thank you note and a photo of Sao Joao Baptista Fort in Berlengas Island which is opposite Peniche where the IPL ESTM is located.

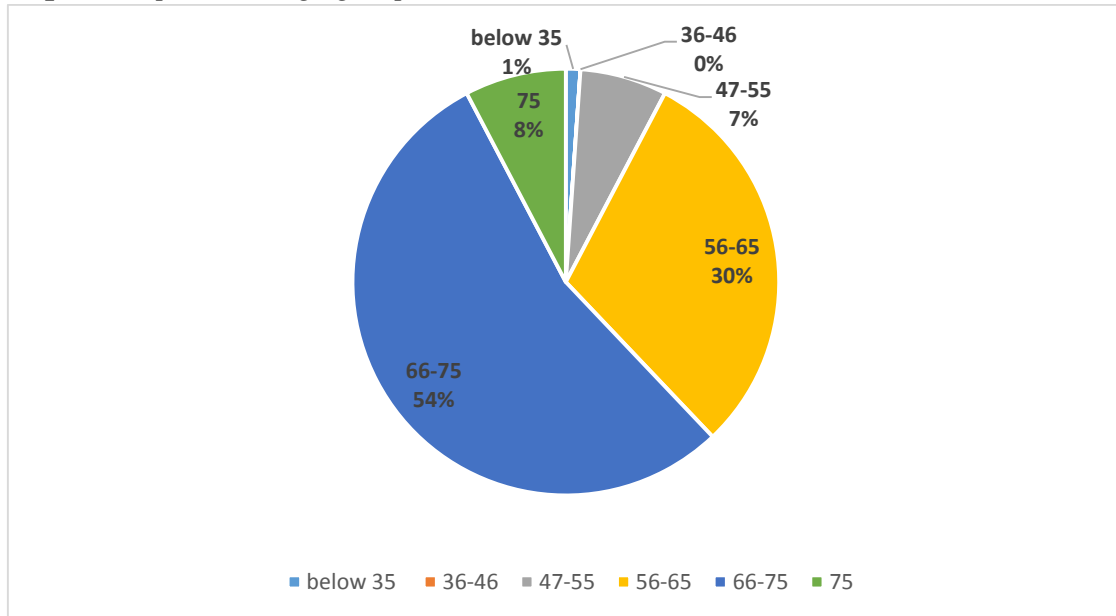
4. Results and discussion

4.1. Results

In total 182 valid responses were collected. 79 respondents, which represents 43% of the total, provided their email addresses and were interested in receiving the results of this study. Question one was to find out the gender of the respondents. In total there were 118 responses from the females who represent 64.8% of the total, and 64 responses were from males who represent 35.2% of the total.

The second was about the age of the respondents. The majority of the respondents, 99 – 54.4%, fell into the age group of 56-65 years old. This was followed by the age group of 56-65 years old which represented 55- 30.2%, after it came the group of +75 years old with 14 respondents who represented 7.7%, then by 47-55 years old 12-6.6% and there were only 2 respondents from the age group of below the age of 35 years old. It is important to note that there were no respondents from the age group of 36-46 (Graph 1).

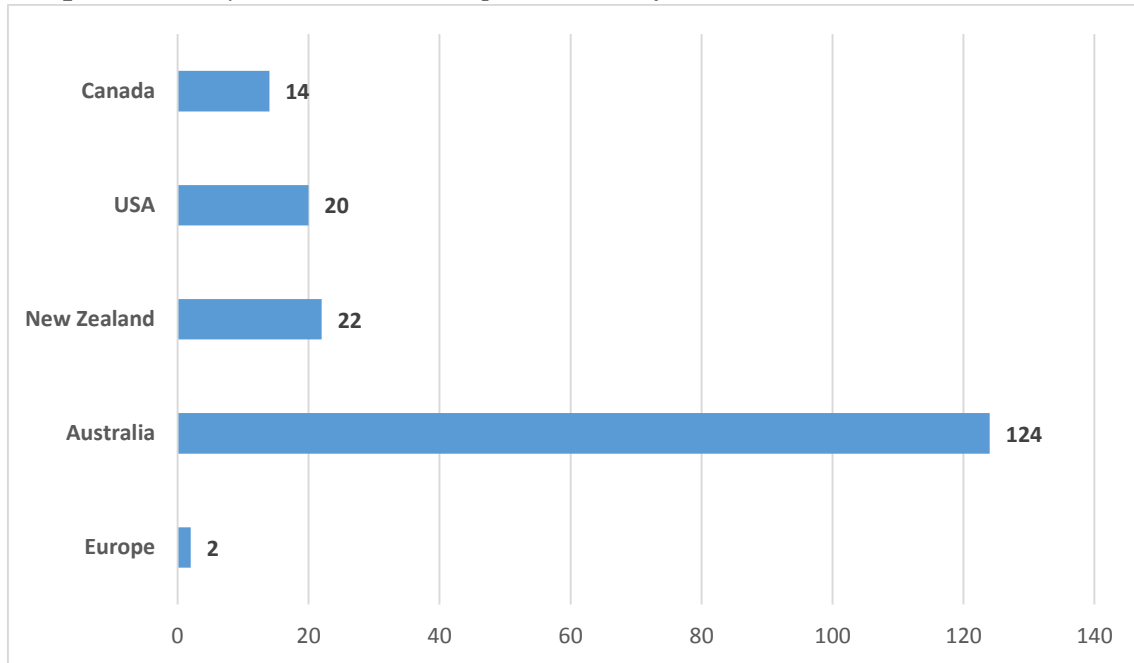
Graph 1. Respondents age group



Source: Author

Question 3 was to find out where the respondents came from (Graph 2). The majority were from Australia representing 68.1% of the total, followed by New Zealanders 12.1%, then by from the USA 11%, Canada 7.7% and only 1.1% were from Europe.

Graph 2. *Country /continent that respondents are from*



Source: Author

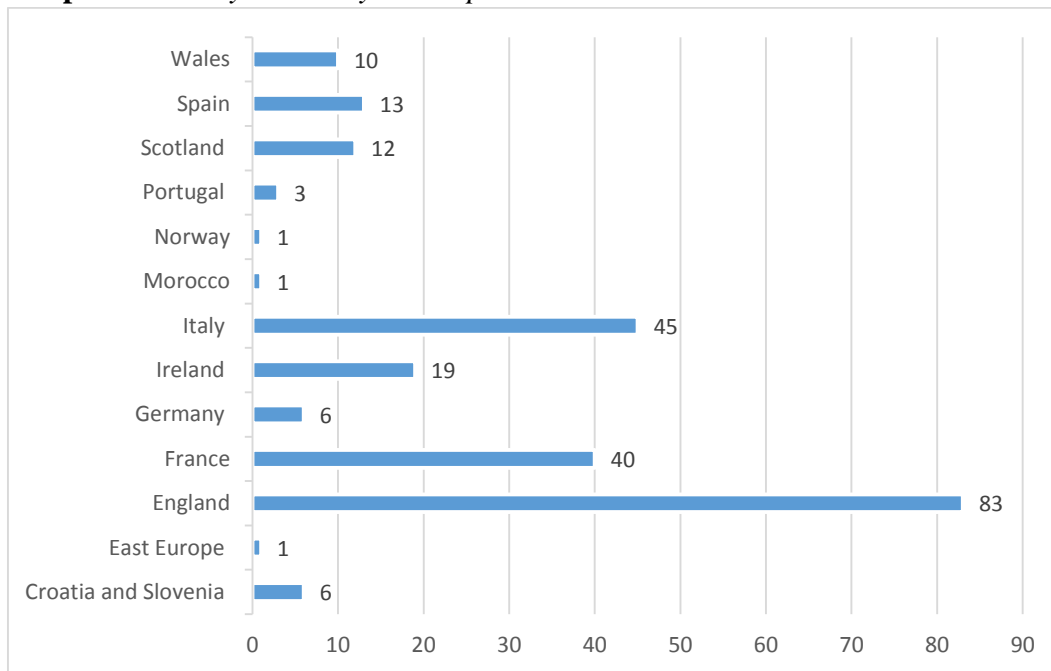
Question 4 was about the highest education level that the respondents obtained. The majority of the respondents had a Bachelor degree representing 46.2%, followed by the high school education which represented 37.9%, then by Master degree – 12.6% and 3.3% who had obtained a PhD diploma.

Question 5 asked the respondents who have obtained Master’s and/or PhD degree to specify the area of their field study. The majority of the respondents were from the social science domain, representing 23 responses, then followed by the exact sciences and engineering with 7 respondents and only 2 from the life and health domain.

Question 6 was about the main profession, even though it is understood that most of the clients, given their age, were retired. Two respondents did not answer this question, making the total number of respondents to 180. The results were grouped into 6 areas: 4 scientific domains using FCT (www.fct.pt) division (life and health science, exacts sciences and engineering, natural and environmental sciences, social sciences and the humanity) and 2 added areas (housewife and public servant (military, religion)). The majority of the respondents were from the social sciences domain representing 109 responses, followed by 31 from exacts sciences and engineering, then by life and health sciences – 26, only 8 were from natural and environmental sciences, and 3 in public servant and housewife categories.

Question 7 intends to find out which tour the clients travelled on with the company. It is important to note that some of the clients went on multiple tours. The majority of the respondents went on a tour that visited England representing 83 respondents (34%), then it was followed by Italy that was chosen by 45 respondents (18.8%) and France – 40 (16.7%). Graph 3 represents results from all the respondents.

