



Good Practice Story Title: Masters of Tradition: safeguarding Bombinhas' cultural legacy

Destination: Bombinhas, Santa Catarina

Country: Brasil

Submitting Organization: Prefeitura Municipal de Bombinhas

Category:

- Destination Management
- Nature & Scenery
- Environment & Climate
- Culture & Tradition
- Thriving Communities
- Business & Marketing

Destination description:

The city of Bombinhas, located in the state of Santa Catarina in the southern region of Brazil, is a 36 km² peninsula that extends into the Atlantic Ocean and has 39 beaches and 3 natural parks. These natural characteristics have shaped the territory's dynamics and, consequently, its social and economic development.

The formation of its people occurred through the mixing of indigenous cultures, Europeans (Portuguese/Azoreans), and African matrices from the 16th century onwards, forming a new culture and a new way of life adapted to local characteristics.

Before tourism, the main economic activities were fishing and agriculture, which sustained the small village. From the 1960s, the first visitors arrived in the small community, attracted by its beautiful beaches.

Currently, Bombinhas has 25 thousand inhabitants and receives 2 million tourists between the months of November and April, mainly motivated by the natural beauty, diversity of beaches, and options for seaside leisure activities.



Summary of Good Practice Story:

With the consolidation of the city as an important tourist destination, the community, which primarily survived on agriculture and artisanal fishing, began to have other sources of income through tourism services. Traditional practices gave way to modern ones, the city's development, the aging and passing of the elderly, the lack of documentation of this way of life, and the lack of interest among the younger generation, all contributed to local traditions fading into oblivion.

Valuing and promoting local culture were urgent, as was recognizing those who still held the knowledge of ancestral practices. From this recognition, it was necessary to pass on these teachings to those willing to learn, turning what was on the verge of disappearance into a potential attraction.

Thus, in 2013, the title of "Master of Traditional Culture of Bombinhas" was created to recognize and value the holders of local knowledge, promoting the transmission of such knowledge and contributing to the safeguarding of Bombinhas' culture and history.

Issues faced:

With the development of tourism in Bombinhas, the city's dynamics have changed completely: land occupation has intensified significantly, and subsistence farming, simple wooden houses, cassava flour mills, and fishing huts have given way to new constructions and enterprises.

The traditional community became marginalized within the neighbourhoods, and consequently, the way of life of the population changed. Due to migration processes, changes in the economic activities of the old village, the aging and passing of holders of traditional knowledge and practices, as well as the lack of formal records of this way of life, local culture and traditions were being suppressed and falling into oblivion and disuse.

The conveniences of the modern world attracted the attention of the younger generation, who ended up neglecting the way of life of their ancestors. Traditional knowledge gave way to new ways of living.

Solution:

In 2013, the Municipality of Bombinhas created the title of Master of Traditional Culture through a municipal law, to recognize individuals who possess traditional knowledge in various areas, whose lives and work have been dedicated to the protection, promotion, and development of Bombinhas' culture, and who have the ability to transmit this knowledge. The titled masters, besides receiving public recognition, have the opportunity to conduct workshops and lectures at events organized by the government. These activities educate the community about the history and culture of the city, enhance tourist services, and enable the continuation of traditional practices, strengthening the cultural identity and traditions of the people, essential attributes for the development of tourism.

Methods, Steps, and Tools applied:

The project to title Masters of Culture began in 2013, stemming from the need to recognize figures within the traditional community, preserve knowledge and crafts, and strengthen Bombinhas' cultural identity. The idea originated from a city councilwoman, who, in collaboration with the Municipal Culture Foundation, worked on the creation of a Law, which was published in 2013 (Law No. 1326/2013). The



following year, 20 community figures were awarded the title of Masters of Traditional Culture. In 2018, another 8 individuals were recognized, and in 2022, an additional 14 masters were honoured.

Proposals for the titling of masters can come from the government (executive and legislative branches) and nonprofit cultural associations within civil society. Nominations are reviewed by a special committee to decide on the recognition of the nominees.

Those recognized have the right to use the title within the Municipality of Bombinhas and to be listed in the public gallery of the Municipal Culture Foundation. The masters also participate in various projects sharing their knowledge. Thus, traditional knowledge and culture, once at risk of being forgotten, remain alive and can be appreciated by residents and tourists alike, whether through purchasing handicrafts made with bobbin lace, tasting local cuisine, visiting memory spots, or listening to beautiful stories about the city. The main areas of expertise include: artisanal fishing, crafts (bobbin lace embroidery), traditional cuisine, folklore (papier-mâché oxen, kings' troupe, and folk dances), blessings, flour mills, basket weaving, and ship carpentry. Most of these areas are established tourist attractions, while others have great potential for development, being utilized in the promotion and marketing of the city.

