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The Attractive Power of Rural Destinations and a Synergistic Community Cooperative Approach: A "Tourismability" Case

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Abstract: The recent climate change, food scandals, pollution and work-related stress, are affecting life in big cities and tourism is suffering changes expanding its typical boundaries. The past decades were characterized by the tourism choice of exotic destinations; nowadays, a route inversion would be visible and remote and inner destinations are acquiring value and attractiveness. According to this perspective, administrators and event organizers are planning and structuring strategies ensuring memorable experiences for the tourists. In the sense of sustainable development, important aspects are cooperative approaches and capability to integrate traditions and expectations. The proposed research work focuses the attention on the analysis of 15 semi-structured interviews through SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) and perception analysis on an event called "Dream of a night ... to that town" provided by the Municipality of Colobraro, Basilicata Region (Italy). The proposition of the research would focus the attention on a case study able to form not a top-down/bottom-up, but a horizontal strategy, a sharable best practice for the whole tourism sector in rural areas that would make truly effective the State decentralization, in which the small communities' activism configures crucial source of competitiveness. The case proposed, contrasting modern lifestyles and common tourism choice, would be able to redirect the concept of attractiveness in privileging remote places that could offer memorable tourism experiences. So, a promotional "tourismability" strategy, integrating agricultural connotates of the territory with heritage, traditions, myths and legends, through a synergistic community cooperative approach, would be necessary to constitute an identitary, attractive, memorable and immersive tourism experience in rural areas.

Keywords: rural areas; tourism; cooperation; development; local community; sustainability; tourismability

1. Introduction

In light of recent climate change, food scandals, pollution, and work-related stress due to daily life in big cities, tourism is changing its forms, evading typical boundaries. While in the past exotic destinations were preferred [1–3], nowadays even the most remote and inner destinations [4,5] are becoming available and attractive. In fact, administrators and organizers operating in these places are forming strategies to guarantee attractiveness, following state and regional guidelines (www.agenziacoesione.gov.it). Some bet everything on food [6–12], and others on cultural heritage [13–16]. Specifically, the proposed case would connect both and goes further for a holistic tourism experience, involving the main community and stakeholders in general, to create unexplored memorable [17–20] hybrid experiences placing the tourist at the center of the scene.

The recent Covid-19 pandemic (www.who.int) will change tourism choices and, unavoidably, even more remote places will shift the pool of visitors to more developed coastal locations.

Tourists' needs are drastically changing, focusing on different paradigms than in the past, and with growing environmental awareness and attention to sustainable development of destinations where events are offered [6]. The need for naturalness, the memory of origins, the rediscovery of traditional flavors and aromas will push tourism to specific attractive pristine areas, where silence, nature, and peace can create optimal conditions, not only for participation in events, festivals, and exhibitions, but also for tourism with the purpose of longer stays.

Already for years some now-forgotten places and those never considered as tourism destinations have started to form strategies to increase their attractiveness, even in remote and internal areas, such as the area that the authors propose in this research as a case study and a best practice. Of course, careful administrators and organizers pay attention to the prospects of events and festivals in terms of opportunities for places where isolation, emigration, and lack of work seem to be the main critical factors of failure [4]. On the contrary, these factors could be triggers to strategically orient creativity [21], following traditions of the past, mixed with folklore, typical foods and beverages, aromas, and flavors, involving tourists in a hybrid experience. To follow this objective, specific factors should be considered: community involvement [22–24] and stakeholder engagement [25,26]. These would make co-created strategies depicting high added value for "unmentionable" places and unpredictable destinations, or in any case places scarcely considered, to become internationally renowned attractions (www.bbc.com/travel/gallery/20171029-the-italian-village-that-cant-be-named).

The research design starts from a tripartite direction based on the low interest in inner areas (rural/urban tourism), suggested by Hall and Sharples [27], including the integration of the agricultural perspective inherent in rural life; the still not fully developed research production of tourism related to events and festivals, already noted by Folgado-Fernández et al. [6]; and the low interest in investigating cooperative conditions and community involvement for rural tourism development (Figures 1 and 2).

Figure 1. Geographic location. Source: our processing from open source web images.

An important clarification needs to be made in terms of the scope of the research. The proposed case study intends to understand how aspects of the agricultural supply chain and traditions attributable to its lifestyle can be configured in a process of sociocultural integration relating to territorial tourism promotion and its heritage, becoming a crucial success factor balanced by the ideation of a co-built tourism scene.

The research work aims to shape the outline of a sustainable rural tourism development strategy case (ability + tourism + sustainability = "tourismability") by a single town between two inner areas, Montagna Materana (Materan Mountain) and the bordering Mercure Alto Sinni Valle Sarmento (Mercure High Sinni Sarmento Valley) and National Park of Pollino (Figure 1). Using a case study, a festival named "Sogno di una notte . . . a quel paese" ("Dream of a night . . . to that town"), and identifying Colobraro town (Basilicata region, Italy), an agricultural territory located in the south of Italy, the authors consider the proposed event as a field of study related to a renewed need for naturalness as a source of tourism

for neglected areas in the shadow of coastal tourism. The authors try to identify the determinants of the created attractiveness both on the administrators'/organizers' and the community's/tourists' side (perception analysis), investigating the satisfaction, motivations, and revisit intention of tourists, the impact on the community, involvement and loyalty strategies, pre- and post-travel experience, type of tourism, etc., according to strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) analysis based on a qualitative approach through 15 semi-structured interviews [28–33] integrating the main axes in the literature [6,34–38].
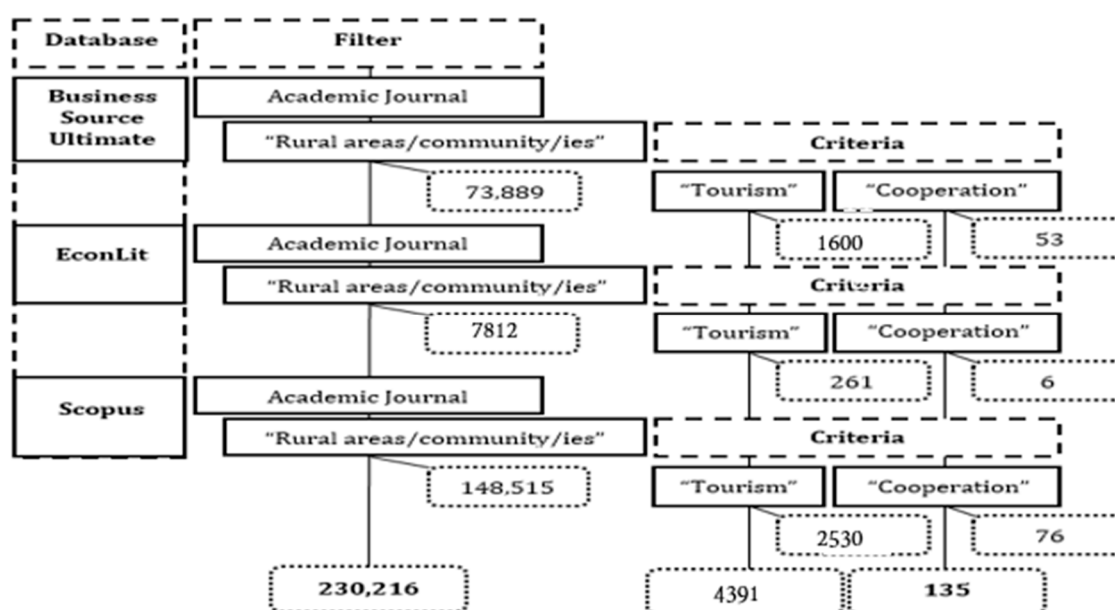

Figure 2. Gap identification. Source: our processing.

The semi-structured interviews involve several systematically mapped categories [39,40]. The approach makes it possible to provide important perspectives from stakeholders that are easily comparable. The data collection and interpretative analysis show critical and strengthening factors, presenting views on potential development and managerial implications.

Concerning the formal structure of the paper, Section 1 briefly introduces the main points of the research; Section 2 considers gap identification and research questions (RQs); Section 3 focuses the attention on a detailed literature review enhanced by Section 3.1, focused on going beyond the mainstream literature on food tourism, and Section 3.2, specifying the interconnections between globalization, sustainability, and ruralness in terms of new tourism perspectives. Section 4 outlines the main materials and methods; Section 5 frames the territorial geographical context; Section 6 shows the main results through Table 1; Table 2 involving the SWOT analysis of the investigated case through the Section 6.1, specifying rural tourism development and immersive events, focusing on the case of "Dream of a night . . . to that town", and Section 6.2 which provides result interconnections. Section 7 concludes the paper. The authors also provide an appendix (Appendix A), including Table A1 integrating the interviews results.

Table 1. Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) analysis of the "Dream of a night … to that town" event.

Criteria	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Administrators and organizers	-Renewal capability, huge hospitality, people have an experience never seen before	-Upgrade and mass opening could change the identity of the event	-Balance created is not to be changed	-Physical limits of absorbing tourism
	-Authenticity, originality, gratuity, genuineness and comedy	-Unexpected proliferation of mass tourism	-Better management of the flow of people	-Road infrastructure
	-Originality, aggregation, charm, cultural growth		-Event structure is solid	-Mass tourism could cause loss of originality and identity
	-Originality of the theme and expressive type	-Physical limits of unexpected tourism boom	-More resources for scenography and organization	-Depopulation creates difficulties for future event propositions and probable change
			-Expansion of the event, not only in summer	-Initial competition with other similar events
Hospitality operators	-Originality and joy	-N/F	-N/F	-Tourism boom could create a loss of subsequent interest
	-Culturally very beautiful	-N/F	-Improving and enhancing the food festival	
	-Native and original products			
Retailers	-Theatricality, local actors, immersiveness	-Excessive attendance	-External involvement to enhance quality	-Initial competition with other similar events
Families	-Irony and originality	-Physical limits in terms of road infrastructure	-Extension of event beyond the summer	-Initial competition with other similar events
	-Transformation of perceived negativity into objective positivity	-N/F	-Unamplified voices of actors	-N/F
			-Actors' professionalism	
	-Social aggregation, cooperation, territorial promotion in terms of traditions and folklore	-N/F	-Construction of talent discovery	-Mass tourism management
			-Better management of vast tourism mass	
			-Every year we try to improve some imperfections	
Educational institutions, religious and cultural associations	-Protagonism of a community eager for redemption linked to historical vicissitudes	-Not optimal road conditions	-Greater enhancement of territory for multi-day proposals, events spread over the whole year, seasonal adjustment of the proposal	-Fragmentation of proposal between various territories
	-Community building its fortune	-Still little availability of accommodations	-Develop and enhance connections among different proposals in territories	-N/F
	-Originality	-N/F	-N/F	-Possible change in constant search for renewal
	-Completeness of the offer and participation.			
	-External projection and originality	-N/F	-N/F	
	-Participation of the local community and tourists			

Table 1. *Cont.*

Criteria	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Tourists	-Immersive involvement is fascinating	-Excess of people	-Further extension of dates	-Too many features harm the possibility of fully experiencing the immersive experience
	-Myth and tradition in favor of the territory and attraction	-Winding road risks interruptions and difficulty in reaching, but is also characteristic	-Study dates with less seasonality	-Repetitiveness and renewal can conflict
	-Originality of the itinerant structure		-Inserting the experience in a circuit (network) that includes other events and locations in the region and neighboring regions	-Dialect can be both a risk for nonregional tourists and a peculiarity
	-Genuineness			-Initial competition with other similar events

Source: our processing. N/F, not found.