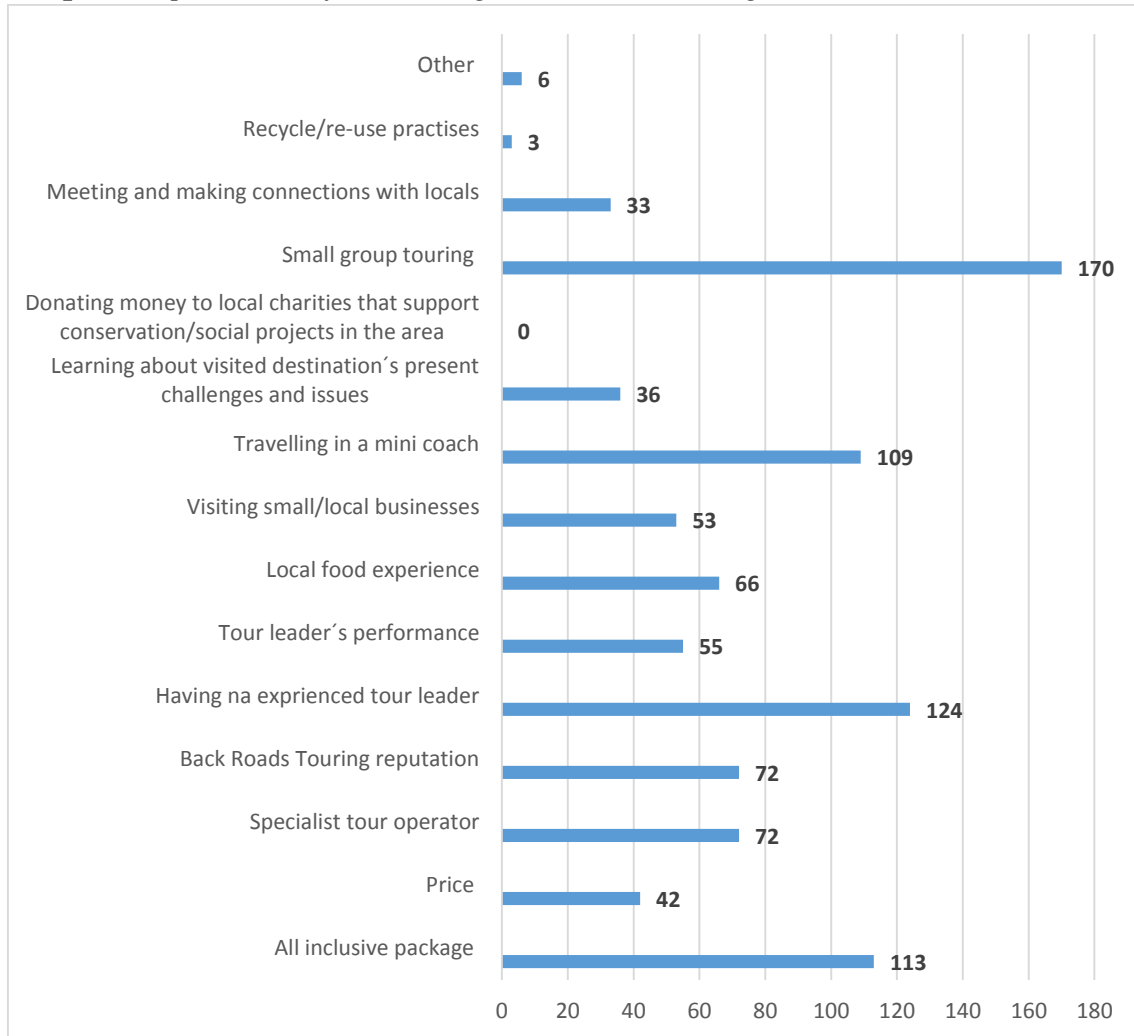
Graph 3: *Country visited by the respondents on a tour*



Source: Author

Question 8 was to find out the top 5 reasons why the clients went on the trip from the choice of 15 options. The most popular was small group touring which was chosen by almost everyone and it represented 93.4% of the total. The second most chosen one was having an experienced tour leader which was chosen by 68.1%, followed by all-inclusive package which ticked by 62.1% and travelling in a mini coach which represented 59.9% (results are represented in Graph 4).

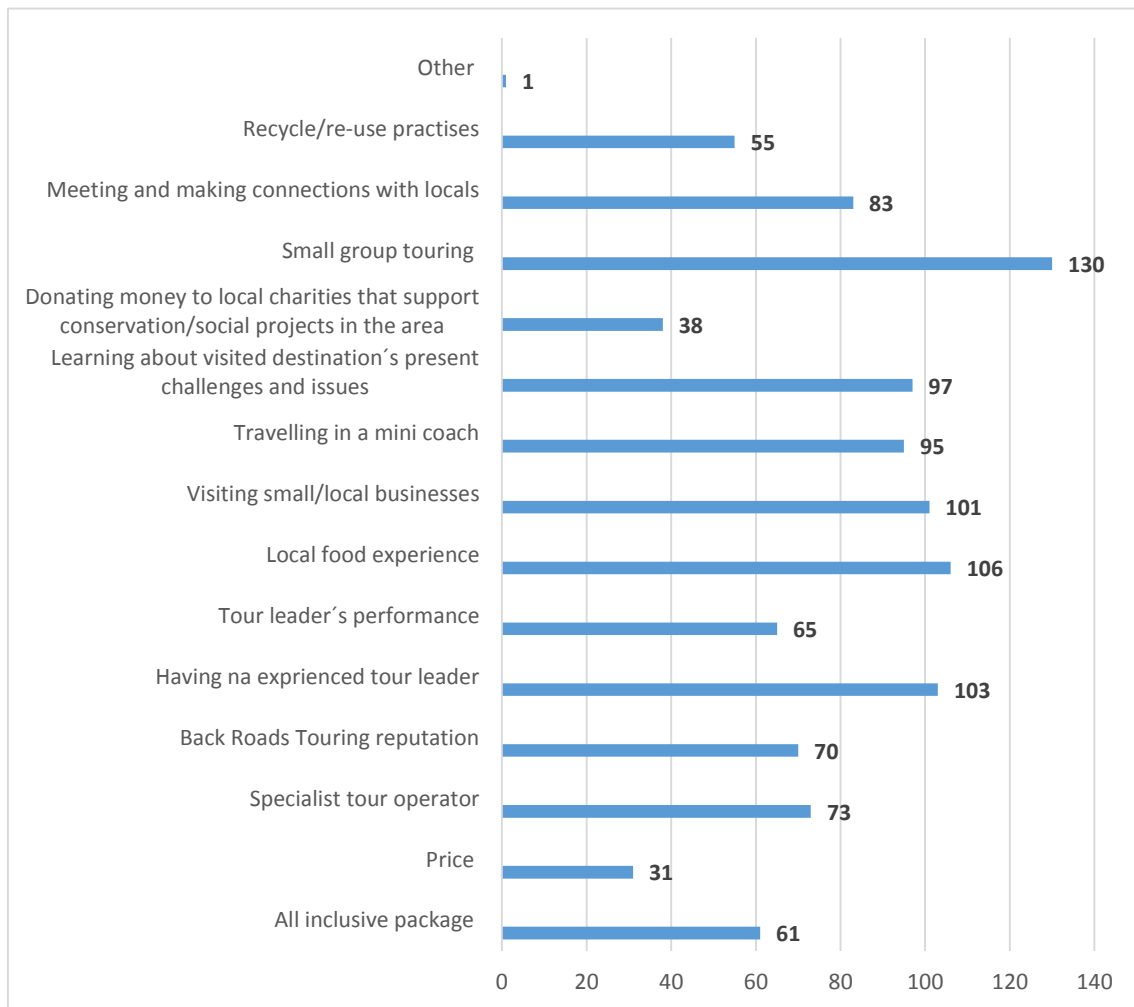
Graph 4: Top 5 reasons for choosing Back Roads Touring



Source: Author

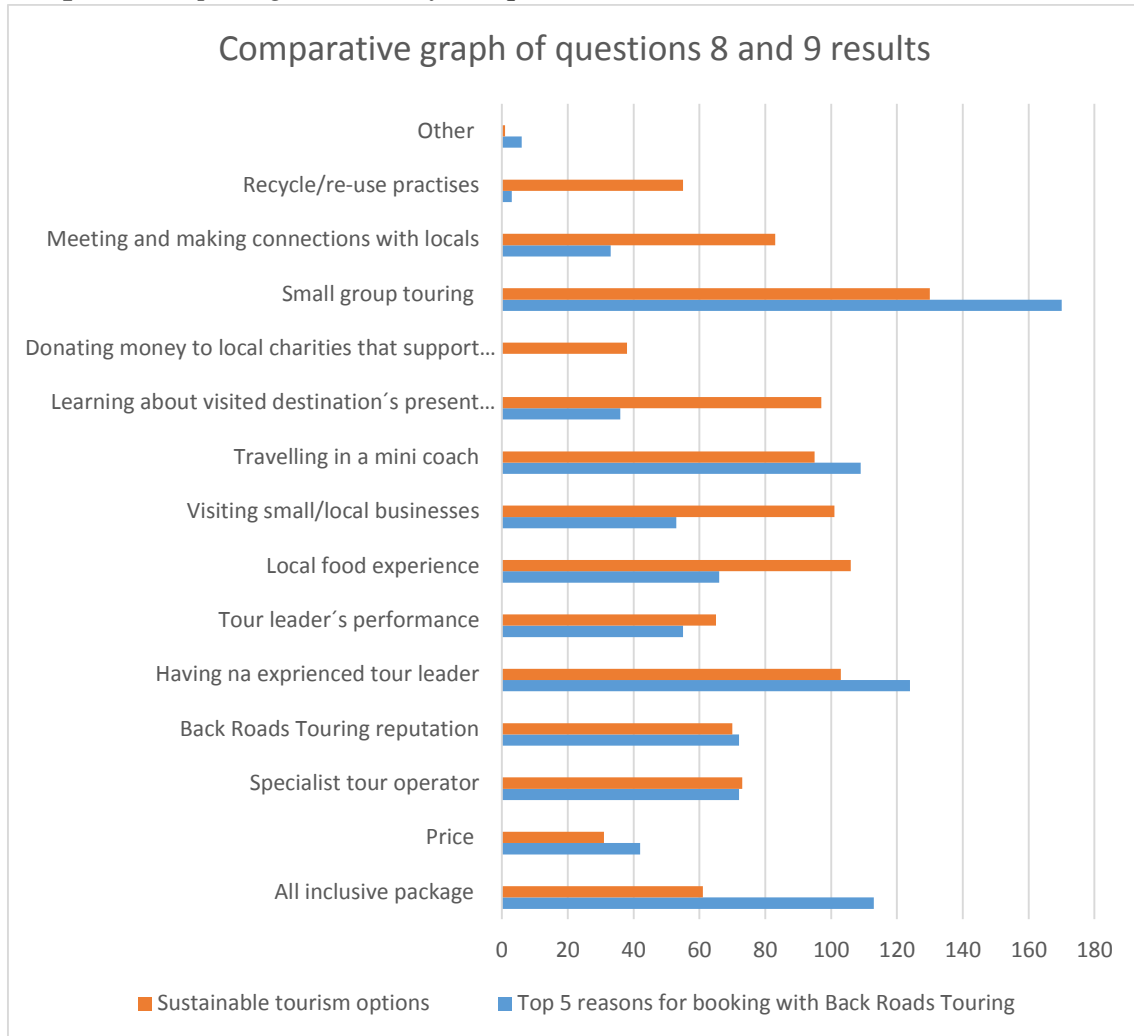
Question number 9 asked respondents to identify the sustainable tourism options using the same options from question 8. Here responses were not as homogeneous as in question 8. The most popular was small group touring which was chosen by 71.4% of the respondents. Then it was followed by local food experiences – 58.2%, having an experiences tour leader – 56.6%, visiting small/local business – 55.5%, learning about visited destinations present challenges and issues – 53.3% and travelling in a mini coach – 52.2% (Graph 5). Graph 6 compares the results from questions 8 and 9.

