



BUYER TRIPS ABC

Visit Finland organizes buyer fam trips for foreign travel industry professionals in order to familiarize potential buyers with Finnish products and service supply. Destination visits offer you a great opportunity to personally showcase the services offered by your company. This is something to prepare carefully for.

You may combine the visit with a short event (1–2 h), during which service providers who are not included in the program may introduce their products.



Visit Finland



PREPARING FOR THE VISIT

The regional tourism organization is usually in charge of the travel arrangements, together with Visit Finland. A preliminary schedule for the visit should be finished in advance, i.e. approximately three months prior to the visit. In order to be able to target the invitations correctly, an initial framework for the schedule should be finished by the time invitations are sent out.

You should present an attractive description of your services, along with representative, high quality pictures. In order to make sure that the tour operators appreciate your services as much as possible, you should research them in advance:

- **Find out if your guests are travel agents, incoming agents, wholesalers, tour operators or meeting and congress vendors.**
- **Do your guests provide group, FIT, business to business (B2B), business to consumer (B2C) trips to leisure or business travelers (MICE, etc.)?**
- **What kind of products do your guests offer and are they similar to your products?**
- **What other destinations are included in the programme?
Has a similar product/experience already been presented?**
- **What position does your guest hold at their company and where do they live
(do not, for example, tell Chinese people how many Germans visit your destination)?**

Design your company presentation highlighting the strengths of your product. Do not, for example, present guests with hotels that are closed during that season if they are not presentable. If you feel that your services are not suited to the group in question, do not invite them for a visit at all. You must be enthusiastic about selling your services to the group!

Remember! Media visitors need a different kind of presentation than tour operators.



SCHEDULE OF THE PROGRAMME

Make sure to check the details of your guests' schedule in advance:

- **Where are they coming from and when?**
- **What is the duration of the visit?**
- **Are there any expected delays?**
- **When must the guests leave at the latest?**
- **Don't exceed the time limit of the visit and be flexible if the group's arrival is delayed.**
- **Please remember to inform your staff of the upcoming visit, so that they are better able to cater to the guests when they arrive.**

BROCHURE CONTENT AND PRICING INFORMATION

Give the participants information on your destination. Offer to provide them with material in English or some other language (not Finnish) via e-mail or on a USB stick. Please pay attention to the quality of your photographs!

The material should include pricing information on products/services (according to target group).

If you wish to give your guests presents, please avoid heavy or large objects.

Please remember that you should be able to provide your guests with, at least, approximate pricing information during a general discussion, e.g. the price range for the summer season.

In private price negotiations, you should cover gross/net prices, commissions depending on the other party, price validity, group size and seasonal effects on price, child and other discounts, age limits included. The more precise you are - the better!

Wholesalers, for example, need prices for the coming year well in advance, and the prices must differ from those offered to travel agents or tour operators. Meal prices are of special interest. Parties offering leisure time trips are interested in your service capacity and prices, both with and without commission.

Be sure to include special offers and extras to sweeten the deal in your materials and negotiations.





PRODUCT PRESENTATION

Customise your service presentation to the particular group. The person giving the presentation should be a natural speaker who is well acquainted with the product. You should not give the responsibility of giving the presentation to an inexperienced intern. Give a comprehensive presentation of your service and be sure to include new and particularly interesting or unique products. Be prepared to answer any questions. Stories are interesting.

PRACTICAL TIPS FOR THE PRESENTATION:

- Be on time.
- Welcome the group, introduce yourself and give the group members your business card. Stay with the group for the entire visit.
- Make sure that you, as well as the services and facilities you present, look tidy.
- Do not be preoccupied with other issues during the event (e.g. do not answer the phone during your presentation).
- Practice your pitch, include also interesting statistics (how many foreign tourists have visited the destination, from which countries, etc.).
- Place your product in your area, i.e. tell the group about your region, its history and culture, as well as other services in the area, and where to get further information. Be sure to also mention how your service complements the other services in the area. Tour operators often sell the entire destination to their customers.
- Inform your guests of your destination's accessibility: distance from the airport / train station / bus stop, any transport options you may provide, etc.
- Make detailed plans of what to show your guests and make an effort to show everything as their customers would experience it (e.g. do not present leisure time tour operators with conference rooms).
- If you are offering program services, tell your guests about how your company takes safety issues into consideration (safety certificates, route length / degree of difficulty, equipment, etc.).
- Listen to your guests, i.e. let them tell you about their own customers and experiences, and show them more services, if necessary. Be diplomatic about cultural differences (e.g. food, touching when greeting, other manners, taboos, etc.) and avoid discussing politics, religion or human rights issues.
- Give your guests time: time for questions (and answer them either immediately or later), time to take photographs and look at details more closely.

If you are offering program services, the tour operator will want to know the size of the groups you can accommodate in terms of equipment, what kind of insurance you have, what languages are offered, what the equipment is like, etc. Operators serving individual customers will want to know what other activities are available in the area and how to access further information.



REFRESHMENTS

The visit to your destination is one part of a larger entity. Meals during the program are an important part of the experience and should be different each day. This means that you should coordinate any meals with other destinations.

Observe the following to ensure that your guests enjoy their meals:

- **Pleasant surroundings:** considerate hosts, aesthetic presentation, clearing used plates away quickly.
- **Menu:** talk the group through the menu (make note of any locally sourced ingredients).
- **Serve both alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks for dinner.**
- **Service:** Finns are used to self-service, but providing good service during meals promotes sales.
- **Local facts:** invite a representative of the area to give an overall presentation of the services and destinations in the area. The dinner table is often one of the best places to get to know your guests better and sell your product/area.
- **Dietary restrictions:** find out any dietary restrictions in advance, and discreetly enquire who the special meal is for on the day.
- **Religious/ethnic dietary restrictions:** find out any religious dietary restrictions and preferences in advance (Chinese people, Indians, Muslims, Jews, etc. in particular).
- **Feedback:** ask the group to provide feedback on the meal and the overall experience



Observe the guests' customs. In southern Europe, lunch is not eaten before midday and dinner is eaten relatively late after 8 p.m. Asians are accustomed to starting their dinner before 7 p.m., having rice for breakfast and drinking their water warm/hot. It is recommended that Asians are served one Asian meal (at a Chinese restaurant) during a four-day visit.

AFTER SALES MARKETING AND FEEDBACK

If any information requested by the guests is not readily available, you should provide this information afterwards, via e-mail, for example. You may use this opportunity to also thank the guest for their visit.

Add the participants onto your mailing list and answer their queries and questions promptly. Remember to keep the members of the group up-to-date on any changes to your product. Follow-up on any sales leads surfacing during the visit.

Visit Finland is glad to receive any feedback on the visit: whether the visit has boosted sales of your destination in new sales channels, whether you have had an increase in the number of customers in the target segment in question, etc.



Visit Finland

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