Table 2. SWOT analysis of strategic involvement/cooperative approach.

Criteria	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Administrators and organizers	-Audience creation through education	-Residual resistance to involvement	-Creating more involvement	-Opening event building to non-professionals
	-Community event building through ethical commitment	-N/F		-Complete opening of public sphere
	-Breaking down ideological barriers			
	-Active co-creation of an outcome, cultural growth for local youth	-N/F	-Strengthening external networks	-Probable individualism and protagonism
	-Socialization moment and feeling of redemption that concrete action leads to achieving the objective			
	-Breaking down barriers	-N/F	-Involvement and cooperative approach in the advanced phase	-Extralocal involvement could change
	-Strong commitment, youth grew up with the event			
Hospitality operators	-Making everyone feel like protagonists and creators	-Sense of internal competition	-N/F	-Depopulation directly connected to success of the event
	-Breaking down barriers	-N/F	-Establishing greater relationships with suppliers and entrepreneurs	-N/F
	-Community made this event its own fantasy and active participation gave rise to creativity			

Table 2. *Cont.*

Criteria	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Retailers	-Desire for redemption and rebirth led to people's cooperative activism	-Small inconveniences for those who live close to the event route	-Greater involvement of youth local and external agents	-Probable ideological barriers
Families	-Central involvement of youth community	-Lack of generational renewal	-More than this cannot be done	-N/F
	-Determination, union, collaboration, and desire to do things together	-N/F	-It can always grow	-N/F
	-Breaking down barriers	-Increasingly difficult to involve youth (depopulation)	-It cannot be improved yet, but the voluntary base is a little smaller	-N/F
Educational institutions, religious and cultural associations	-Great ability to make community	-N/F	-Greater involvement in public–private partnerships and construction of external networks	-Involvement would not create penalties
	-Strong vision to not fear strategic possibility of proposing something big in a very small area			-N/F
	-Almost the whole population is actively involved in event organization	-N/F		
	-Breaking down barriers to acceptance		-N/F	-Strict connection with budgetary aspects
	-Creating a pervasive mechanism that can activate extraordinary emotional forces	-N/F	-N/F	
	-Empathic involvement			
Tourists	-Belief in the project	-N/F	-N/F	-N/F
	-Strong commitment	-N/F	-N/F	-Depopulation risk could lead subsequent events to draw from external professional pools, distorting the event
	-Recruiting local people and non-professional actors for their growth over time			

Source: our processing. N/F, not found.

2. Gap Identification and RQs

Events and festivals are great opportunities for tourism development and they are increasingly being organized. Huge cities and small towns in inner and remote areas are developing capabilities in organizing events and festivals to attract tourists, in order to achieve positive results and returns for the territory. Folgado-Fernández et al. [6] suggested that huge events are catalysts of change for urban systems and their impacts are well investigated in the literature [41–44], but research works related to small events, especially in rural areas, are scarce. The authors tried to fill this gap according to three directions of investigation (Figure 2). Figure 2 introduces the gap identification through interrogation of three databases—"Business Source Ultimate", "EconLit", and "Scopus". Using filters ("Academic journal") and combined criteria ("Rural areas-community/ies", "Tourism", and "Cooperation") it was possible to show the production of research on the specific theme.

In this sense, gap identification is strictly related to the following: (1) lower interest in investigating specific issues provided by inner areas, as noted by Hall and Sharples [27]; (2) the scarcity in the literature of studies on events and festivals, as noted by Folgado-Fernández et al. [6]; and (3) less research identified by the authors on rural areas and rural communities according to tourism and the collaborative synergic involvement approach (cooperation) of the community in event-making (Figure 2). In addition to Figure 2, the authors provide Figure 3 which identifies a clear frame on the trend of research production related to the specific theme investigated, specifically based on Scopus data, according to the three levels of gap identification mentioned above ("Rural areas-community/ies", "Tourism", and "Cooperation").
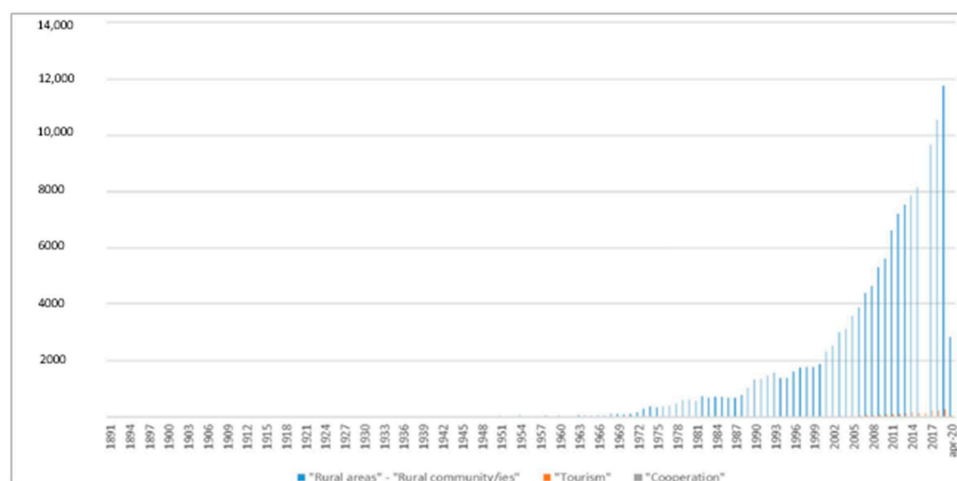

Figure 3. Longitudinal trend: third-level gap. Source: our processing.

As suggested by Luo [45], the focus should be more on the coordination processes related to community development.

Lee [46] noted that, notwithstanding the fact that local governments play a crucial role in community development, especially concerning small towns, only a few studies have been conducted with the aim of investigating the relationships involved in creating niches of cooperation for event tourism in inner areas, as well as considering local government policies, individual perceptions, loyalty creation, and community involvement as determinants of acceptance and success, minimizing negative impacts and discontent.

Based on the guidelines mentioned above, the authors shaped a precise research design, properly built to close these gaps, in an attempt to add to the academic literature related to integrating rural areas, agriculture, and tourism, and implementing a multidisciplinary view of different investigation perspectives. In fact, Shone et al. [47] addressed the possibility of investigating tourism development through the lens of local administrators' strategies and adjustments for rediscovering

the heritage of inner areas, considering not only tourists' perceptions, but local actors' points of view as well.

This study tries to fill that gap with the support of a SWOT analysis, already used in several areas of management and tourism research [5,48], in addition to a perception analysis [49].

Lee [46] suggested that research on festival and event tourism has only reached a high level since 2008, considering several perspectives of studies conducted on tourism, marketing, impact, benefits and negative effects, preservation of culture and heritage, and valorization, host and guest considerations, satisfaction, motivations, etc.

Along these lines, it is crucial to investigate interventions by local governments in relation to the responses of communities and tourists to evaluate the beneficial or destructive impact of events. Festivals and events based on regional and local traditions, heritage, products, handicrafts, folklore, food and beverage, etc., seem to be a rapidly growing and developing phenomena [6], but they need facilities and public–private support for their implementation.

The Basilicata region in Italy is mainly characterized by a slow pace and peacefulness, a geographical area able to maintain fixed traditions in both space and time. On the contrary, the rurality would show a double face.

On the one hand, exacerbated by globalization, critical factors and aspects such as emigration, isolation, and depopulation create urgency in satisfying needs such as job opportunities, entertainment, essential services like socio-medical assistance, etc.

A recent study published in *Sustainability* about community-based cooperatives [4] related to a new business model based on an approach of synergistic cooperative involvement can provide inspiration for a valid analysis research protocol (Figure 4) structured on the pillars of the main needs of small-town residents (including tourism).
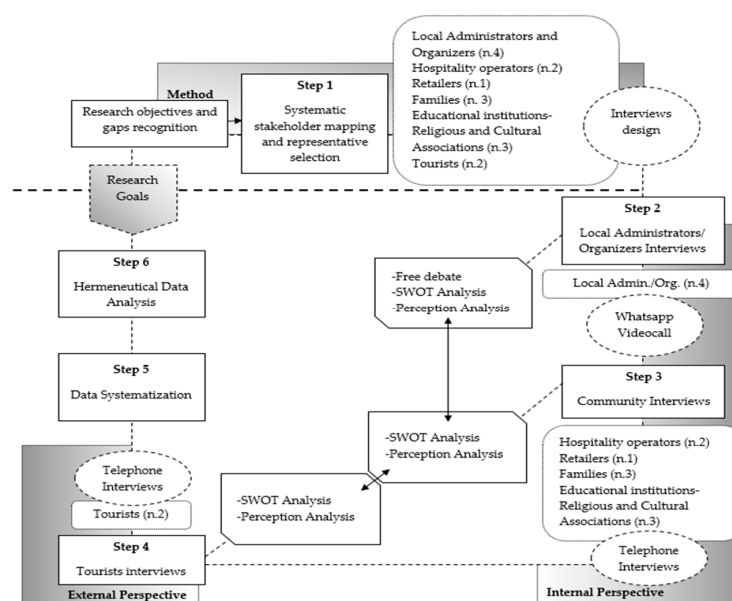

Figure 4. Design and research protocol. Source: our processing.

That view made it possible to investigate as a case study [50–52] the local government strategy of development and marketing (starting from a cooperative inclusive public ratio agenda) in Colobraro municipality. Once they identified the possibility to structure and integrate a model of sustainable development with a particular focus on the exploitation of dormant resources (characteristics of the territory in terms of traditions, myths and legends [53], and dialectal songs [54]), the administrators tried in 2010 to develop a strong attraction to the territory and made a strong appeal to rediscover the need for naturalness.