Graph 5: Sustainable tourism options



Source: Author

Graph 6: Comparing the results from questions 8 and 9

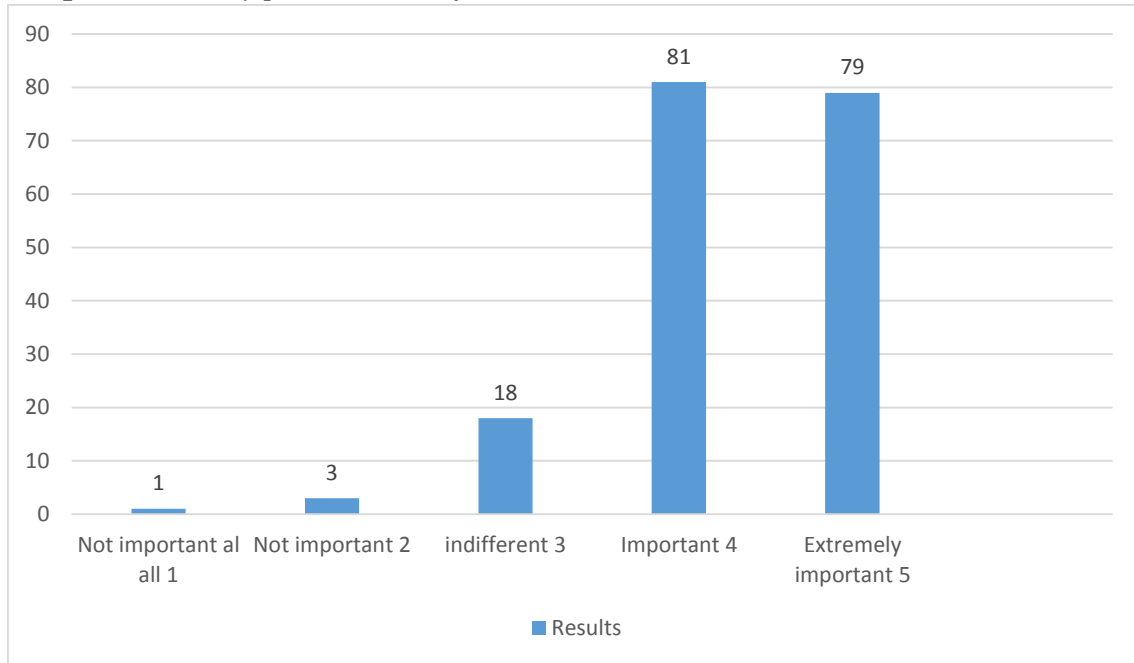


Source: Author

Question 10 asked the respondents about the intended future travel options and the importance of represented 15 items in travelling again with same company. This question was divided into 15 sub sections as already explained in the methodology section

Leisurely paced nature tour was important to most of the clients representing 43.4% who have chosen extremely important, followed by 44.5% who chosen as important (Graph 7).

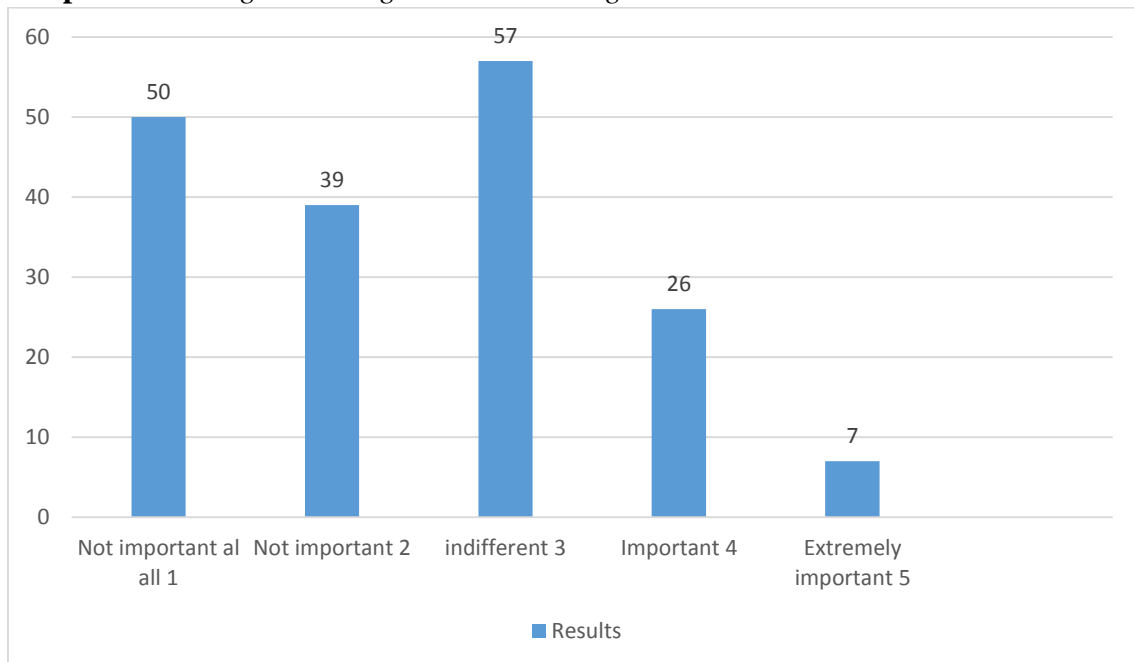
Graph 7: *Leisurely paced nature of the tour*



Source: Author

Learning something new in a cooking class was indifferent to most of the clients representing 31.8% and 27.9% who said that it was not important at all (results represented in Graph 8).

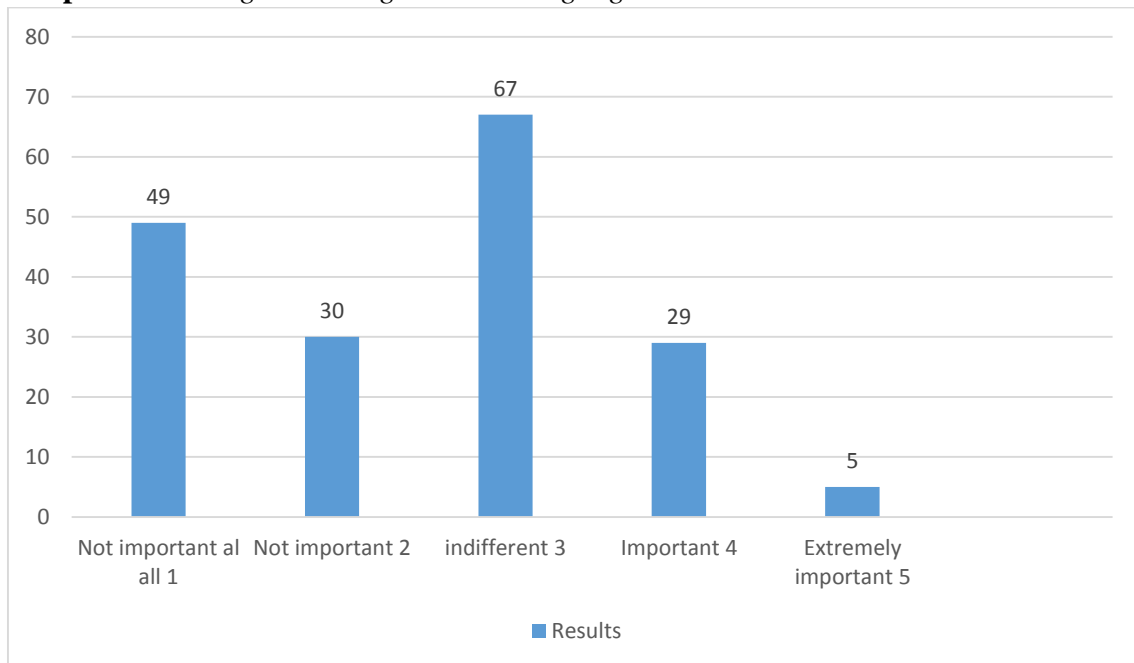
Graph 8: *Learning something new in a cooking class*



Source: Author

Learning something new in a language course was also indifferent to majority of the respondents 37.2% and 27.2% saying that it was not important at all (results are represented in Graph 9).

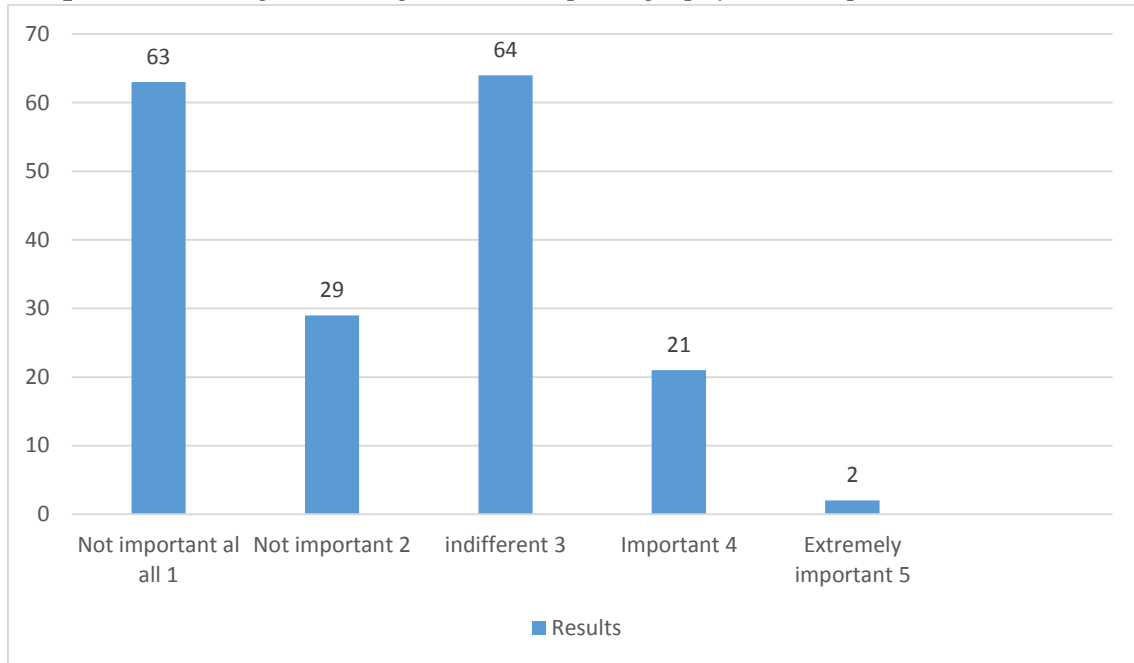
Graph 9: *Learning something new in a language course*



Source: Author

Learning something new in a photography workshop was also found as indifferent by 35.8% of the respondents followed by 35.2% who said that it was not important at all (results are represented in Graph 10).