Achievements and Results:

The designation of Masters of Traditional Culture has facilitated the development of public policies that have opened up new possibilities for tourism development and training opportunities aimed at safeguarding the local cultural heritage. Among the projects developed by the municipality are: the “Vô Sabe, Vô Ensina” Project, where the masters teach traditional knowledge; the Sea School, a program for teaching the knowledge of the land and sea to children in the municipal school network during after-school hours; the “Pirão Cultural,” an event that promotes roundtable discussions with researchers of popular culture, each theme focusing on a specific topic; the “Tarde do Beijú,” an event that welcomes the community, students, and tourists to a manioc flour mill and promotes the making of traditional culinary items; and “Discovering Bombinhas,” a training program on tourism for the community and the local tourism trade, promoted by the Department of Tourism and Economic Development.

All these events feature the participation of masters, who are given a platform to share their teachings about Bombinhas. In this way, they became well-known and began receiving invitations to share their life stories and knowledge in other settings, such as companies and the school network. Thus, challenges were overcome through the recognition of the masters and a set of actions that enabled the transmission of this knowledge.

In 11 years, 42 Masters of Traditional Culture have been designated, and more than 1,500 people have participated in the training activities promoted by the masters, learning about aspects of local culture and traditional knowledge. In addition to improving the quality of service to tourists, it increases the sense of belonging and also opened opportunities for students to produce and sell products and souvenirs, as well as to share the knowledge they have learned.

Lessons Learned and Advice:

The coordinated work between public authorities (legislative and executive) and the cultural actors of the city was fundamental for the creation of the law and its implementation, the initial step for the continuity of history, the appreciation of the people's identity, and the transmission of knowledge to the community.



The involvement of the Municipal Culture Foundation throughout the process was crucial for the success of the project, both for the identification and recognition of the masters and for bringing them closer to those institutions, bodies, and people interested in traditional knowledge and culture.

The safeguarding of cultural heritage is essential for the development of responsible tourism, and often, simple ideas with low financial investment can positively impact the community and tourism.

Recognitions and Additional References

One of the areas with represented masters is artisanal mullet fishing. This activity is considered a cultural heritage of Bombinhas and, in 2019, it was also recognized as cultural heritage of Santa Catarina. In 2023, it received the Story Awards from Green Destinations in the Culture and Tradition category. The fact that there are masters holding this traditional knowledge, who are active and recognized by the project, also enables the transmission of this knowledge.

The program Discovering Bombinhas, which provides training for local residents in tourism, history, culture, and sustainability, features contributions from the Masters in various fields of knowledge, such as gastronomy and fishing. It was listed in the Top 100 by Green Destinations in 2021.

The Escola do Mar program, which teaches students from the municipality the knowledge of the sea, also benefits from the valuable contributions of the Masters in the transmission of knowledge and was listed in the Top 100 in 2023.

Additionally, for the set of projects and works involving the masters of traditional culture and the safeguarding of intangible heritage, the municipality of Bombinhas was awarded by the Federation of Municipalities of Santa Catarina as a case of good practices in 2019.

Master of Traditional Culture report, with activities, photos and news: <https://bit.ly/mastersreport>;

Video of Bombinhas: <https://bit.ly/bombinhasvideo>;

Top 100 Green Destinations Awards: <https://bit.ly/bombinhastop100>;

Municipal Law Nº 1.326/2013: <http://leismunicipa.is/jicne>;

Vô Sabe, Vô Ensina! project videos on YouTube:

- Quitutes de Engenho I, II e III - video of traditional tapioca dough recipe, sheet cake and waffle cake desert: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7prs6Wl_x5o; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1LRnCSLBE-c&t=252s>; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J3VidOY7eZU>;

- Consertada and Maracujazinho - typical cultural drinks:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WnfK8ALUe30>;

- Vô Sabe, Vô Ensina!: A Farinhada - artisanal manioc flour production process:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sI5XfcirTrA&t=1s>;

- From Urucum to Colorau - local spices: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FGGRq-ghVLc&t=1s>;

- Ilha Bela Canoe Restoration, used in Artisanal Mullet Fishing:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=33uzf60AVJc>;

- How to make homemade soap:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4s8sDqqwdis&t=2s>.