A sensory experience and a cooperative approach produced optimal results for an almost forgotten place [55], in fact, that cooperative approach guides this paper, shaping the conditions of a sustainable tourism strategy [56,57] through value co-production [23,58] to create a competitive advantage [59].

Concerning the methodological preparation of the study, it started, as mentioned above, with recognizing the gaps, in order to form the following research questions:

- **RQ1:** How does the cooperative approach constitute a competitive advantage in the implementation of sustainable tourism for rural areas, integrating agricultural aspects and traditions?
- **RQ2:** How can a real tourism strategy built on a collaborative basis create high attractive value for a destination through the implementation of a hybrid experience?

3. Literature Review

It seems to be well-known and recognized that spreading tourism would have strong potential to contribute to regional growth and development [12]. In fact, on the economic side, nowadays tourism can be considered as one of the main strategic points in job creation, exchange trade, and improved development standards of local residents and can support intersecting sectors, shaped by the nonsmoking sector [34,60], which means the sector adds value without pollution. In contrast, another sector that would be important for regional development is agriculture.

The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines "tourism" as "the practice of traveling for recreation", according to the meaning of free time traveling and traveling for pleasure, and envisaging other considerations such as "the guidance or management of tourists", "the promotion or encouragement of touring", and "the accommodation of tourists" (www.merriam-webster.com).

Yeoman and McMahon-Beatte [61] describe tourism as political capital, a visionary state, and a privileged push toward affluence and exclusivity in having a fluid experience in a post-modernist world. A seminal definition of tourism (1986) was provided by the European Commission, which included as tourism activities "all journeys of more than 24 h for recreation, business, study or health purposes" (http://aei.pitt.edu/5410/1/5410.pdf).

In this sense, the term "tourism" shows different facets, subject to various investigations from different survey perspectives, one on the tourist side, and others in terms of the local community and administrators. In fact, the research goes beyond the characteristics of tourists choosing one place over another, but proposes an integrated point of view oriented to rural areas, memorable experiences, agriculture, traditions, festivals, food and beverage, and management.

Thanks to an increasing awareness of the environment, there are the FridaysForFuture movement (www.fridaysforfuture.org) and the green economy perspective [62]. Integrating the agricultural sector and tourism would be a great strategy to boost inner areas, overcoming local particularities for a competitive advantage in the future.

Agriculture and tourism seem to be developed in segments of the Italian economy (https://web.archive.org/web/20121030145348/http://www.inea.it/public/pdf_articoli/1679.pdf.), but every region does not have the same percentage. In fact, some regions are more devoted to tourism, others to agriculture, and others to industry and services.

According to the aforementioned, agriculture is practiced more or less in every country around the world [35], and it is recognized as "the science, art, or practice of cultivating the soil, producing crops, and raising livestock and in varying degrees the preparation and marketing of the resulting products" (www.merriam-webster.com).

For some years, with the emergence of agritourism, rural tourism, industrial scandals related to food [9,63–67], and the depletion of tradition in the rapid and frenetic life of big cities [68], there has been a gradual convergence of the two sectors (agriculture and tourism), evident above all in some national and regional strategies for enhancing the territories. Tourism is growing quickly, and the last few decades were crucial for attractive destinations, providing a specific boost for many regions.

The competition among nations, regions, cities, and small towns appears to be stronger, and the rise of performance-oriented and critical review web sites can influence, prioritize, and suggest places

to avoid. So, a competitive sentiment among destinations is dramatically rising. At the same speed, the need for evaluation is becoming crucial [45].

In destination management, paying attention to tourist expectations and memorability [17–20] is becoming a real competitive advantage, in parallel with territorial offerings. Recently, tourism demand appears to be significantly connected with pull and push factors [69].

It would be possible to consider the former as a determinant of destination choice and the latter to investigate the motives of travel [70], motivated by needs [71]. The economic benefits of tourism are obvious [45], but the possibility of integrating it with agriculture is relatively new, comparable to the alternative hospitality generated by the emergence of B&Bs [72].

Since 1961, the OECD (The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development) Tourism Committee has tried to give governments a clear framework for strategies related to the tourism sector. A document titled "Tourism Strategies and Rural Development" provided by the OECD (1994) (www.oecd.org/cfe/tourism/2755218.pdf) can be considered as a starting point for rural tourism recognition and opportunity.

Tourism has long received priority attention by governments [45], but integrating tourism as a strategic issue for improvement is relatively recent. As early as 1986, the European Commission transmitted to the Council the document "Community action in the field of tourism", (aei.pitt.edu/5 410/1/5410.pdf) considering tourism not as simply an asset for economic activity and job generation, but an important function to promote knowledge sharing in a multinational community, shaping the lines of "rural tourism".

Concerning the definition of "rural tourism", Busby and Rendle [73] identified 13 characteristics, reporting the main concepts as the ones provided by Hoyland [74], Denman and Denman [75], Davies and Gilbert [76]: *temporary accommodation* and the *active provision* and *relation* to the *working farm sharing rural and farming life*.

These connotates are focused more on a strict connection with farms, but more recently, rural tourism is changing into a "rurality experience" [77], specifying the triple perspective of integration, sustainability, and endogeneity [78], and concentrating on sociocultural aspects connected with the history and heritage of the territory [57]. In this way, tourism could be a crucial point of diversification for rural economies, especially those oriented toward defined seasonality.

Direct and indirect connections could exist between tourism and local communities. Although huge cities and tourism-based regions make efforts to maximize economic benefits, in parallel, rural areas are starting to produce linkages between employment and tourism, increasing their attractiveness and the presence of tourists, and enlarging expenditures and longevity [12].

According to Ashworth and Tunbridge [42], the importance of traditional heritage-based tourism is considerable as a segment in rapid development, so it would be crucial to investigate the aspects determining its success according to local authorities and specific marketing and managerial attitudes toward organizing attractive events that can bring economic benefits to rural destinations.

In a complementary way, inner areas with long rural traditions cover 60% of the national territory, and thanks to the National Strategy for Inner Areas (SNAI), municipalities characterized as distant from cities but capable of guaranteeing essential services are developing new business models to increase their attractiveness in pursuit of the interest of the local community (www.programmazioneec onomica.gov.it/2019/05/23/strategia-nazionale-delle-aree-interne/).

The research is specifically intended to add another contribution to the scientific production of tourism in rural areas and the collaborative approach. In this sense, it would be possible to implement the study within the PIC (Participation, Incremental growth, Collaboration) framework provided by Timothy and Tosunc [13].

Thanks to this interpretive paradigm, it would be possible to outline the three pillars of the planning process for a synergistic community cooperative approach to enhance the attractive power of rural destinations: participatory, incremental, and cooperative/collaborative.

According to Mulcahy [38], critical success factors from an integrated tourism perspective would meet the following criteria: (1) start from the basics, in which quality, authenticity, and locality are crucial; (2) build coalitions (i.e., public–private partnerships); (3) spread the message together (i.e., promotion); (4) develop and promote a holistic approach (i.e., comprehensive); (5) ensure a solid base of local culture; and (6) develop a network abroad.

Integrating an interpretive analysis of the data would ensure that most of these criteria would be met, shaping the event "Dream of a night . . . to that town" as a strong, creative, strategically oriented, and attractive solution for implementing rural tourism.

3.1. Food Tourism but Not Necessarily

With a view to achieving the above objectives given by Mulcahy [38], territories are following the line of including food and beverage in rural tourism. Physiological needs such as eating and drinking can be considered the main needs of humans [71] and described as the first steps in a needs pyramid. Nowadays, eating and drinking activities have reached an enhanced position in terms of being status symbols [79,80], reversing the pyramid [81] in terms of tourism experiences. In fact, Italian regions like Tuscany [8] are structuring travel propositions based on food and beverage itineraries. Food and beverage-oriented events and festivals are growing all over the world [82,83], becoming more than life necessities, but an important part of socializing [84], but in some cases a specific motivation for traveling [69,85–91].

According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization [92], tourism based on gastronomic experiences is considerable as a new market in the tourism sector that is rapidly growing [38,93]. So, this segment plays a crucial role in terms of competitiveness and attractiveness, and it can be assumed that there is global competition among nations, regions, cities, and small towns to become internationally recognized as specific tourism destinations [94,95].

While nations, regions, and big cities in the era of globalization [96,97] are competing for huge events such as the Olympic Games [98], rural destinations are betting on cultural heritage, and on traditional food and beverage experiences to support their economy, and are specializing in making local and regional attractions distinct from others thanks to food and drink, artifacts, heritage, and other territorial products that Emmendoerfer et al. [99] describe as identitary specialization (IS) (e.g., the art of the Neapolitan *pizzaiuolo*, an intangible world cultural heritage (www.ich.unesco.org), guaranteeing a match between destination choice and satisfaction [69,85,100].

According to Csurgò et al. [84], gastronomic tourism emerged as a complementary service to the travel experience and to increase the success of regional and local tourism economies [101]. Actually, it is well known that gastronomic tourism is a global fact [102].

Once we have individual definitions of tourism, agriculture, farm tourism, and rural tourism, the question is, then, what is food tourism [103]?

Sanchez-Canizares and Lopez-Guzman [104] indicated several terms related to food tourism in the literature and there is also considerable evidence for the importance of food as a determinant in choosing a destination for travel. Mulcahy [38], citing Dursteler [105], confirmed that food was the principal benchmark in decision-making, positively influencing the tourist experience of a destination [106], also influencing feelings when identifying destinations for travel [6].

Food and beverage travel can be considered more than a niche activity. In a study on 10 countries, 59% affirmed that over the decades, food has become more important in travel choices [11]. In contrast, the interchangeable use of the terms mentioned above would not create a common understanding among academics because of the perspective with which the phenomenon is investigated. In fact, the tourism experience related to gastronomy includes several dimensions and perspectives for investigation. Choice can be influenced by the viewpoint of managers and marketers on the one hand, and the sociocultural perspective on the other hand [107].

The authors' intention is to identify food tourism as part of the wider tourism experience related to rurality. Food tourism can be considered as a precise motivation to travel, but in cases other than the

one proposed, it is possible to show a more complex way to promote territories, in which food and beverage is just a part of the experience that rural areas offer to tourists. This could make them attractive places both for their intrinsic characteristics, matching tourists' specific motivations [70], and for creative collaboration [21,38] with a holistic approach in forming strategies to produce memorable events steeped in heritage (including food, beverage, traditions, aromas, flavors, etc.) So, gastronomy would be considered as alternative tourism experience that could be included in wider offerings from a rural perspective, creating "a peak experience", as expressed by Quan and Wang [37].

Rural tourism appears in the literature strictly related to food tourism also thanks to a dramatic increase of consumer trust in local/rural food, km 0 production, and shorter food chains [63,108] due to several food scandals [9,64–67]. That has increased scholarly interest over the past decade in terms of the important ramifications on local agricultural economies [101].