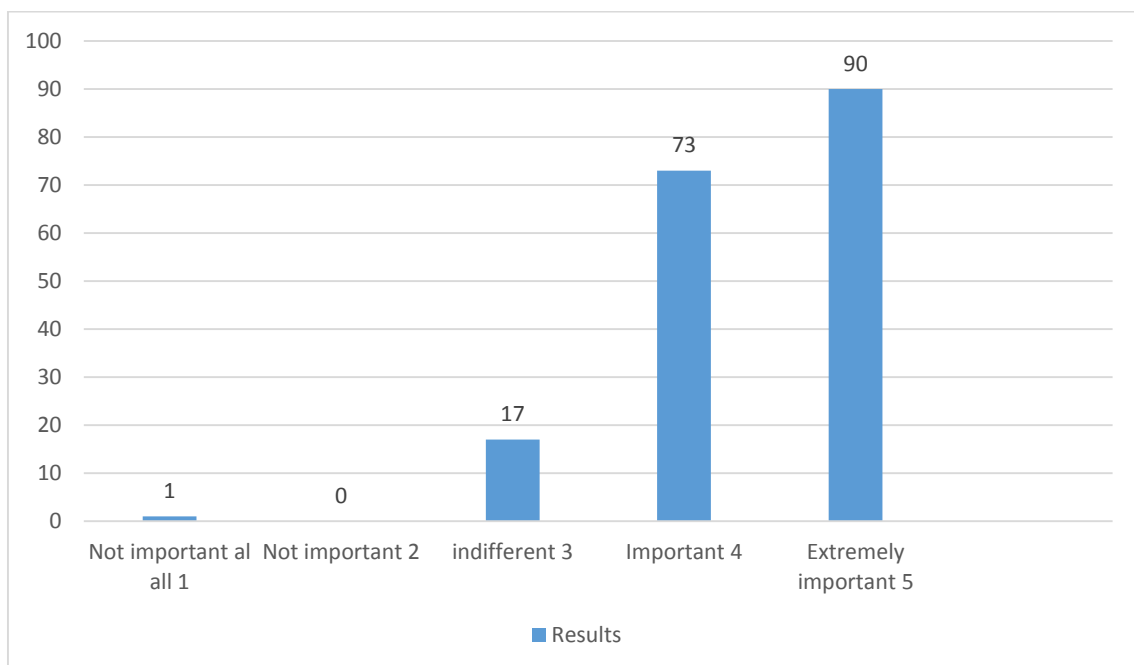
Graph 10: *Learning something in new in a photography workshop*



Source: Author

Finding out about the local traditions and customs was seen as extremely important by 49.7% and 40.3% also said that it was important (Graph 11).

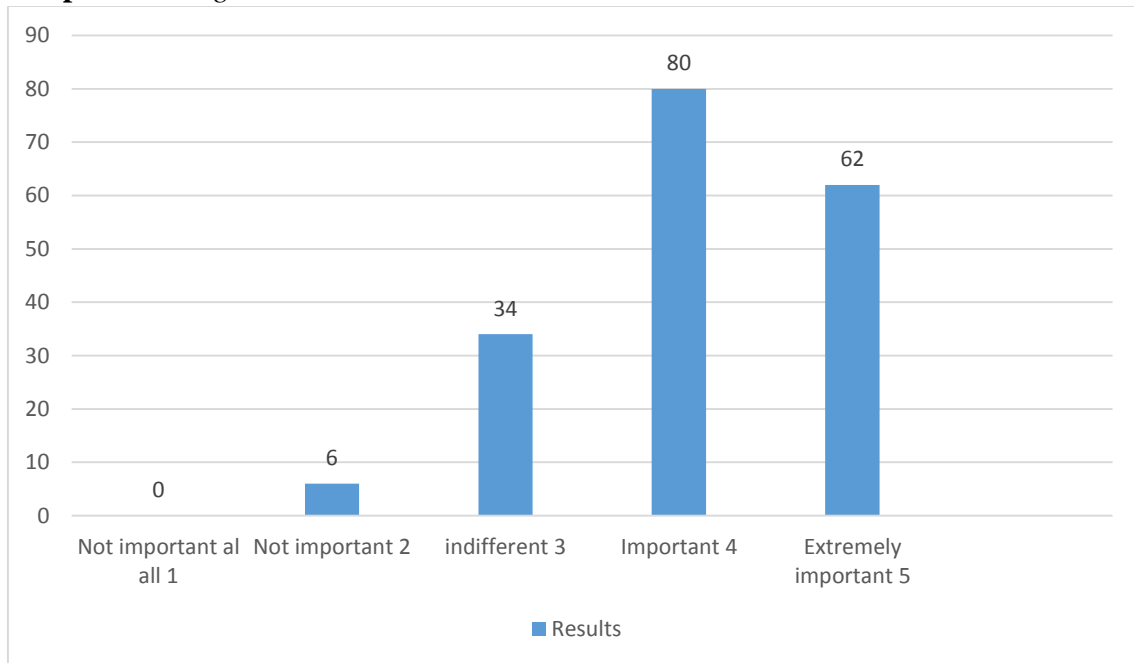
Graph 11: *Finding out about the local traditions and customs*



Source: Author

Being in a nature was also viewed as important by 44% and 34.1% said it was extremely important (Graph 12).

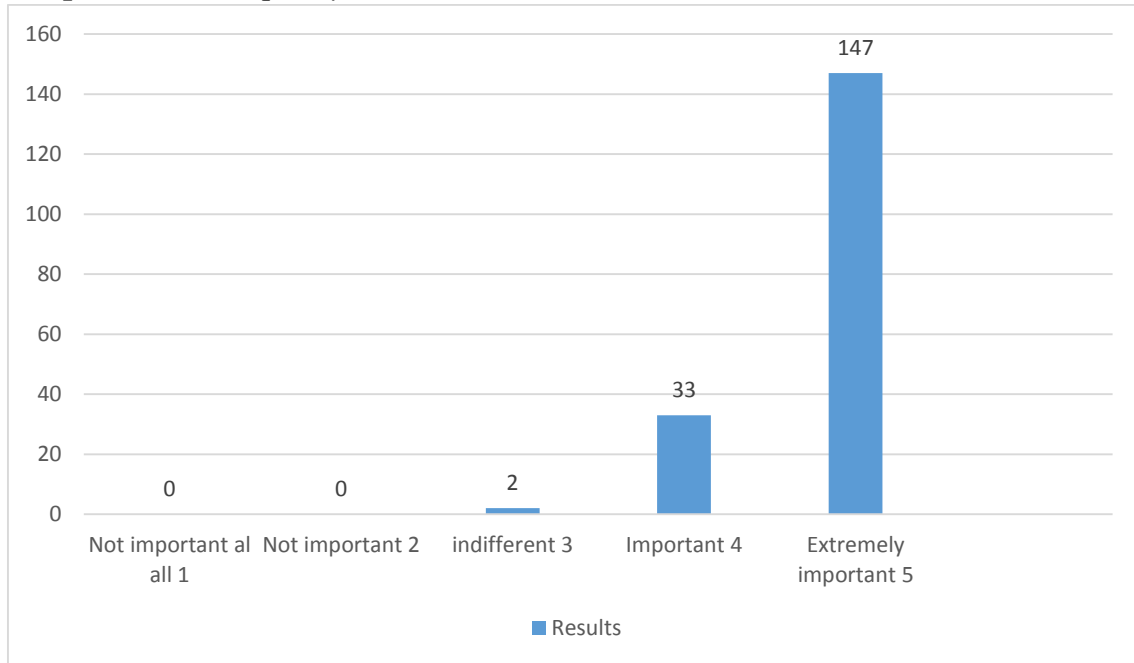
Graph 12: *Being in a nature*



Source: Author

Service quality was seen as extremely important by the majority of the respondents 80.8% and 18.1% said it was important (Graph 13).

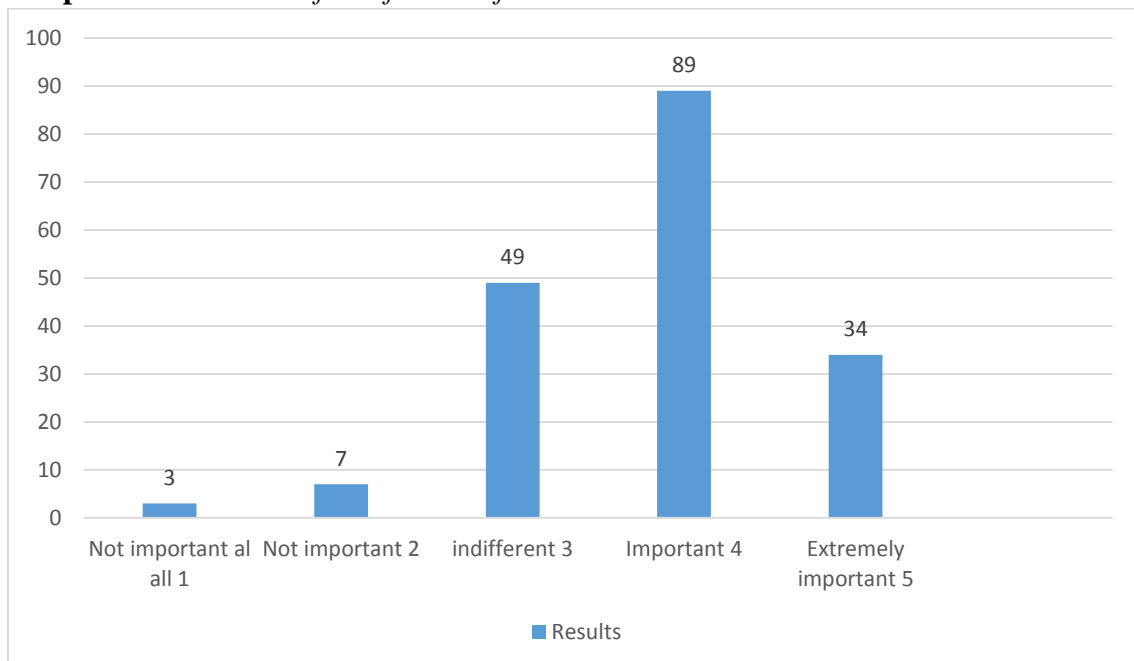
Graph 13: Service quality



Source: Author

Same level of comfort and facilities as back home was important for 48.9% followed by 18.7% who said it was extremely important, however 26.9% were indifferent (Graph 14).

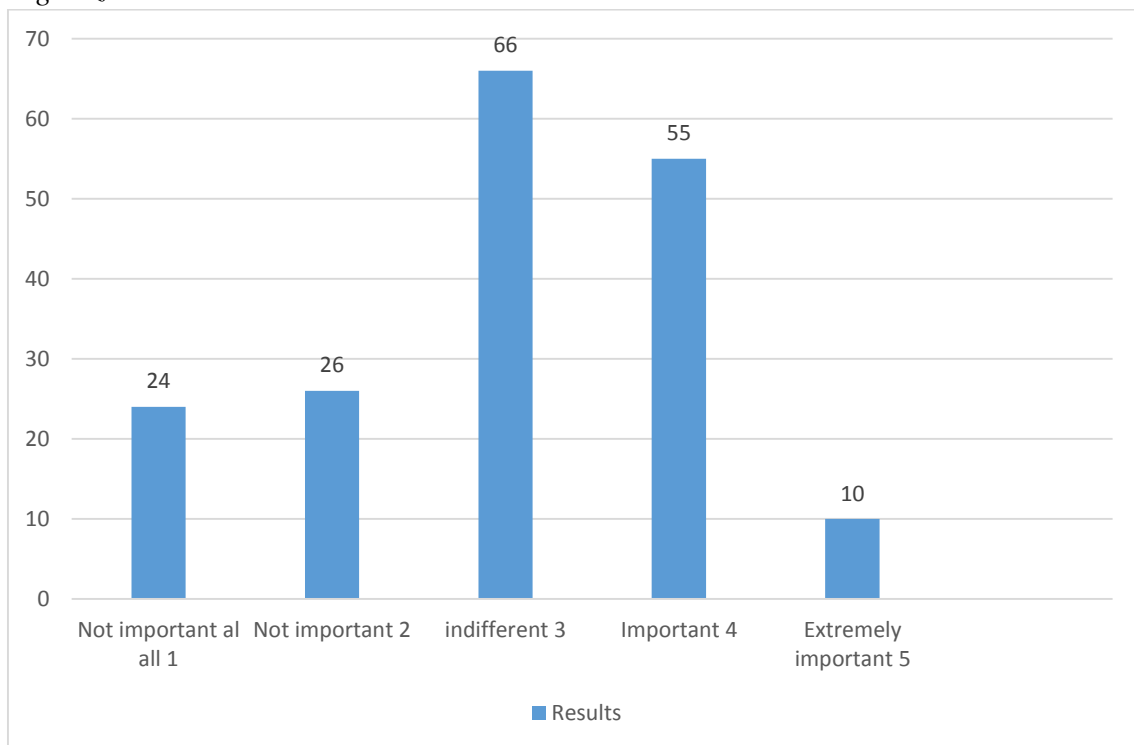
Graph 14: Same level of comfort and facilities as back home



Source: Author

Part of your tour price going towards support local charities / non-profit organizations was chosen as indifferent by 36.5% and as important by 30.4% (Graph 15).

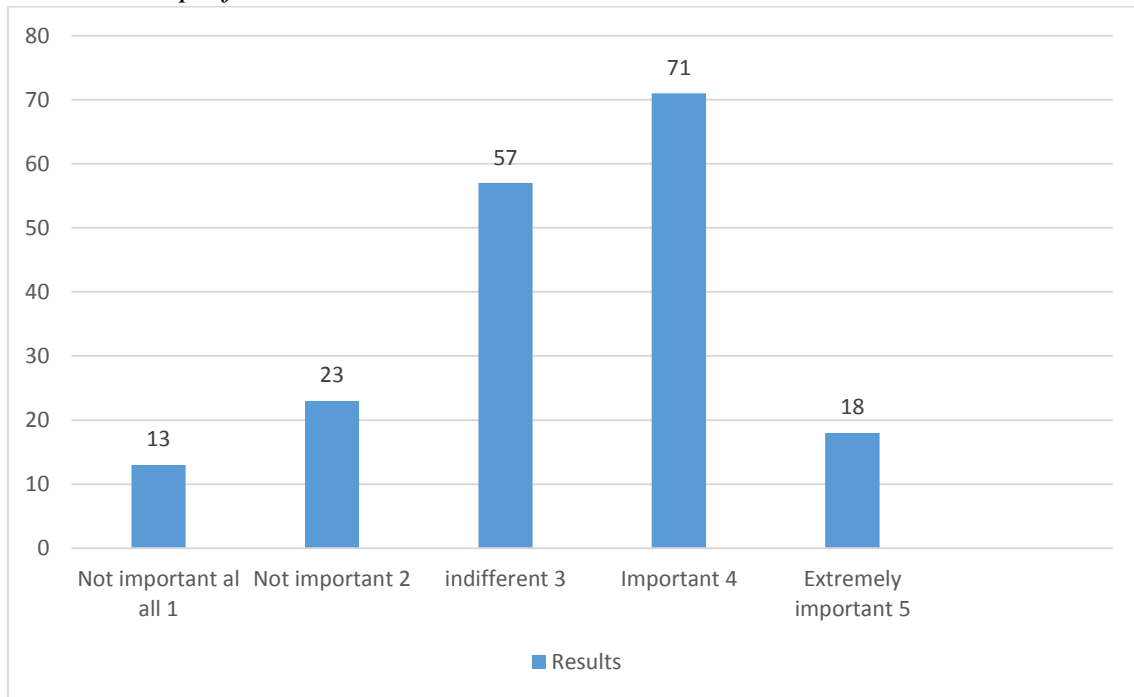
Graph 15: Part of tour price going towards support local charities/non-profit organizations



Source: Author

Part of your tour price going towards support environmental / heritage conservation projects were marked by 66 (36.5%) who were indifferent, however 55 (30.4%) of the respondents found it important (Graph 16).

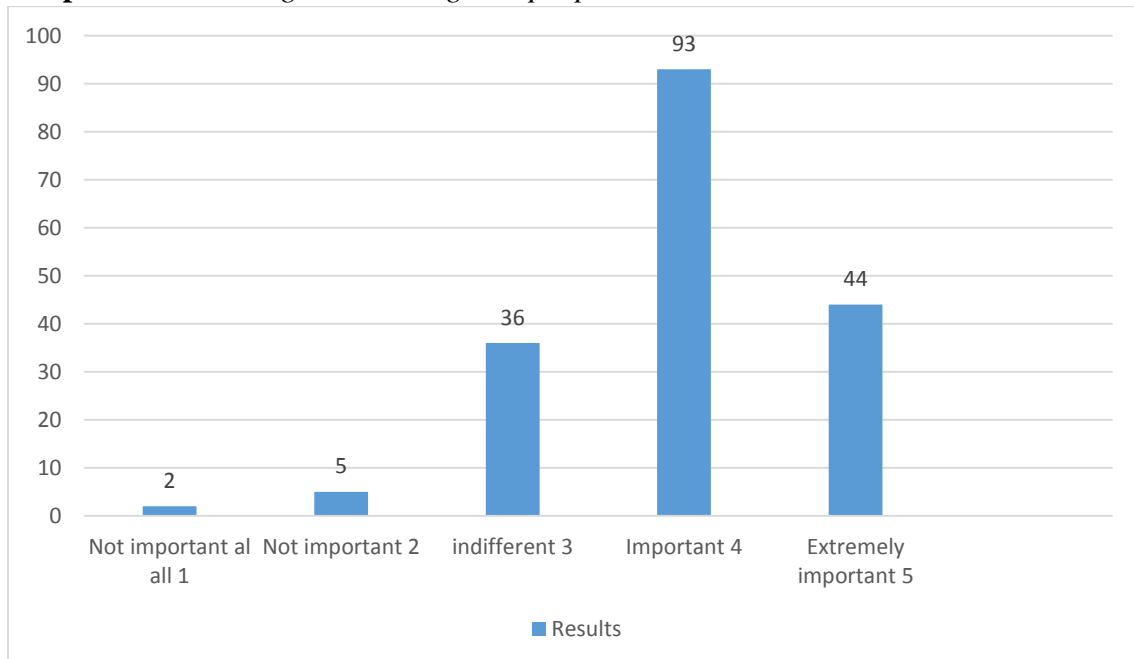
Graph 16: Part of your tour price going towards support environmental /heritage conservation projects.



Source: Author

Socializing and meeting new people was seen as important by 51.7% and extremely important by 24.4% (Graph 17).

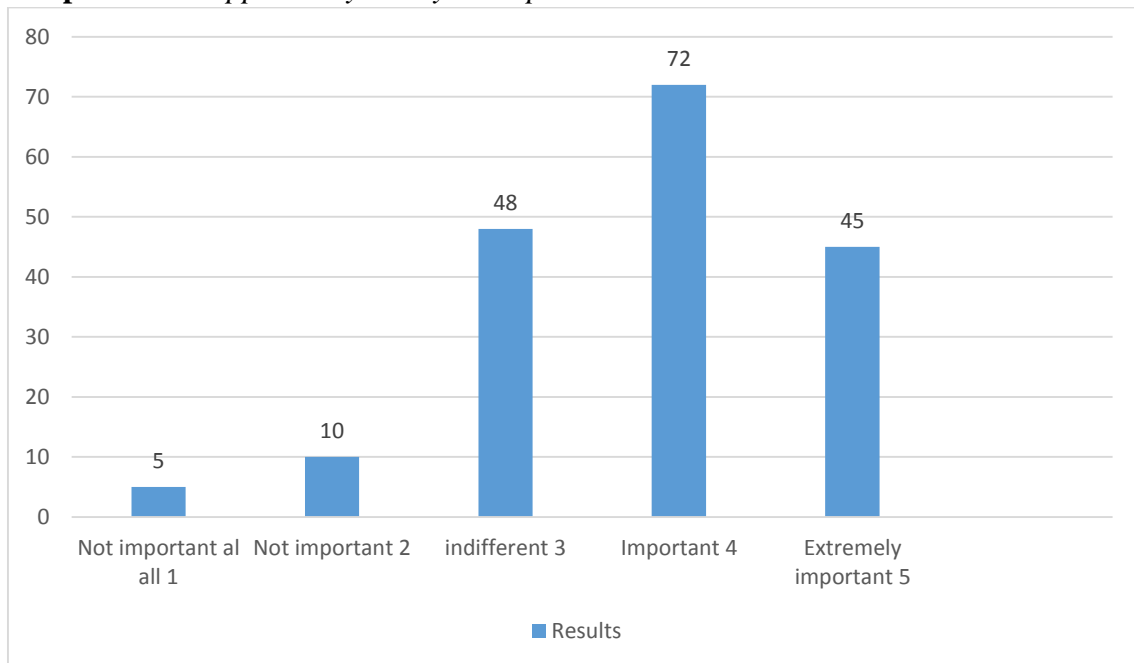
Graph 17: Socializing and meeting new people



Source: Author

The opportunity to buy local products was seen as important by 40% respondents followed by 25% who said that it was extremely important, however 26.7% were indifferent (Graph 18).