3.2. Globalization: Sustainability and Ruralness

Today, in the age of globalized modernity that Bauman [97,109] described as "liquid society", the world is moving faster than in the past, leading to discontinuity [110]. In fact, the strict (economic) relation between urban systems and villages (agricultural places) is gradually becoming weaker [111], eroding borders that previously existed through the rapid loosening of tradition.

From that perspective, derived from the dualities of urban–rural and industrial–agricultural, arose the need for sustainability involving every area of social life. In this sense, a crucial point for the future is sustainability, and tourism follows this line of development. The principal inspiration derives from agriculture and tourism, determined by the necessity to sustain production and quality in rural areas, creating opportunities to add value. A World Commission on Environment and Development report titled "Our Common Future" [112] makes clear humans' ability to ensure sustainable development to satisfy our present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to satisfy theirs.

Furthermore, in economic–financial terms, the concept of sustainability is growing in importance. In fact, sustainability is considered as the ability to ensure long-lasting prosperity thanks to economic and social inclusion with less dependence on finite resources [113].

Kuhlman and Farrington [114] affirmed that there are infinite ways to define sustainability, but the sense and meaning of the notion is maintaining well-being for a long to indefinite period of time.

The need for sustainability is crucial, and the recent Covid-19 pandemic reminds us that planet Earth needs care. To expand the role of sustainability in tourism, it would be simple to think of how much tourism is able to generate foreign exchange, employment, etc., but this reasoning is also valid for attractive areas all around the world. In contrast, underdeveloped tourism areas are at risk of collapse. If the concept of sustainability signifies a balance of resources, no place should survive at the expense of another.

Thanh Long and Nguyen [34] consider sustainable development of the tourism industry according to Muller [115], as a balance between cultural and economic health considering people's welfare, and caring and for protecting natural resources for the satisfaction of tourists.

Jessop [116] theorized the transition from the national Keynesian welfare state to the post-national workfare state of Schumpeter, basing the assumptions on promoting innovation, strengthening competitiveness, and subordinating social policies to the needs of the labor market.

This view appears to be drastically destructive to the traditional sphere and conditions of rural life, subordinating villages to cities. Nowadays, the renewed recall of the past is becoming the legacy and heritage shown by the present approach to tourism. Local administrators must be able to understand this and exploit it for the benefit of the territory, based on the fact that sustainability assumes a crucial role in tourists' destination choice [45]. Consequently, tourism is changing its forms. Opportunities and perspectives can open new scenarios. The need to put people at the center of the scene by attempting to renew interest in a "new humanism" [117] and rediscover traditions will be the determinants of tourism choices.

The preference for rurality recalls an ancient internal human condition to favor a balance between biological, psychological, and social conditions [118] fragmented by globalization and subsequent homogenization. The choice to pursue more distinctive and original experiences [119] is functional to capitalism and status symbols, but in rural tourism the sense of exclusivity reflects the need for well-being that only nature can give.

The majority of rural economic production derives from agriculture and obviously occurs in rural and remote areas [35]. Traditionally, rural development has focused on extracting or exploiting natural resources, but to face the challenges of a post-modern society and the critical factors linked with rural life, it has become crucial to make a "way out" for the development of local communities related to economic growth and opportunities.

Rural tourism, if implemented well, could hypothetically contribute to socioeconomic growth, sustain community development, and provide a good image at the national and international level [119]. Through such an understanding, communities, led by administrators first, can activate virtuous circles [9] through which they can promote attractions to potential tourists, linking heritage and creative festivals, generating seasonal employment, excellence, and quality entertainment based on authenticity [120].

The proposal to create events strictly connected with the rural soul of the territory is an incredible opportunity to express unity and distinctive features. That objective can be pursued with creativity [21] and community involvement [121] through which food, heritage, handicrafts, culture, and historical traditions are reproduced in immersive experiences, which Quan and Wang [37] identify as peak experiences. These kinds of events, such as the huge ones as Olympics games, but in smaller dimensions, would become a crucial determinant of visitors' satisfaction and choice of destination, in addition to the positive word of mouth (WOM) they can generate [6,55,122–126]. That could evolve into potential alternatives for tourism opportunities and the local economy.

4. Materials and Methods

The first step of the methodology to answer the questions is to recognize the systematic mapping [127] of the stakeholders, selecting the main representative subjects and structuring the interview design [29–33] based on the main points in the literature provided by Thanh Long and Nguyen [34]; Slocum and Curtis [35]; Uysal and Sirgy [36]; Quan and Wang [37]; Folgado-Fernández et al. [6]; and Mulcahy [38]. The second and third steps (conducting interviews) are specifically structured to consider the internal perspective (administrators/organizers) strictly connected to the SWOT and perception analysis intended for tourists (external perspective). In the fifth step, the authors conduct data systematization, integrating the results of the survey, and in the sixth step they provide the interpretation needed for critical discussion.

Specifically, the semi-structured interviews (*n* = 15), conducted by WhatsApp video calls [128] and telephone calls [129,130], were developed by integrating the main lines of investigation in the literature and the respondents were selected through a systematic mapping of stakeholders; after free discussion with main administrators, the ones more involved in the organizational process were identified, instrumental and functional actors such as associations of various kinds, and representatives of retailers, local hospitality operators, and tourists.

Many of the subjects called to represent almost all the agents; this is due to the small number and limited size of the case study. The limited number of interviews among tourists is due to the difficulty of tracing these subjects (the interviews were conducted by telephone during the lockdown period due to Covid-19); in any case, the responses of these latter were balanced by the analysis of the reviews on one of the main web sites online, resulting in congruity.

According to Slocum and Curtis [35], it is important to investigate both motivations and perceptions related to the pre- and post-travel experience.

Uysal and Sirgy [36] specified that through the combination of motives and related positive perceptions, the concept of memorability takes shape, delineating the different phases of pre-trip, en route to the destination, at the destination, and post-trip with the intention to return.

In this sense, Quan and Wang [37] affirmed that a food experience would be functional according to the three conditions expressed. The same discourse would be valid for event tourism experiences that would be an extension of daily life or a supporting experience (e.g., when visiting places routinely or when directed to or situated in another destination to support the experience with an excursion, etc.)

By contrast, a peak experience would be created thanks to a balance between motivation and positive feelings and the perception of satisfying expectations.

In this sense, the peak experience would make a return visit possible by fixing the moment in memory (memorability).

According to the above discussion, the investigation perspective would be based both on internal perception (administrators/organizers) of what constitutes a peak experience and the external perception (tourists).

In this frame, it is crucial to consider how the local community is involved [13] and how the local government favors loyalty [6,46,87].

The investigation of the internal perspective (administrators and organizers) relies on the principles of critical success factors provided by Mulcahy [38]:

- Start from the basics (quality, authenticity, locality).
- Build coalitions (partnerships) and spread the message together (promotional strategies and WOM) in a holistic approach.
- Ensure a solid base of local culture and develop a network abroad.

The matching of results on these axes would ensure customer satisfaction perceived on the side of both administrators and tourists in terms of local offerings, infrastructure, food and beverage, services, and quality [34].

The sample involved a specific choice for organizers and administrators (closely connected with the creation of the event) and a randomized approach for the other clusters (connected to the territory and proximity to the event; total sample $n = 15$ (6 clusters)) was segmented in the following way: administrators and organizers ($n = 4$), community members as hospitality operators ($n = 2$), retailers ($n = 1$), families ($n = 3$), educational institutions and religious and cultural associations ($n = 3$), and tourists ($n = 2$). The need to include different perspectives in the sample and the relative reduced sample size reflect the dimension of the area investigated, which has, for example, 3 bars, 1 restaurant, and 2 secondary hospitality structures.

Starting from the literature review, research objectives, and gap recognition, the research design was structured following these main steps: (Step 1) the aforementioned systematic stakeholder mapping and representative selection of the sample, structuring interviews design for each cluster, including SWOT analysis and perception analysis; (Step 2) local administrator and organizer interviews provided by WhatsApp videocall preceded by a free debate; (Step 3) telephone interviews with community members; (Step 4) telephone interviews with tourists; (Step 5) data systematization, including interviews interconnections between the three two clusters considered as internal perspective (local administrators, organizers and community members) and external perspective (tourists); (Step 6) the considerations which emerged from the interviews were integrated and merged by the different perspectives, according to the SWOT and perception analyses, providing hermeneutical conclusive remarks in relation to the expressed research goals.

The semi-structured interviews were intended to explore a wide range of the key areas mentioned above, based on the fact that tourism in inner areas is a relatively new phenomenon that brings both possible benefits and possible drawbacks and imbalances.

It is therefore important not only to consider a point of view, but to integrate the different perspectives in order to construct a more truthful and complete frame.

That approach, on the one hand, permits the identification of the reasons for the choice of a specific kind of tourism, and on the other hand, underpins the determinants of a good rural tourism strategy based on local features that characterize a destination compared to others and the need for naturalness.

5. Territorial Geographical Context

There is no panacea that would make a unique tourism development strategy valid for each place, from rural to coastal, and in this sense, the same strategy cannot be defined and adopted everywhere [5]. For this reason, when consultants or administrators try to find a solution for territorial development through the tourism channel, it would be crucial to have local stakeholder involvement. That is the approach underlying the proposed study.

When the considerations referred to in a research study relate to local events, knowledge of the local environment, traditions, landscapes, foods and beverages, cultural heritage, infrastructure, etc., would be necessary. For this reason, an introduction to the territorial geographical context as area of investigation would be useful.

The research was conducted in the Basilicata region, one of the smallest regions of southern Italy (9992 km^2), where the labor force is distributed about 14% in the primary sector, compared to a national mean between 5% and 6%. The data underline the importance of agriculture for the territory, but not without difficulties due to the unfavorable soil characteristics, hydrological and climatic irregularities, lack of infrastructure, and splitting of properties in reclamation areas [131], which favored political confinement between 1930 and 1943 [54]. Valuable products are found in craftsmanship, and tourism has benefited from improved roads, but especially on the coast, due to the presence of large hotels [131].

The research focuses specifically on the summer event "Dream of a night . . . to that town" in the municipality of Colobraro (Matera province), and notes that studying a small town appears necessary.

Colobraro has ancient origins, traditions, aromas, flavors, and myths and legends of a peasant culture, like all of southern Italy, between Pollino National Park, the coast of the Ionian Sea, and Sinni Valley, located about 80 km from the district capital of Matera (www.matera-basilicata2019.it) [132].