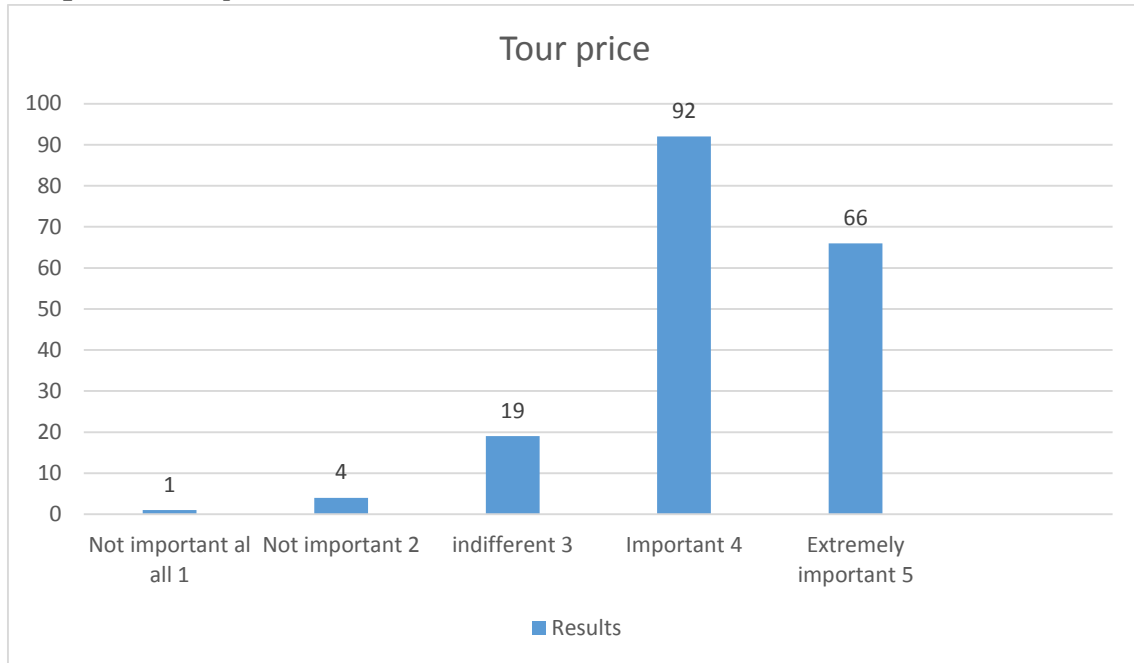
Graph 18: *The opportunity to buy local products*



Source: Author

Tour price was important for 50.5% and extremely important for 36.3% (Graph 19)

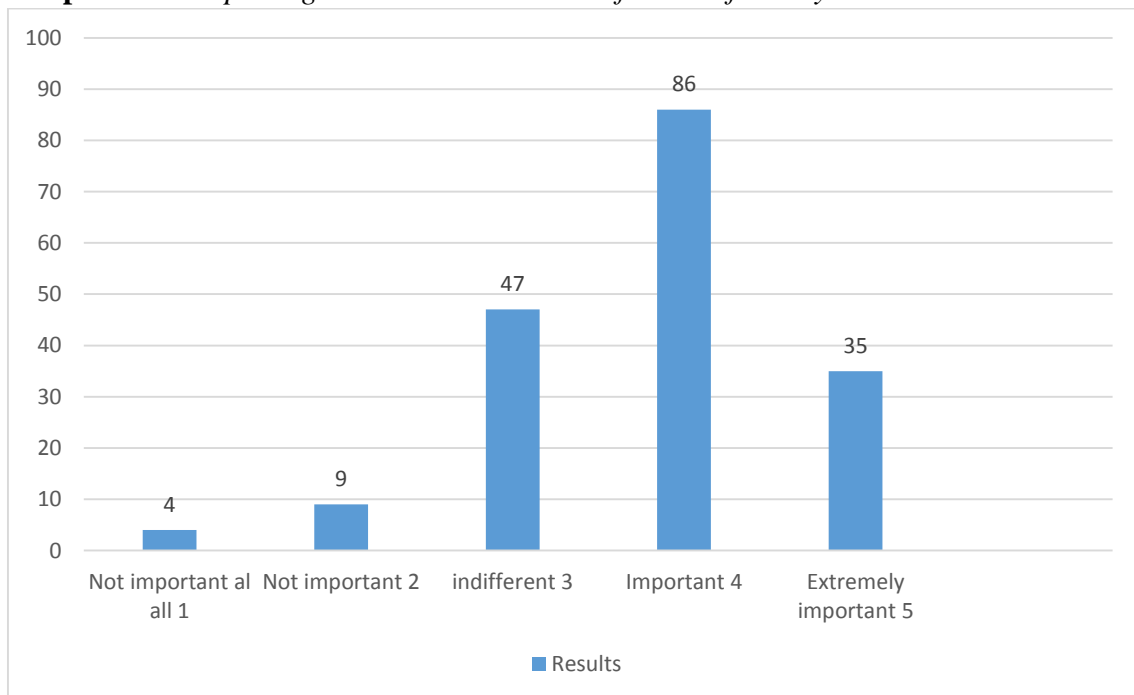
Graph 19: *Tour price*



Source: Author

Tour package that includes the certified eco-friendly services was important for 47.5% and extremely important for 19.3%, however indifferent for 26% (Graph 20).

Graph 20: *Tour package that includes the certified eco-friendly services*



Source: Author

There were 16 respondents who left their comments in the section 'Other'. Table 11 represents all the comments.

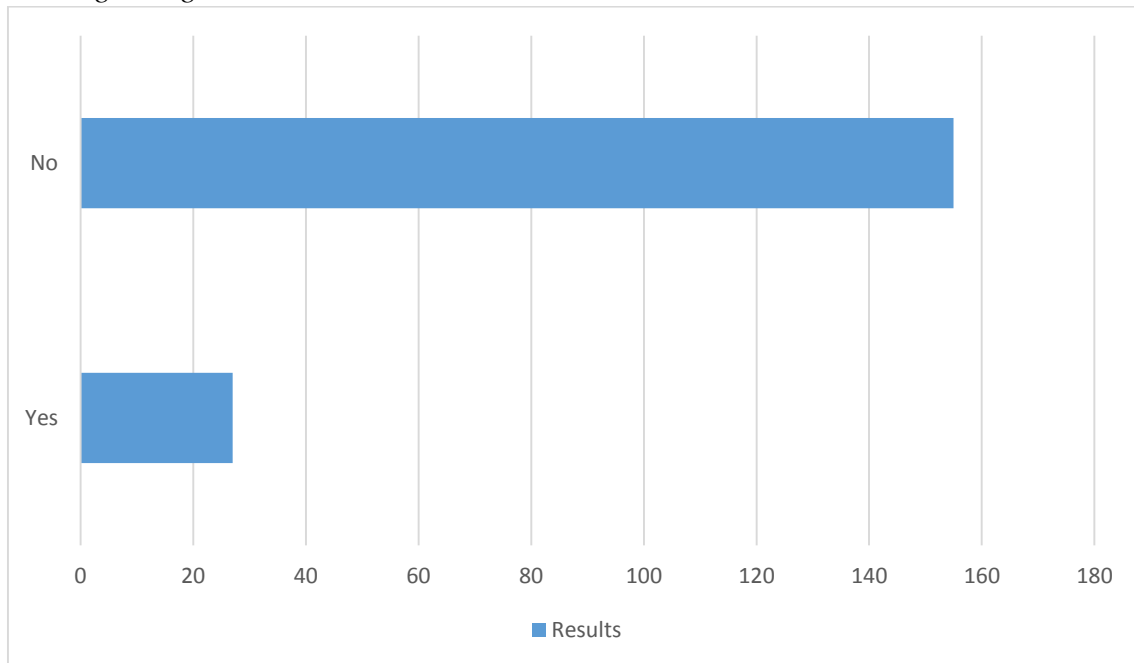
Table 11: *Respondents comments in question 10*

Small group and more time in each place
Visiting Eco tourism spots
Gratuities to be included in price structure
I only like small groups
A tour going to a region that I'm interested in.
Back Roads needs to continue to keep the groups small and visit out of the way places using "back roads" so travelers get the best experience. We loved our tour of the Orkney Islands with Roddy 😊
The small number of fellow travelers is most important.
Travel to out-of-the-way locales that larger buses don't visit
Historical sights
Loved small group & experienced tour guide
Flexibility within tour to accommodate specific local choices if possible
Option for single travelers to share with another solo person (if willing) to reduce tour price
Local food, music and culture
Tours go where I want to visit or explore.
Travelling to less well known areas as well as main tourist attractions
Friendly, competent tour guide
<i>Note: Spelling mistakes corrected by the author of the report</i>

Source: Author

Question 11 asked the respondents if they knew that Back Roads Touring had earned a Silver Green Tourism rating. The majority respondents did not know that and represented 85.2% of the total (Graph 21).

Graph 21: *Did you know that Back-Roads Touring has been awarded a Silver Green Touring rating*



Question 12 asked if knowing that Back Roads Touring has earned this rating influence respondents' decision to travel again with the company in the future. The results were close to equal where 92 said yes it will influence their decision to travel again with the company and 90 saying it would not.

In total there were collected 63 comments, which could be find in annex number. The comments results are presented using a word cloud function (Figure 4), which recognizes the most used word and enlarges it accordingly. This method provides an overview of the most quoted words and phrases that respondents used.

higher than in most of the countries in Europe. Therefore, there were only 2 clients from Europe and most likely coming from England given the fact that the tour is only offered in English.

The most popular destinations as predicted in the first of part the report, were England, Italy, and France (all together they collected over 65% of the total). This is due to the fact that majority of the tours visit those destinations and they have the biggest number of departures. On the other hand, it could be said that countries like England, France and Italy are well mature destinations where probably the concept 'off the beaten track', appeals the most. As it offers an opportunity to visit an iconic destination and explore the paths that are less travelled. Furthermore, this information also shows that given the clients' senior age, they are not keen to venture somewhere that it is too unknown and unfamiliar (e.g. Eastern Europe countries), therefore they are looking at the classic destinations which offer an infrastructure (transport connections, locals speaking English due to many tourists in the area, higher standard hotels, restaurants and attractions) needed to have a comfortable holidays. And this fact is confirmed with the results from question 10.8 which asks respondents to mark the importance of 'same level of comfort and facilities as back home', as the majority of the respondents marked it as 'important' and 'extremely important' (67.6%) and only 1.6% chose as not important at all.

The second section of the questionnaire is directly related to the research objective number 1, which asks to identify tourism practices (selecting top 5) that are more important on a Back-Roads tour. Almost everybody chose a 'small group touring' (93.4%) as it is a paramount factor about the company. This could be explained due to the fact that the company is marketed and known for only small group tours. Furthermore, it makes sense that this concept of small group touring attracts senior clients, as during their lifetime they most likely have gone on numerous big coach tours and experienced the negative sides (too many people on a tour, thus no personalized service is offered, standard itineraries where only big amount of people could be taken, thus no flexibility, visiting only highlights and not trying to understand deeper a place visited because of time limit) of that type of travelling. Finally, the senior clients have more time and disposable income as opposed to the younger generation.

Travelling in a mini-coach received over 50% responses, which is basically the consequence of small group touring, as the group is small a mini-coach is used. The other

item that was selected by more than half of the respondents, was 'having an experienced tour leader', which is again another important aspect of a Back-Roads' tour. This choice shows that the clients are looking for more complete experience (rather than ticking a bucket list), as most likely they have already been to some of the destinations, but they would like to come back and get to know a destination more in depth. 'All inclusive package' was another option that was chosen by more than 50% of the respondents. This choice again supports the idea that the clients are looking for 'no hustle experience' where they do not have to actively search for/ look for information, but rather relax and enjoy the experience as everything is included. Furthermore, this choice could be explained by the age of the clients, as they were all seniors and it is natural that they are looking for conform of having everything included.

Objective 2 was to find out which tourism practices from question 8 do tourist identify as sustainable tourism options. Here, it was interesting to find out what the respondents will mark as a sustainable tourism description was given. The responses in question 9, this time were not as homogeneous as in question 8, which shows that the clients had different ideas of what sustainable tourism practices mean. The result proves the fact that sustainable tourism as mentioned in the literature review, is interpreted differently by many clients and could have a different meaning to different people.

Yet it is interesting to mention that the most popular response (71.4%) from question 9 was the same as in question 8, which is 'small group touring'. After again it was followed by 'having an experienced tour leader' and 'travelling in a mini-coach', that were chosen by over half of the respondents. Those three top choices are indeed sustainable tourism practices as mentioned in Table 3.

On the other hand, there were other options that appeared very significantly in question 9 results and they were very different from the results in question 8 (Graph 6). 'Local food experiences' and 'visiting small/local businesses' were chosen by over 50% of the respondents. Both of those options are directly linked with the key aspects of a Back-Roads Tour (Table 1) as it emphasizes culinary and authentic experiences, which could easily be a local cheese farm, a winery, etc. Also, those two options represent the sustainable tourism concept (visiting small and local business and experiencing the local cuisine).

‘Learning about visited destinations present challenges and issues’ was also marked by over half of the respondents. It represented a big disparity from question 8 results where this option was chosen by only 19.8%. The results indicate that the respondents felt that this option was representing sustainable tourism concept. This is indeed a sustainable tourism option and it was mentioned in the literature review (educating tourists and informing them about the present challenges so they could make adequate choices).

What is more, there were other two options (in question 9) that had collected a significant amount of responses in comparison with question 8 results. ‘Meeting and making connections with locals’ was chosen by over 45%, which showed that the respondents felt that this option was representing a sustainable tourism option. Indeed sustainable tourism encourages the connection between the tourists and local community in order to foster a mutual understanding and respect. Yet, it is very interesting to note that recycle and re-use practices, which was the other option were only chosen by over 30% of the respondents. Recycling is a paramount factor in sustainable tourism, thus the fact that the majority did not select that option is quite intriguing.

Furthermore, an option of donating money to local charities only collected 20% of the responses. This might be due to the fact that the clients visiting quite developed European countries and they are not exposed to the extreme poverty and environment degradation (e.g. Africa), thus they may think that the support is not needed as the countries are developed enough and the tourism automatically contributes to conservation/social projects. Moreover, it is important to note that most of the clients were from middle class, thus it could be that they did not have much extra disposable income to donate to. Also, it could be that respondents are not aware of negative impacts in a visited destinations. Therefore, if they are not aware of the negative impacts, then it does not exist in their minds, and this brings to the viewpoint where they do not see the need in donating money.

Objective 3, that asked respondents which tourism practices will be most important in choosing to travel again with Back-Roads Touring and which – the least. Question 10 provides the results to this objective. Out of 15 given choices, there were 5 options most important aspects that were chosen over 75% (a sum of ‘important’ and ‘extremely important’) of the respondents. Almost everybody (98.8%) chose ‘service quality’ as the aspect that would influence them the most to travel again with Back-Roads Touring. This could be translated as, the clients already went on a Back-Roads tour and enjoyed the

experience and quality that it had, thus if they were to return and take another tour, they would expect the same quality standards or even higher. The next important aspect was 'finding out about local traditions and customs', which resonates local food and small business options that were marked in question 9. Also, the company emphasizes its offered unique and local experiences and the clients experienced that during the tour, thus they are looking for the same experience.

Leisurely paced nature of the tour collected over 80% of the responses (combining important with extremely important results), which is a key aspect of a Back-Roads tour. Tour price was a big factor too, however it was not important reason for booking a Back-Roads tour. This indicates, that price will have an influential factor in the future travel decisions. The last option was 'socializing and meeting new people', which could have been influenced by the results from question 9 where meeting new people also scored a high number.

The least important tourism practices were 3 that collected over 40% (a sum of 'not interested at all' and 'not interested') and over 30% who marked them as 'indifferent'. The three aspects were from the section 'learning something'. Photography workshop was the least important one, followed by a cooking class and language course. This is an interesting finding as the food and local cuisine is one of the key aspects of a Back-Roads' tour and it was marked as a sustainable tourism option by the respondents. However, this could be interpreted as that clients are interested in visiting local farms and tasting their products, but they are not so interested in a cooking class. The language course may not be of their interest, because the majority are coming from the English speaking countries and most likely they do not speak a foreign language and see it as a massive challenge. What is more, as tour is quite short, and the clients may not come back again to the destination, thus they do not see the value in learning something that is quite complicated and could not be used daily.

The responses for donating money to the local charities or conservation projects were quite divided, and over 30% of the respondents marked as 'indifferent'. This just emphasizes the same fact mentioned in question 9 analyses, that the clients did not see the need in donating money. Another factor, it could be that the clients did not want the tour price to increase (as a direct result of donation) as a price factor was important if they were to return. However, support for environmental/heritage conservation projects were

seen more favourable as oppose to charities/non-profit organizations. This could be interpreted as that the respondents see the value in environmental/heritage conservation projects and there is a possibility that the value, if marketed correctly, could grow.

The last objective was to find out if tourist value sustainable tourism certification. Over 85% of the respondents were not aware that Back-Roads Touring has been awarded a Silver Green Tourism rating, even though a company has a full website page dedicated to sustainable practices that also talks about the Green Silver certification. Question 12 aimed to understand if knowing of this award influences their decision to travel with Back-Roads Touring. The results were quite divided, 90 said no and 92 – yes. This is an interesting result, which indicates the division between the clients and requires a deeper analyses in order to understand the results. Yet, it is important to note that half of the respondents did see the value in the certification, which means that it is important fact that the company has a sustainable tourism certification.

Finally, the comments' section was dominated by the company's name, tour, guide, experience and small groups. The bolded words all had a positive aspect to it and it showed that the respondents really like the company and are willing to come back.

5. Conclusions and recommendations

5.1 Conclusions

The internship report aim was to explore the importance of sustainable tourism practices from a tourist point a view. This was reached by having four objectives in a form of a question. An internship took place at the head office in London of a tour operator called Back-Roads Touring, where the report author and trainee have completed a research study.

Back-Roads Touring is a medium sized tour operator offering small group tours (only in English) in a mini-coach with an experienced tour leader in Europe and Morocco. The main clientele (senior travellers) comes from Australia, New Zealand and also from the USA and Canada with occasionally few clients from Europe. The emphasis on small group touring of the beaten track and seeking more authentic experiences echoes sustainable tourism practices.

The research study was proposed in order to understand better Back-Roads Touring clients (as the company's feedback form is very basic) and see if they seek more sustainable tourism practices.

Sustainable tourism is indeed emerging from the last couple decades especially as the understanding of negative (and sometimes irreversible) tourism impacts become more apparent at the destinations loved by tourists. Also, trends and innovations shape the new ways of travelling and looking for something that is it still yet not explored. Although, the sustainable tourism promises everlasting benefits (environmental, economic, and social) of tourism, however it rather hard to implement it in reality. First of all, this has to do a lot with the confusion of a term and it various interpretations that quite oftenly businesses use. Secondly, the tourist themselves who tend to agree with the benefits of sustainable tourism verbally, however fail to act once needed. Therefore, more academic research is needed that focus on the complicated relationship between the sustainable tourism and tourists. As such, this research study is aiming to contribute towards a better understanding between tourists and sustainable tourism and also to see if there already exists a demand from Back-Roads clients 'perspective, for tours with more sustainable tourism practices.

In order to respond to the objectives of the study, an online questionnaire of 12 questions using Google Forms was created. A convenient sampling was chosen and in total 1322 Back-Roads clients (who went on a tour in 2015) were contacted by an email asking to fill out the questionnaire. In total 182 valid responses were received and were analysed using a descriptive analysis.

The findings for the objective 1 (which tourism practices are identified as more important by tourists during a tour) showed that the most important aspect of a Back-Roads tour were small group touring, followed by an experienced tour leader and travelling in a mini-coach. And objective 2 (which tourism practices do tourists identify as sustainable tourism options) responses were similar, saying that both small group touring and having an experienced guide were sustainable tourism practices. However, local food experiences, visiting small/local business and meeting locals had also received a significant amount of responses, showing that these aspects are important. The result for objective 3(which tourism practices will be the most important in choosing to travel again

with the same company and which are the least) showed that in future if a client were to take another Back-Roads tour, the biggest influencers were service quality, finding out about local traditions and customs, leisurely paced nature of the tour and tour price. And finally, the results for the last objective (do tourists value sustainable tourism certification) which tried to evaluate the importance of a sustainable tourism certification, proved that most of the clients were not aware of the certificate that a company had, however over half of the respondents felt that it would influence positively their decision to travel again with the company.

It is important to point out, that sustainable tourism practices such as recycling, donating money to support conservation projects or charities, have not received a lot of positive results, this could be due to the fact that the majority of the clients were from the middle class.

To sum up the research findings, it could be said that the Back-Roads tour clients are not actively seeking for more sustainable tourism options, as they are content (the comments section support this too) with the company's model of a tour which without a doubt, has some sustainable tourism influences. However, it is important to emphasize the fact that the majority of the clients are middle class senior travellers who seek for quality and stress free travel experiences and are not willing to change or adapt their behaviours in order to become more sustainable tourists.

5.2 Recommendations

From an academic perspective, it would be very interesting to analyze the research results' using SPSS software as it would provide a deeper understanding of the results. It would be especially very useful to find out if the nationality had an impact on question 12, where the results were almost equal. As well, other questions could be analysed from the nationality prism, which could provide some fascinating results.

Furthermore, it would be interesting to use an on-site questionnaire that is given out when a tour ends and see if the results differ, as the tour experience would be very fresh and it would be interesting to see if respondents reflect on it differently. What is more, an important component of sustainable tourism - environmental sustainability was not so much emphasized in this research, thus it would very beneficial to find out the viewpoints of this .

As for suggestions for the company, it is important to market better Green Silver award which was valued by half of the respondents, however over 80% were not aware of it. Also, the important aspect is to keep the service quality (which could be evaluated by sustainable tourism certifications) and price the same. What is more, although the clients did not show a big enthusiast donating money, however there were clients who cared about it, therefore a company could think of supporting a local conservation project (preferably visited during a tour) and use soft marketing so that the clients are aware of good practices that the company engages in at the same time softly encourage the clients to support it too. This sort of activity would benefit the image and reputation of the company that clients found it very important.