To underline the ancient history of the small towns that comprise the Basilicata region, Racioppi [133] affirmed that many can be dated back to pre-medieval times, while other parts are typical of medieval times. To better frame the roughness of the territorial morphology and the rural harshness, Racioppi [133] deduced that if the Latin roots "colombarium", "apiarium", and "formicularium" indicate places where there are, respectively, pigeons, bees, and ants, "colubrarium" (the Latin name of Colobraro) would indicate a place where snakes live.

The small town of Colobrario rises between two inner areas, Montagna Materana (Materan Mountain) and the bordering Mercure Alto Sinni Valle Sarmento (Mercure High Sinni Sarmento Valley) and Pollino National Park.

The inner area of Mercure High Sinni Sarmento Valley comprises the municipalities of Calvera, Carbone, Castronuovo Sant'Andrea, Chiaromonte, Fardella, Francavilla in Sinni, San Severino Lucano, Senise, Teana, Viggianello, Castelluccio Inferire, Castelluccio Superiore, Rotonda, Cersosimo, Noepoli, San Costantino, Albanese, San Paolo Albanese, and Terranova di Pollino. Materan Mountain comprises the municipalities of Accettura, Aliano, Cirgliano, Carco, Gorgoglione, Stigliano, San Mauro Forte, and Oliveto Lucano. The Marmo Platano (Marble Plain) area comprises the municipalities of Balvano, Baragiano, Bella, Castelgrande, Muro Lucano, Pescopagano, and Ruoti. The Alto Bradano (High Bradano) area comprises the municipalities of Acerenza, Banzi, Forenza, Genzano di Lucania, Oppido Lucano, Palazzo San Gervasio, San Chirico Nuovo, and Tolve.

Colobraro municipality is considered a rural area within a wider regional context characterized by development problems (http://europa.basilicata.it/feasr/aree-psr/).

The population of the Basilicata region as of 1 January 2017 was about 570,365 (www.istat.it); about 94,000 reside in the four inner areas [134] (to see the areas: http://polaris.crea.gov.it/psr_2014_2020/Regioni/BASILICATA/MIS.%207/SOTTOMIS.%207.6/BAS_M7.6_2020_Bando.pdf). The inner areas represent a large portion of the national territory (52.7%) with 4261 municipalities (www.montagneinrete.it); the population of Basilicata, according to the most recent regional database and territorial accounting, is characterized by negative conditions in terms of decreasing population, declining birth rate, and growing mortality rate. In contrast, some positivity comes from the tourism sector; in fact,

it has been growing since 2000 and appears to have almost doubled, based on the number of tourists housed in accommodations since 2010 (http://basilicatadati.regione.basilicata.it/).

Concerning the strict relation between ruralness and tourism, the data from the most recent ISTAT (National Institute of Statistic) survey on agribusiness production show that in 2013 the region reached 809 million euros, equal to 8.2% of the overall added value produced by the regional economy.

Agri-food production involves 18,700 businesses (31.7% of the overall entrepreneurial base), with employment estimated at around 32,000 units of work, 17.1% of the total. A comparison with the national picture indicates a decidedly greater "weight" of agri-food at the regional level (http://basilicatadati.regione.basilicata.it).

From the advent of the National Strategy for Inner Areas (started in 2012–www.programmazio neeconomica.gov.it), direct actions to maintain territorial competitiveness in terms of sustainability have taken place. The aim is to face in the medium term the demographic decline of the inner areas with the objective to create new possibilities for income, ensuring accessibility to essential services (www.agenziacoesione.gov.it).

6. Results

6.1. Rural Tourism Development and Immersive Events: The Case of "Dream of a Night … to That Town"

According to a proposal by the inner area Montagna Materana (Materan Mountain), "being peripheral and rural does not mean being backward, but means having diverse problems and opportunities compared to other places".

Along these lines, the strategy for inner areas, according to agricultural, tourism, and services development, can work thanks to the support of the local economy betting on the huge environmental resources (Regione Basilicata -Dossier d'area organizzativo 2018)

Crispino [54] wrote about the small town of Colobraro (1187 inhabitants as of 1 January 2019 (http://dati.istat.it), which is "a little-known place, a small southern municipality not far from the Ionian Sea". The morphology that characterizes the place, situated between the Sinni and Agri valleys, is strongly mountainous-hilly, consisting of irregular elevations in the municipality of Colobraro: Monte Sant'argangelo (858 m), Serracortina (780 m), and Monte Calvario (789 m) on which the town is placed. The landscape has barren hills, rocks, and arenaceous sediments and the climate alternates between periods of drought and violent rains, the hydrography presents rivers with irregular flow, and there are mostly clayey soils that cause instability and landslides.

In a seminal book, De Martino [53] shaped the lines of cultural and traditional heritage of southern Italy, strictly related to myths and legends, superstitions and magic, rituals and popular beliefs, that nowadays appear totally unsuitable for current generations of people who live in the memory of a popular culture that has its roots in the antithetical intertwining of religion and superstition.

A great emigration took place between 1875 and 1928. That first wave was determined by emigrants from southern agricultural areas as a result of the economic crisis and poverty levels in to the north. Another wave of emigration occurred during the late 1950s and early 1960s, prompted by the low employment [135]. In contrast, several places in Basilicata, as in all of southern Italy, were renewed thanks to government intervention and the land reform in the 1950s [136].

The government, and especially local governments in terms of municipalities, which are closer to the residents, are the first responders to citizens' needs, and require incitement to trigger and boost the creation of virtuous processes of responsibility for a new cohesion, implementing an effective improvement of services, and meeting and satisfying widespread needs [137].

As Mastronardi and Romagnoli [4] identified critical factors derived from specific needs of people in rural and inner areas, in the same way, local administrators should intervene for the development of these places.

The municipality of Colobraro, with the aim to integrate history, food and beverage, traditions, territorial heritage, and ruralness, decided to create an annual festival named "Dream of a night

... to that town". The project started in 2010 thanks to good general involvement, in which local government intervention was crucial, justifying the success and festival attendees' satisfaction, with the intention to return.

The festival is held annually in Basilicata from 1 August to 1 September, from late afternoon to midnight. It ensures anthropological, theatrical, ethnic, musical, and food and beverage venues that can transmit the cultural traditions, natural beauty, and typical features of Colobraro and Basilicata. The event is divided into several parts: a welcome, historical museum exhibitions, visits to the historical center of the town (Bramea Prize for the most beautiful small town, Lucania), immersive theater, the festival and tasting experience, music and dance (www.basilicataturistica.it/attrattore/sogno-di-una-notte-a-quel-paese-colobraro).

So, festivals for rural areas, supported by local administrators and the entire community, appear to be a best practice for boosting tourism and attractiveness, as measured by benefits in terms of image and income [46].

In general, a public event is defined as a connection between natural elements and other overlapping elements, created thanks to intentionality and determined project orientation involving people and organizations, with or without the aim of making a profit [138].

Any event would tend to show strong value in terms of its impact on the territory [139]. Nowadays, a growing trend of events in both number and type as well as complexity is widely observed [140]. In addition, it is well known that events and festivals show social value, going beyond mere entertainment, breaking routines [141] in terms of moral and traditional aspects [142]. In contrast, the event organizers of "Dream of a night ... to that town" decided to develop an integrated, holistic, and strictly rural immersive experience.

While mountains are very popular tourism destinations in the world [5], the hilly inner areas of the Italian territory had little attractiveness until a decade ago (http://basilicatadati.regione.basilicata.it/).

Characteristics in terms of biodiversity, natural landscapes, and opportunities, as well as culinary, cultural, traditional, and sporting activities and resorts characterize the Alps [143]. In contrast, a harsher and harder nature, in some ways purer and less manipulated by humans, characterizes the internal areas of the Apennines of Basilicata, where scarce business opportunities and limited infrastructure slow down the tourism economy, making these places a choice for short-term holidays, or a conscious choice to get away from the daily routine of big cities.

A dichotomy brings up a question regarding the choice of ruralness as a holiday destination: is it conscious niche tourism or merely a temporary alternative?

The traditions and local authenticity of a destination represent something new to travelers [144]. For this reason, a strong internal motivation [145,146] would create a conscious [147] travel choice [148], with awareness of the possible risks.

Festivals and events (rural or not) are identifiable by two productive/destructive forces: hosts and attendees [149]. So, both perspectives need to be evaluated and considered.

Rural places can create excitement as unusual experiences, and at a time of social environmental awareness [150] can shape a state of mind and become a status symbol like exclusive exotic travel in past decades [1–3,148], with a taste of the regional culture being in contact with its traditions.

Several rural places have chosen to specialize in gastronomic tourism as a competitive advantage 71 [84,120,151,152]. Other places, like the one analyzed, chose a more comprehensive strategy to promote tourism in rural areas, which unfortunately remains based on conscious decisions and short-term preferences.

The possibility to offer more in terms of hospitality would renew the dichotomy. On the one hand, it would promote and develop a type of mass tourism, ensuring a higher income, probably at the expense of the pristine purity of the place. In contrast, and based on the accuracy in developing the event "Dream of a night ... to that town", Colobraro can ensure tourism and image promotion internationally, while preserving the key factors of naturalness that attract niche tourism for longer stays and a broader time frame other than just the festival in summer.

In terms of durability and sustainability [114,153], the concept of loyalty creation [27,87,154,155] is crucial, according to the pre- and post-travel experience [35], positively correlating tourists' decision-making process, expectations, and attraction to holiday destinations [6] for memorable tourism experiences [37].

So, thematic festivals are connected with the tourism experience and territorial identity that can result in the satisfaction of tourists, based on memorable parts of the trip to be shared with family, friends, etc., through stories, photos, and mementos (especially valid for immersive hybrid experiences like the one proposed). In addition, based on evidence in the literature, it is well known that positive relations among special events and promotion of local products, handcrafts, and souvenirs with logos, can subsequently engender loyalty to host places and encourage return trips in the future [6,87].

As mentioned above, the involvement of local administrations appears crucial in creating synergy among stakeholders and community members [7]. The roles of governance and local administrations in service production and tourism development have been developed under the concept of trust and co-creation/co-production by several authors, with the perspective of mediating cooperative relations aimed at achieving outcomes in terms of tourism development in rural areas [22–24,156–163].

The creative collaboration [38] of the municipality of Colobraro in creating the event "Dream of a night . . . to that town" is a critical factor in its success by integrating wide-ranging interests, according to tourism development and positive economic consequences in terms of seasonal attendance (between 15,000 and 18,000), as well as balancing the environmental concerns and social well-being of the community [47].

In recent years, several territories have changed their orientation, aimed at specialization following identity development. At the supranational level, important initiatives are taking place, such as the well-known World Heritage List, Climate Change and World Heritage, Cultural Landscapes, Human Evolution: Adaptations, Dispersals and Social Developments (HEADS), Initiative on Heritage of Astronomy, Science and Technology, Initiative on Heritage of Religious Interest, Modern Heritage Programme, Natural World Heritage in the Congo Basin, Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape, Reducing Disaster Risks at World Heritage Properties, Small Island Developing States Programme, World Heritage and Indigenous Peoples, World Heritage and Sustainable Development, World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism Programme, World Heritage Centre's Natural Heritage Strategy, World Heritage Cities Programme, World Heritage Earthen Architecture Programme (WHEAP), World Heritage Education Programme, World Heritage Forest Programme, World Heritage Marine Programme, World Heritage Volunteers Initiative (https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/) Unesco Creative City on several axes [99], and the European Union's European Destinations of Excellence (EDEN) program to promote sustainable development (https://ec.europa.eu/growth/sectors/tourism/eden_it), according to the Agenda 2030 (https://epale.ec.europa.eu/it/resource-centre/content/lagenda-2030-lo-sviluppo-sostenibile-nuovo-quadro-strategico-delle-nazioni).

Colobraro town, even if it is not included in the list of creative cities, earned a place on the BBC travel page in 2017 thanks to the event "Dream of a night . . . to that town", enhancing the value of the rural area for 10 years, which has only recently seen increasing awards for territorial development, such as Matera being named the capital of culture in 2019 (www.matera-basilicata2019.it).

Due to these projects, according to the redirection of preferences in the area of tourism [102] and the renewed interest in undiscovered and less publicized or quite neglected destinations, local administrators are moving to enhance the attractive power of rural and inner areas, offering possibilities in terms of immersive experiences.

To achieve this, a specific synergistic cooperative community approach is necessary to determine a new dimension of development in the competitiveness and attractiveness of tourism destinations, envisaging a symbiotic relationship of several variables [15], starting from the point of globalization (that creates serious difficulties for small rural agribusinesses). In this sense, specific events would enhance local economies in an intersectional way [6].

New strategies to empower the profitability of small municipalities and activate virtuous circles for inhabitants of rural areas would be considerable in terms of partnerships, involvement, and collaborative planning for the regeneration of territories [13,35,164], in contrast to the unsustainable global approach to small and agricultural economies.

6.2. Results Interconnections

This section of the paper is written as clearly as possible to report the qualitative data relating to the results of the semi-structured interviews, making use not only of narrative techniques, but also of summary and schematic tables (Results—Tables 1 and 2 and Appendix A, Table A1) to make for easier comparability of the information reported therein. Results from this kind of explorative research, based on the unusual paradigm of promotional activity for sustainable tourism in inner areas, can provide insights for interpretation. It can promote the outlining of practices to enhance attractiveness and alternative tourism with socioeconomic opportunities. The ability to create virtuous cycles and increase the presence of tourists in small and remote towns through the active involvement of local administrators in communities can become a new frontier for management in these territories.

According to the methodology used and the tables and prospects provided by the authors (Tables 1 and 2 and Table A1), it is possible to match the different perspectives, ensuring reliability and facilitating reproducibility, in addition to providing an easier way to interpret the qualitative data from perception and SWOT analysis.

The following considerations, based on the interview results, can ensure a good perceptive analysis derived from several points of view, distinguished by the initial stakeholders' systematic mapping, deserving interest in transversal qualitative data. This can enrich the proposed study and provide additional information devoted to outlining the managerial implications and critical discussions.

The study and research work were conducted using the clear design described above (Figure 4), and carried out by matching informative sources based on direct perception analysis through free debates and semi-structured interviews. The researchers' personal observations and experiences related to the event were excluded to ensure total objectivity of the interpretative analysis.

Key informants were divided into categories of stakeholders from an internal perspective: administrators and organizers (*n* = 4; WhatsApp video calls); community members, divided into hospitality workers (*n* = 2), retailers (*n* = 1), and families (*n* = 3) (telephone calls); educational institutions, religious and cultural associations (*n* = 3); and, from an external perspective, tourists (*n* = 2). More than 20 h of interviews were conducted over two months, favoring a wide range of points of view. Following this structure, the authors provide information to enrich and better understand the case.

Along these lines, rural characteristics are key indicators of the Basilicata region in Italy, and over the last decade they have started to be considered as key strategical points by local administrations to promote alternative tourism attractions and lifestyles recognized by citizens' opportunities for sustainable tourism. The Municipality of Colobraro is an example. Although few inconveniences need to be managed, the proposed event is an integrative factor for the development of tourism activities and social aggregation for the local community, which is involved in the whole organizational process, mostly on a voluntary basis (from the idea shared 10 years ago to the implementation and closing phases).

This ensures strong legitimacy and identitary sentiment that can be reproduced in the same manner by the community. The external opening would be perceived as a probable change factor. So, the strategical projection to the offer the internal community constitutes and promotes would be clearly perceived by the tourists as an identitary feature. In addition, the shared activity of structuring the tourism scenario faces a sense of intrusion that the local community could have suffered if a collaborative strategy had not been implemented.

The event was created out of several needs that the local administration identified in cooperation with citizens. Some are triggering factors in the literature for alternative business models based on a

cooperative approach, as reported by Mastronardi and Romagnoli [4], others are strictly related to the event, but they are not the main proposition and motivational factors that moved administrators, organizers, and the community to create the event "Dream of a night . . . to that town". In summary, some of the main determining factors were isolation, job opportunities, tourism promotion, loyalty and social aggregation, redemption, rediscovering traditions, culture, and flavors of the territorial area, promoting a lifestyle, and providing an alternative to conventional tourism.

This kind of alternative tourism (with general acceptance from each perspective) is based on quality, authenticity, and localism, characterized by participation and involvement through a strong shared message promoting and constituting a holistic, immersive, and hybrid experience focused on a solid cultural base. In contrast, the network abroad would need to be enhanced (a strategic view would probably be oriented toward maintaining the event closer to the original community sphere).

The self-production and cooperation approach better shows tourists an indigenous sense of genuineness and originality, demonstrating strong involvement and commitment aimed at creating an empathic context for a memorable holistic/hybrid and immersive experience.

The event is totally free and without tickets, except for an amulet (a strategic alternative to tickets), which follows the myths and legends characterizing the theme, provided to tourists who want to be protected by spells and fascinations at a low cost during the welcome ceremony. The self-produced amulet is a strategic trick to reproduce ticket benefits, but enhances involvement and memorability, including symbols of traditions and agriculture thanks to the handmade artifact and perfumes of medicinal herbs, subsequently made known to tourists through a museum itinerary strictly centered on oil production and agricultural activities, traditions, and instruments, including the food interest, and the magical properties of herbs and natural products that have always been used as medicine.

Thanks to voluntary local cooperation and the help of strategic funds, municipal and non-municipal (public-sourced) funds, and proceeds generated by activities related to the festival (about one-third), the event can self-finance a portion of its next occurrence, without prejudice to the private proceeds (which remain in charge to the exhibitors) derived from the sale of artisan objects, also created for advertising purposes. This greatly enhances the local economy, based on the fact that the products sold during the event are locally produced. In fact, as reported in Table A1, all stakeholders involved positively perceive the economic benefits of the event. Consideration could be given to perceptions by local administrators and organizers who perceive less benefit than other stakeholders. Perhaps their expectations would have been exceeded. In this sense, the retailers' perceptions should be considered reliable, but on the contrary, others would report a stronger positive perception of economic-related repercussions, also indirectly in the winter months. This perception could be used to determine the positiveness of the event per se. In fact, in complex, largely and appropriately positive perception was shown.

On the community side, the strategic involvement and cooperative approach has been perceived as a determinant, necessary and decisive in knocking down existing ideological barriers, without which the event would not have been created, and the direct and complete involvement and message sharing from the early stages of the idea to the implementation and closing phases seem to play a crucial role.

From this perspective, there is an important consideration according to the precise matching of perceived services offered to tourists to ensure reliability. If the promotional activity in the starting phase is considered to be provided more by the community, the expectations of tourists and their need to seek the place and the event would find a sure reflection in the intention of local administrators, organizers, and community members to create a memorable experience, which nowadays creates authentic and self-generating positive WOM (word of mouth).

Introducing the tourists' perspective, it would be important, according to the guidelines described in the literature (to which the authors refer), to show an integrated view of factors in order to provide a clear frame of the destination's attractiveness and memorability of the tourist experience, matching strategical organizers' orientation and tourists' expectations, motivations, and perceptions. First, it is

crucial to determine the tourism motivations before the trip and perceptions during and after the trip that would create a positive influence on WOM and return possibilities [35].

Consequently, each stakeholder view has been considered in matching possible divergences or convergences. Surprisingly, the perceptions from different sources appear to converge on the main factor that would move tourists to the destination (ruralness, panoramas, landscapes, historical centers, sense of family, traditions, myths, folklore, authenticity, magic, a natural way of life, etc.) and expectations related to the event, motivated first by curiosity aimed to relive traditions, be surprised, experience irony, have a combination of theatricality, food, and beverage, jump into myths and legends through an immersive route, etc.

In this sense, the aim of organizers and the community would match the tourists' expectations according to the intention to provide a rediscovery of traditions and flavors through a holistic, immersive, and hybrid event that motivates a great number of visitors to return the next year and visit the place without the mass of attendees in the summer, with the objective to rediscover the silence, naturalness, and quiet in other periods [36]. Despite the main tourist typologies initially being researched less, nowadays the event can be one of the main attractions of the region, sometimes creating overbooking that the organization manages anyway.

The infrastructure and services are perceived as adequate, and the small inconveniences (e.g., winding roads) become part of the tourist offering, which does not discourage visitors who, although in most cases do not stay (support experience), consciously want to enjoy a memorable peak experience [37].

The largely positive feedback and the important role played by self-generative positive tourist WOM would make loyalty strategies as they exist unnecessary [6], which was also determined by sentiment analysis of online reviews (76.41% excellent) (https://www.tripadvisor.it, accessed: 5 June 2020).

Managerial implications could come from integrating the two analysis methods. In fact, from the SWOT analysis side (Tables 2 and A1), several strengths are shown and validated, as mentioned above, by perception analysis; in contrast, redundant weaknesses and threats can serve as a crucial tool to enhance future occurrences of the event.

Excessive attendance could be limited without changing the strategy of free participation (amulets), providing free tickets ahead of time with reservations, and creating repercussions in terms of economic benefits, not strictly related to the summer, extending the dates and making the event not seasonal (enhanced by other accommodations) would be strong investments for the future.