Furthermore, some managerial implications for Back-Roads Touring can be drawn from the obtained results so that it may improve to a higher standard the sustainability aspects of their tours (for example, use hybrid or electrical vehicles that try to reduce their emission) . Yet, it important to be cautious not to drastically introduce change, but rather do it slowly and make sure that it is carefully planned, as the respondents showed that they are not ready for any radical changes. Also it is important to notice that the results also indicate that those innovations (regarding sustainability), if directly related to the quality of service have higher probabilities of being welcomed by the clients. An option here could be to initiate working with the certified (preferably sustainable tourism certifications) suppliers (accommodation, restaurants, attractions, vehicle suppliers) and increase the number of them gradually over the years.

Supplementations

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Sustainable Travel on Back-Roads Touring website

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the Back-Roads Touring website. The browser's address bar shows the URL backroadstouring.com/sustainable-tourism. The website header features the Back-Roads logo, the tagline "THE EXPERTS IN SMALL GROUP & TAILOR-MADE TOURS UK & EUROPE", and navigation links for "View cart: 0 trips", "Brochures", "Newsletter", and "Contact Us". A search bar is present with the placeholder text "Type in your Search...".

The main navigation menu includes "Small Group Touring", "Why Travel With Us", "Our Tours", "Destinations", "Special Offers", "Tailor-Made Tours", and "FAQs". The breadcrumb trail reads "You are here: Home » Small Group Touring » Sustainable Travel".

The page title is "SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL". On the left, there is a "Tour Search" sidebar with three dropdown menus: "TOUR DURATION: ANY LENGTH", "TOUR DESTINATION: ANY DESTINATION", and "TOUR TYPE: ANY TYPE". Above the sidebar is a "WINNER BRITISH TRAVEL AWARDS 2015 BEST COACH HOLIDAY COMPANY * SMALL *" badge.

On the right, there is a "Green Tourism SILVER" logo. Below it, a text block states: "Back-Roads has been accredited with a Silver Award by the Green Tourism Business Scheme. This certification reflects Back-Roads' commitment to reducing our carbon footprint, both on the road and in the office and working with local hoteliers, attractions and restaurants to promote green tourism and support of local".

Source: Back Roads Touring website, at <http://backroadstouring.com/sustainable-tourism>

Appendix 2: Back-Roads Touring feedback form

BACK-ROADS TOURING CLIENT QUESTIONNAIRE

ABOUT YOU <small>(Please mark boxes with an x where applicable)</small>	
First Name:	Last Name:
Country:	Female <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/>
Age Band: Under 40 <input type="checkbox"/> 40-45 <input type="checkbox"/> 46-50 <input type="checkbox"/> 51-55 <input type="checkbox"/> 56-60 <input type="checkbox"/> 61-65 <input type="checkbox"/> Over 65 <input type="checkbox"/>	
Who are you travelling with? Alone <input type="checkbox"/> Partner <input type="checkbox"/> Relative <input type="checkbox"/> Friend <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/>	
Have you travelled with Back-Roads Touring before? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Are you doing multiple Back-Roads tours? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Additional tour(s):	

BACK-ROADS TOURING GUIDE (Please mark boxes with an x where applicable)

Guide Name:

How would you rate the following aspects of your Back-Roads Guide?

Excellent Very good Good Fair Poor

General attitude Helpfulness

Interaction with group

Organisational skills

Knowledge

Professionalism

BACK-ROADS TOURING DRIVER / VEHICLE (Please mark boxes with an x where applicable)

Driver Name:

How would you rate the following aspects of your Back-Roads Driver?

Excellent Very good Good Fair Poor

General attitude

Helpfulness

Driving skills

Navigational Skills

Vehicle

Care of coach

ACCOMMODATION (Please mark boxes with an x where applicable)

How would you rate the following aspects of your accommodation?

Excellent Very good Good Fair Poor

1. _____

Bedroom

Location

Service

Cleanliness		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Excellent	Very good	Good	Fair	Poor	
2. _____						
Bedroom		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Location	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Service		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cleanliness		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3.		Excellent	Very good Good	Fair	Poor

Bedroom	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Location	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Service	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cleanliness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.		Excellent	Very good Good	Fair	Poor

Bedroom	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Location	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Service	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cleanliness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.		Excellent	Very good Good	Fair	Poor

Bedroom	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Location	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Service	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cleanliness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.		Excellent	Very good Good	Fair	Poor

Bedroom	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Location	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Service	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cleanliness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.		Excellent	Very good Good	Fair	Poor

Bedroom	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Location	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Service	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cleanliness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Excellent		Fair	Poor

8.			Very good	
			Good	
Bedroom	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Location	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Service	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cleanliness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

PRE / POST ACCOMMODATION (Please mark boxes with an x where applicable)

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Fair	Poor
Pre.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>					
Post.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>					

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE BACK-ROADS TOURING? (Please mark boxes with an x where applicable)

How did the following effect your decision to travel with us?

	Essential	Important	Irrelevant
Group size	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Back roads not freeways	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Accommodation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Authentic local experiences	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Price	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Leisurely pace	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Places visited / tour length	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Travellers of similar age	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

MARKETING (Please mark boxes with an x where applicable)

How did you hear about Back-Roads Touring?

Travelled with Back-Roads Touring before Travel agent

Online Travel expo / event

Friend / Family Social media

Advertisement Other

How did you book your tour?

Travel agent Direct with us Back-Roads website Other

If you booked direct or with a travel agent, how do you rate the service?

Excellent Very good Good Fair Poor

If you booked your tour online, how would you rate the website?

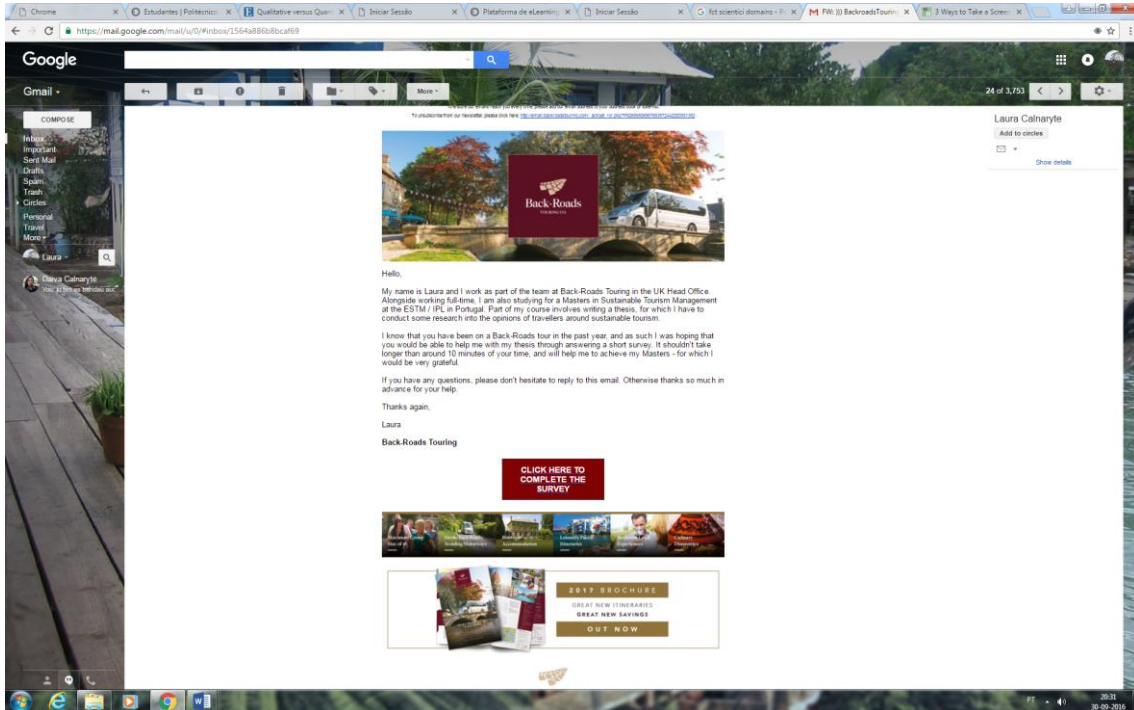
Excellent Very good Good Fair Poor

COMMENTS

TRAVELLED WITH BACK-ROADS TOURING BEFORE?
Thinking about booking another Back-Roads tour? Receive 5% off the price of your next tour – it's our way of saying thank you for the repeat business! Promo code: BRTPP5% * Please see the website for full details.

Appendix 3: Client email with a questionnaire link

A screenshot of an email



The text in the email:

This is a message from Back-Roads Touring Co Ltd.

To ensure our emails reach you every time, please add our email address to your address book or safe-list.

To unsubscribe from our newsletter, please click here: http://email.backroadstouring.com/act/get_rcr.php?P92699506867683572442000551352

Hello,

My name is Laura and I work as part of the team at Back-Roads Touring in the UK Head Office. Alongside working full-time, I am also studying for a Masters in Sustainable Tourism Management at the ESTM / IPL in Portugal. Part of my course involves writing a thesis, for which I have to conduct some research into the opinions of travellers around sustainable tourism.

I know that you have been on a Back-Roads tour in the past year, and as such I was hoping that you would be able to help me with my thesis through answering a short survey. It shouldn't take longer than around 10 minutes of your time, and will help me to achieve my Masters - for which I would be very grateful.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reply to this email. Otherwise thanks so much in advance for your help.

Thanks again,

Laura

Back-Roads Touring

**CLICK HERE TO
COMPLETE THE
SURVEY**

Appendix 4: Respondent's concerned email sent to the Australian office

From: Nicole Gruver [mailto:Nicole.Gruver@backroadstouring.com.au]
Sent: 02 August 2016 02:23
To: Lyli Dante <l.dante@backroadstouring.com>
Cc: Laura Calnaryte <l.calnaryte@backroadstouring.com>
Subject: survey

Hey guys

We have a loads to questions about this, concerning if it is real.

Given that everyone seems to think it is spam and we weren't advised it was happening, sorry Laura I am not real sure how many reply's you will get. ☹

I hope it goes well. Just double check it is legit??

Thanks

Nicole

Nicole Gruver
Customer Service Consultant

Back-Roads Touring
backroadstouring.com.au
T 1300 100 410 (Australia)
T 0800 223 369 (New Zealand)
F [+61 7 30418199](tel:+61730418199)
A: Level 4, 199 Grey Street, South Brisbane Q 4101

We now book flights! Request a quote [here](#)

From: Hugh & Dianne Polson [mailto:polson@bigpond.net.au]
Sent: Friday, 29 July 2016 8:46 AM
To: AP_Topdeck_BackRoadsTouring AU <info@backroadstouring.com.au>
Subject: survey

I have been sent an email re: a survey by an employee named Laura, from your company for her Master's Thesis.

This process seems unusual as is the distribution of past client information to employees

I have wondered if this is a form of SPAM.

Concerned Customer

Dianne

Appendix 5: Questionnaire