The SWOT analysis results, based on involvement and the cooperative strategical approach, integrated and validated by the results of perception analysis (Table 1), focus on the strong capability and determinant role of knocking down ideological barriers, constituting a pervasive mechanism of emotional forces and empathic activism motivated by message sharing, determination, and a desire to propose doing something big together at a very small scale.

Risks would be considerable in reducing the number of people, which could affect future occurrences of the event. If requests for external opening were observable, additional local involvement could change the identitary proposal. In this sense, having external networks and partnerships would a be great solution to provide continuity; in contrast, they could harm the family aspect, the intergenerational exchange and passing-on of traditions appreciated by tourists who consciously seek this type of experience.

If it is true that there cannot be a standard managerial recipe, a creative and strategic solution for the municipality under investigation would seem to be an excellent compromise for a town that until a few years ago was unknown.

In addition, stakeholders' involvement and a synergistic community cooperative approach would contribute to combine proposals and tourists' expectations and needs in terms of success factors, as expressed by Mulcahy [38]: quality, authenticity, localism, message sharing, holistic approach, and community involvement, except for a limited amount of network development.

Concerning the involvement strategy, intended as an appropriate plan for tourism in destination communities, it would have been respected according to the participatory, cooperative, collaborative, and incremental view as suggested by Timothy and Tosunc [13].

Based on the fact that landscapes are among the main factors that motivate tourists to Basilicata's rural areas, as suggested by Romano [165], the landscape can be considered "the heterogeneous set of all the elements, processes and interrelations that make up the ecosphere, considered in its unitary and differentiated ecological-systemic and dynamic structure, appears identifiable with an evolutionary process in which move the activities of nature and those of man, in their historical, material, cultural and spiritual dimension". In this sense, landscapes are related to the human dimension, not only the territorial, and therefore are interdependent of the proposal and search for authenticity and uniqueness, which contexts such as the one studied can offer.

7. Conclusions

The study presented would show, as a note of originality, an investigation started from interviews with the main stakeholders, an explanatory view about the existence of a clear strategical solution that can integrate the needs of a rural community and tourists through a cooperation-based approach that can be a best practice for tourism promotion in highly agricultural destinations.

That would be a new direction for tourism, also if related to the uncertain period in which humans are living, rediscovering origins and renewed paradigms of rurality and ancestral lifestyles inherent human nature.

The landscape is one of the main motivational factors that bring tourists to Basilicata's rural areas, such as Colobraro, from all regions and neighboring areas, as well as nationally and internationally.

Basilicata's communities have a long tradition in agri-food production with specialties of typical cuisine, which can offer an opportunity to create holistic/hybrid and immersive events such as "Dream of a night . . . to that town", which consider perspectives related to quality, authenticity, and localism according to what tourists really want [166].

With that possibility, to better create acceptance and legitimacy, strong involvement of the local community would also provide a strong identitary view to tourists, who are called upon to be involved through the different routes and scenes of the festival.

Colobraro's event "Dream of a night . . . to that town" is today a leader without competition (which existed only in the initial phases) from other similar events in the territory, becoming a powerful tourist attraction more than expected, thanks to a positive self-generative word of mouth [167].

The rich variety of proposed experiences can combine not only the need for naturalness by visitors, but also completely new and original multifaceted experiences capable of leaving viewers spellbound determining a spatial diversity of tourism [168]. Matera Culture Capital 2019, a worldwide tourist destination, enhances the offerings proposed by other less known and frequented destinations (such as the one investigated), moving the entire Basilicata region from an agriculture-driven place to a strong alternative/complementary and specific tourist choice. The whole region, intended as a contemporary rural system [8], would be a unique opportunity to rediscover traditions and enjoy landscapes that are impossible to find in huge cities. The research involved more than a dozen interviews with community members, administrators, organizers, and tourists, providing a wide range of stakeholder points of view and favoring comparative activities based on SWOT and perception analysis.

Following the promotion of quality local products, handcrafts, culinary, or intangible heritage, festivals and events organized in the territory can create positive repercussions on both the tourist side and the community side. Festivals such as "Dream of a night . . . to that town" have a limited duration (i.e., several days in the summer), which does not reduce the event to a mere culinary experience, but ensures an immersive and hybrid tourism solution in the face of economic globalization [169]. The proposition to provide not a top-down/bottom-up, but a horizontal strategy and a sharable best practice to the whole tourism sector in rural areas makes state decentralization truly effective, defined by Lovering [170] as "new regionalism" or "localism".

In this sense, the voluntary nature and activism [171] in implementing a deconstruction of territory boundaries [9] through creativity [21] is a crucial source of competition to estimate the balance of benefits of tourism and ruralness and a non-capitalist view [172]. In addition, raising the awareness of residents involved [173] and promoting the cooperative approach in projecting and executing the event reflects a positive image, empowering values that link social relationships in the village system, attracting tourists who are specifically motivated to live pure experiences with sustainable goals [6]. According to these objectives, events like the one analyzed can contribute to tourists' specific destination choices and intention to revisit [174], because of the aim to concretely revive the fundamental characteristics of the traditional village, where the durability of the residents is interdependent with the land [175]. So, the contrast between modern life and mass tourism choice would be a determinant in redirecting the concept of attractiveness, privileging remote places that are difficult to reach that could offer memorable tourism experiences at the expense of standardized and homogenized vacations that are not sustainable.

The research responds to RQ1 in a complete way, considering the case study as an ingenious possibility to implement sustainable tourism that integrates rurality, agriculture, and local traditions through a collaborative approach.

Possible limitations have been identified, especially in the proposed case under investigation, given the high variability of individual perspectives over time. The qualitative approach tends to be more prone to criticism, especially at the methodological level, but such limitations, often found in the sample selection criteria, reflect the possibility of investigating a wider spectrum of complexity derived from social variables that are difficult to consider with rigid quantitative methods. Although RQ2 still needs more in-depth investigation relating to the perception of tourists, a strategy like the one proposed could show how constructing a tourist scene based on a hybrid experience that integrates different aspects related to the agricultural supply chain and rural traditions could constitute a valid opportunity to attract tourists.

In this case, the limited sample still corresponds to the small size of the investigated case, and the difficulty in identifying tourists to be involved was balanced by the analysis of the main online reviews, moderating the effect of possible modification of the results by changing the subjects involved in the sample.

In addition to the new venue of research mentioned above, the authors consider the possibility of reproducing the survey on a yearly basis to facilitate a longitudinal extension of data after the Covid-19 pandemic. The combination and interlacement existing in the attempt to integrate multidimensional factors from traditions to strategical operations, for future development and managerial repercussions, and above all from the point of view of public engagement, could consider the construction of an area map [176] through a creative collaborative approach to communicate the wealth of a place, giving value to the territory and the landscape (lato sensu) with further involvement of the community, sharing an intergenerational exchange (which seems to have been reduced over the years).

The tangible result of the narration and transcription of the map as a fruit of a constructive dialogue (synergistic and cooperative contribution) and an affective component would be provided to tourists/visitors to increase the sense of uniqueness, authenticity, and identity of the territory, and to guide the discovery of the immersive experience inherent in the event.

Future research developments could focus on constructing this type of tool and analyzing perceptions, subsequent effects, and impacts, but nowadays the proposed case appears as an interesting and original perspective for best practices in rural area tourism management.

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Appendix A

Table A1. Integrated interview results.

Criteria **	Internal Perspective		Community			External Perspective
1 = Positive; 0 = Negative	Administrators and Organizers	Hospitality Operators	Retailers	Families	Educational Institutions, Religious and Cultural Associations	Tourists
Investigation of possible perceived triggers of event creation						
Depopulation	1,0,0,0	0,1	1	0,1,0	1,0,1	**
Emigration	1,0,0,0	0,1	1	0,0,0	1,0,1	
Job loss	1,0,1,0	0,1	1	0,0,0	1,1,0	
Isolation	1,1,1,1	1,1	1	0,1,1	0,1,1	
Job opportunities (also seasonal)	1,1,1,0	1,1	1	0,1,1	1,1,1	
Territorial tourism promotion	1,1,1,1	1,1	1	1,1,1	1,1,1	
Territorial valorization	1,1,1,1	1,1	1	1,1,1	1,1,1	
Loyalty and social aggregation for the community	1,1,1,1	1,1	1	1,1,1	1,1,0	
Growth opportunity	1,1,1,1	1,1	1	1,1,1	1,1,1	
National/international visibility	1,0,0,1	0,0	1	1,0,0	1,1,1	
Redemption	1,1,1,1	1,1	1	1,1,1	1,1,1	
Rediscovering traditions, culture, flavors of the area	1,1,1,1	1,1	1	1,1,1	1,1,1	
Promotion of a lifestyle	1,1,1,1	1,1	1	1,1,0	1,1,0	
Tourist competition with most popular and well-known destinations	0,0,0,0	0,0	0	0,0,0	0,0,0	
Construction of alternative to conventional tourism (complementary)	1,1,1,1	1,1	1	1,1,1	1,1,1	

Table A1. *Cont.*

Criteria **	Internal Perspective	Community				External Perspective
Investigation of constituent elements attributable to the event						
Quality, authenticity, localism	1,1,1,1	1,1	1	1,1,1	1,1,1	1,1
Participation and involvement	1,1,1,1	1,1	1	1,1,1	1,1,1	1,1
Message sharing	1,1,1,1	1,1	1	1,1,1	1,1,1	1,1
Promotion of holistic/immersive hybrid experience	1,1,1,1	1,1	1	1,1,1	1,1,1	1,1
Solid cultural basis	1,1,1,1	1,1	1	1,0,1	1,1,1	1,1
Network development	0,0,0,0	0,1	0	0,0,1	1,1,1	1,0
Other information provided	Community support, ethical work, implementing networks, good base but network to implement	Embryonic network, network still in early stages				Network not much developed, with margin of improvement
Investigation of tourist typologies						
Niche						
Mass	1,1,1,1					1,1
Little researched						
Other	Initial little researched					Early niche and little researched after.
Support experience	1,1,1					1 / which becomes peak
Extension experience	1,1					
Peak experience	1,1,1,1					1
Investigation of typologies of stay						
1 day to 1 night	1					
1 day to 5 days	1					
More than 5 days						
No night-only event	1,1,1,1					1,1

Table A1. *Cont.*

Criteria **	Internal Perspective	Community				External Perspective
Investigation of tourist origins						
Province						
Region						
Neighboring regions	1					
National	1,1,1,1					1
International						
Year of event starting point	2010–2011, 2011, 2011–2008	2010, 2009–2010	2009–2010	2010, 2010, 2009–2010	2009–2010, 2010, 2010	
Perceived motivation to create an immersive experience	1,1,1,1					1,1
Investigation of perceived needs to satisfy						
Naturalness/silence/quiet	1,1,1,1					1,1
	For later return choice not related to the event					Silence and tranquility decisive for subsequent return choice
Rediscovering traditions, culture, myths and legends	1,1,1,1					1,1
Rediscovering scents, flavors, and past memories	1,1,1,1					1,1
Immersive/holistic/hybrid exp.	1,1,1,1					1,1
Perceived tourist feedback	-Largely positive	-Largely positive	-Largely positive	-Largely positive	-Largely positive	-Largely positive (experience to be redone, I will come back
Largely positive	-Largely positive			-Largely positive	-Largely positive	
Appropriately positive						
Poorly positive	-Largely positive	-Largely positive	(many return trips)	-Largely positive	-Largely positive	-Largely positive (even friends and relatives who came with me from outside the region left very positive feedback)
Indifferent						
Negative	-Largely positive					
Largely negative						

Table A1. *Cont.*

Criteria **	Internal Perspective		Community			External Perspective
	Investigation of expectations and perceptions of what tourists look for from a dual perspective					
(1) Place	-Ruralness, traditions, folklore, authenticity	-Landscape, characteristic historical glimpses, rediscovery of origins and traditions, ruralness	Clean air, quiet, silence, views	-Rural landscape, cuisine, hospitality, place boasts one of the most beautiful landscapes in Italy	-Breathtaking landscapes	-Panoramas, landscape/naturalistic aspect
	-Characteristics of geographical position, climate, landscapes	-Landscape, ruralness of the place, social relations and rediscovery of the sense of family.		-Naturalness, finding a natural way of life in the place because we are surrounded by technology	-Immersion in a historic center that retains its charm	-Specificity of tourist choice
	-Panoramas and natural beauty			-Magic and breathtaking landscapes, exceptional moon at night, landscape itself is the magic of the place	-Rediscovering a land that arouses particular emotions in traveler, discovering traditionally non-tourist areas that can be a strong emotional element	-Finding something that cannot be done elsewhere
	-Magic of the place					-Landscape
						-Wonder and amazement
(2) Event	-Event meets expectations	-Curiosity and leisure	-Reliving tradition, entertainment, theatricality	-Magic, cultural fun	-Spend an evening experiencing a sense of welcome from a community in the name of re-enacting tradition and culture, tasting typical dishes	Jump into the myth/immersive experience of magic and tradition
	-See and experience legends up close			-Irony and curiosity	-Landscapes, relaxation, and culture	-Originality
	-Curiosity, some for food	-Distraction and leisure		-Curiosity, evenings full of welcome and fun combined with food and wine	-Searching for values, traditions, customs that have been neglected by modern society	-Many tourists who come have had similar experiences but this is particularly characterized by being a collective event
	-Surprise and irony				-Cultural heritage that stimulates interest	

Table A1. *Cont.*

Criteria **	Internal Perspective	Community	External Perspective
Investigation of tourist perceptions pre-trip/en route/at destination/post-trip			
(1) Pre-trip	-Curiosity		-Curiosity and adventurousness, difficulty reaching destination
	-Curiosity		
	-Curiosity		-Initial curiosity as a prevailing and motivating element
	-Culture and traditions		
	-Curiosity		
(2) En route	-Fascinating and enchanting panoramas		-Logistical difficulty, but landscape makes you forget the tortuosity of the road
	-Naturalness and isolation/distance and difficulty making tourists aware of choice		
	-Fascinating landscapes		-Fascinating landscape and its peculiarity
	-Emotion and fear		
(3) At destination	-Appreciation and charm		-Seems we arrive at and live in a different world, a fantastic world where you rediscover flavors, traditions, and a lost friendliness
	-Welcome		
	-Feel welcomed		-Welcome, organization, involvement, offer of multiple aspects of fruition
	-Joy, sense of family and welcome		
(4) Post-trip	-Everything beyond expectations		-Tourists leave with a sense of melancholy mixed with joy as the experience is memorable, this positively influences the choice of possible return
	-Sense of lightheartedness		
	-Wonder		-Beautiful memory and desire to return
	-Satisfaction, well-being, relaxation		
Perceived percentage of choice to return (%)	80%		90%
	60%		100%
	70%		(varies depending on tourists' place of origin; neighboring regions show higher return frequency)
	30%		

Table A1. *Cont.*

Criteria **	Internal Perspective			Community		External Perspective
Perceived services offered	-Reception, welcome service, free parking and bus, catering	-Reception, welcome service, free parking and bus, catering	-Reception, welcome service, free parking and bus, catering	-Reception, welcome service, free parking and bus, catering	-Reception, welcome service, free parking and bus, catering; tourists are invited and welcomed to the country - Emblematic experience -Community as a development agent in building a welcoming experience	-Reception, welcome service, free parking and bus, catering
Investigation of determinant role of WOM and promotional activities	1,1,1,1	1,1	1	1,1,1	1,1,1 (Fundamental, even if changed with new technologies)	1,1 "We came to know by WOM and advertising" (ADV) -WOM is of considerable importance, there are still effective promotion channels -"We came to know directly by citizens and WOM by other tourists and ADV material"
Community promotion	1 (before)					
Tourist promotion	1,1 (more today)	1,1	1	1,1	1,1,1	1
Equal	1,1			1,1		
Investigation of perceived infrastructure adequacy	-Adequate and functional -Improved over the years, good -Sense of adequacy	-Adequate -Good	Not totally adequate (road)	-Initially more community input -Today promoted more by tourists -Adequate, affected by the cleanliness	-Adequate, probably still early phase of receptive structures even if compensated by structures on the coast -Positive -We have gone from the tiring and softening complaint of infrastructural discomfort to a proposal that takes into account this difficulty and inserts it in the conscious tuition proposal.	-Fair (difficulty arriving by winding road) -Adequate but a single weak point can be found in the still poorly implemented accommodations
Tickets	0,0,0,0 (Amulet with medicinal herbs)					0,0 (Amulet with medicinal herbs)

Table A1. *Cont.*

Criteria **	Internal Perspective		Community			External Perspective
Investigation of production and sale of artifacts during the event	1,1,1,1	1,1	1	1,1,1	1,1,1	1,1
Investigation of typologies of artifacts with ADV scope	1,1,1,1	1,1	1	1,1,1	1,1,1	1,1
	Handicrafts and souvenirs with advertising (ADV) characters of the place	Handicrafts and souvenirs with ADV characters of the place	Handicrafts and souvenirs with ADV characters for the place	Handicrafts and souvenirs with ADV characters of the place	Handicrafts and souvenirs with ADV characters of the place	Handicrafts and souvenirs with ADV characters of the place
Investigation of sale and service of typical local dishes	1,1,1,1	1,1	1	1,1,1	1,1,1	1,1
Investigation of profit redistribution	-Expenses coverage—contributes to participants'/merchants' personal income	-Coverage of organizational expenses and eventual refinancing of following event	-Creation of a sort of circular economy	-Covers organizational and festival expenses, provides reimbursements to some volunteers	-Local economy benefits indirectly, even if supplies are provided by local operators	
	-Cost coverage and possible self-financing of subsequent event		-Collaborative/ cooperative approach, only reimbursement for those who organize	-Repays costs and promotes the next event—flat-rate reimbursement and self-financing for the next event	-Cost coverage, sometimes possible to finance the next event	
Investigation of involvement strategy and cooperative approach						
Phases	-All phases	-All (full involvement)	-Direct in all phases	-All-round involvement from conception to closure	-Throughout the process from starting stages and at the end of the event	
	-All phases			-Active participation in all phases	-At all stages	
	-All phases	-Whole process		-Participation in all phases of the process, everyone's help promotes success of the event	-Community involvement by interested parties, community is involved from start to finish	
	-All phases					

Table A1. *Cont.*

Criteria **	Internal Perspective			Community		External Perspective
	1,1,1,1	1,1	1	1,1,1	1,1,1	
Voluntary for free/voluntary with reimbursement	-At different levels, mostly voluntary	-Mostly free and voluntary -Double level	-Mostly free and voluntary	-Mostly voluntary	-At different levels: membership, direct involvement out of love, voluntary with compensation/gift, mainly free and voluntary	
				-Mostly volunteers, some with refunds	-Mixed	
					-Mostly free	
				-Voluntary with and without compensation	-Voluntary	
Perceived economic benefits during summer (event)	1,1,1,1	1,1	1	1,1	1,1,1	
Perceived increment (%)	N/F	+40%	+20/30%	+80%	+50/70%	
	+10%			+50%	+50%	
	50/60%	+80%		+70%	+50%	
	20%					
Other months increment	-Much less, mainly summer months	-Returns also during the year about + 20%.	-Even in other months	-Poor returns	-Some tourists return to enjoy the landscape without the mass of summer tourists during the event	
				during the year	-Even in months not connected to the event	
				-Some relapses during the year	-Even returns in the following months	
				-Strong connection to the event		
Perceived inconvenience	1,1,0	1	0	0,1,1	1,0,0	
Typologies	-Attendance absorption (for some)	-Attendance absorption -Viability		-Small road problems	-Small inconveniences related to viability	
				-Absorption of mass tourists		
				-Small inconvenience because the town becomes a living theater		

Table A1. *Cont.*

Criteria **	Internal Perspective		Community			External Perspective
Investigation of general perception of the event						
Largely positive	1,1,1		1		1,1,1	1,1
Appropriately positive	1	1		1,1,1		
Poorly positive						
Indifferent						
Negative						
Largely negative						
Investigation of eventual perception without involvement strategy	-Ideological barriers -There would have been no -Greater presence of barrierscurrent result -There would have been no event -It would have been perceived as slightly less positive	-It would have suffered from barriers -Greater presence of barriers	-It would have been accepted favorably even without involvement, but the strategy helped create a strong identity	-Involvement is a winning idea, otherwise the event would have suffered from barriers -Equally accepted but with some resistance -It would have had barriers	-It would have been perceived as a distorted event -It would have been a completely different proposal -It would have been perceived less positively -Creation of virtuosity connected with production and transfer of culture	
Investigation of the role of involvement strategy	-Determinant -Necessary and decisive -Without involvement, the event would not exist -Determinant in shaping the current level of acceptance	-Determinant -Determinant because now the event is "a child of the community"	-Knocking down some barriers	-Determinant Determinant—element that drives maintenance of the event and today we experience it as a personal matter	-Involvement strategy creates an extraordinary experience at all levels: administration, population involved in the reception, associations, commercial activities, local actors in intergenerational connection -Everyone contributes to the success -Decisive role of engagement strategy is fundamental	

Source: our investigation. ** Space not filled means an answer was not given or an aspect was not investigated for the category, guaranteeing a comparison between perspectives of the clusters considered significant for the purpose of the specific segment analysis.

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