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**SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES**  
**DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES**



**TOPIC**

**TOURISM SERVICE: GUAYA HOSTEL**

**SERVICIO TURISTICO DE HOSTAL EN SAN JOSÉ GUAYABAL**

**PRESENTED BY**

JENNIFER MARCELA JUÁREZ MUÑOZ (JM18016)

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**BACHELOR OF ARTS IN MODERN LANGUAGES WITH A MAJOR IN FRENCH  
AND ENGLISH**

**AND**

MARCELA NOHEMY MARROQUÍN BONILLA (MB18043)

**IN ORDER TO OBTAIN THE DEGREE OF**

**BACHELOR OF ARTS IN ENGLISH WITH A MAJOR IN LANGUAGE TEACHING  
PROFESSOR**

LICENCIADA GLORIA CAROLINA ORTEGA

**GENERAL COORDINATOR OF THE GRADUATION PROCESS**

LICENCIADO MIGUEL ÁNGEL CARRANZA CAMPOS, MSE

**UNIVERSITY CAMPUS, DR. FABIO CASTILLO FIGUEROA, SAN SALVADOR  
CENTRO, EL SALVADOR, CENTRAL AMERICA, OCTOBER 30TH, 2025**

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**HEAD OF THE DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

LICENCIADO JOSÉ ISRAEL OLIVA

**COORDINATOR OF THE GRADUATION PROCESS**

LICENCIADO MIGUEL ÁNGEL CARRANZA CAMPOS, MSE

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### **Abstract**

This study presents the design and strategic development of the Guaya Hostel project, a sustainable and inclusive accommodation proposal in San José Guayabal, Cuscatlán, El Salvador. The hostel addresses the lack of formal lodging in the municipality by integrating local natural assets, notably Cerro Guazapa—a volcano of historical relevance—and the Guaza River with its natural pools. The project highlights cultural heritage through religious celebrations, traditional cuisine, and artisan workshops, enhancing community identity and the visitor experience. Responsible management is reflected in strict quality and safety standards, local business partnerships, and adherence to national tourism norms. Guaya Hostel is distinguished by its pet-friendly approach, wellness offerings like yoga and meditation, and active promotion of family and religious tourism. The strategic location and programming aim to diversify San José Guayabal's tourism portfolio, stimulate local employment, and support sustainable practices. Operational practices are designed to foster positive socio-economic impacts, preserve heritage, and strengthen community involvement. By contributing to territorial development, Guaya Hostel directly supports El Salvador's national objective of advancing as an innovative and environmentally responsible tourist destination. The project acts as a catalyst for regional progress, enhancing both visitor experiences and local vitality.

*Keywords:* Sustainable tourism, hospitality, heritage, local development, San José Guayabal, innovation, community impact, ecotourism

## **Introduction**

The country's constant development has fostered tourism, not only national but also international tourists who increasingly choose to explore El Salvador, which has incredible destinations and beautiful landscapes. This growth has encouraged an improvement in the quality of tourism products and services. Based on that, the initiative to support tourism in the municipality of San José Guayabal has emerged through the project "Guaya Hostel".

It will be the only hostel in the municipality, committed to sustainable practices and low-cost services. The city receives a considerable number of visitors, many of whom find their tourist experience limited due to the lack of accommodation options. This tourism service is an innovative proposal that seeks to address that need, being a pet-friendly service.

Chapter I of this project outlines the objectives of the tourism service, aimed at enriching the guests' experience. It also includes justification, detailing the importance and relevance of the tourism service. The description of the tourism service includes its name, location, attributes, and tourism typology. Finally, the chapter concludes with the principles of sustainability strategy.

Chapter II presents an overview of the history of tourism in our country, as well as the beginnings of tourism around the world and in El Salvador. It also describes the natural resources located near tourism services, the different types of soil found in our country, and additional information about the cultural identity and intangible heritage of San José Guayabal. Moreover, the chapter addresses the 17 Sustainable Development Goals and concludes with a description of the strategic plan of action and quality management.

Chapter III focuses on the definition and profile of an entrepreneur, including their main characteristics and competencies, as well as the profile of the entrepreneurs behind Guaya Hostel. Additionally, this chapter outlines the types, responsibilities, challenges, and opportunities that entrepreneurs face. It also presents the definition of market niches, their types, benefits, importance and the market niches of Guaya Hostel, along with the logo, slogan, mission, vision, and values that represent the hostel

# **CHAPTER I: PROFILE OF THE TOURISTIC PRODUCT OR SERVICE**

## **1.1 Objectives**

### **1.1.1 General Objective**

To contribute to tourism through an innovative service in the municipality of San José Guayabal, which offers accommodation in the area, complemented by wellness and cultural activities, to enrich the guests' experience.

### **1.1.2 Specific Objectives**

- To promote physical and emotional well-being through guided yoga and meditation classes to enhance the guests' stay.
- To provide a cultural experience through a ceramic workshop led by local artisans that contributes to the guests' tourist experience.
- To offer inclusive accommodation that allows guests to enjoy their stay accompanied by their pets.

## 1.2 Justification

El Salvador has experienced steady growth in tourism services, but some towns and cities lack accommodation services. The department of Cuscatlán has municipalities with the potential to increase tourism in the region, including San José Guayabal. Unfortunately, there is a total absence of hostels, which has directly affected the city's growth.

For that reason, a hostel in the municipality is convenient for accommodating visitors. Guaya Hostel contributes to the development of tourist activities in the city throughout the year. It offers national and international tourists a tourism service with affordable prices, wellness, cultural activities, and adequate basic services.

Additionally, its location in the country's central region will aid its growth and sustainability in the medium and long term. Guaya Hostel offers ideal accommodation for exploring the municipality, which has a natural environment, emblematic places, and religious traditions. It supports the municipality's development through hiring staff and purchasing local products.

Finally, Guaya Hostel, located in that amazing city, presents a strategic investment, generating a strong positive impact on the municipality and developing an innovative tourism service in which the guests become the protagonists of its huge progress.

## **1.3 Product Description**

### **1.3.1 Name of the tourist product**

The name Guaya Hostel was chosen as a tribute to the town of San José Guayabal, where the project is located. “Guaya” captures the local essence and sounds warm, friendly, and distinctly Salvadoran. The name reflects not just the geographic identity but also the spirit of hospitality and cultural pride that the community embodies. It’s short, memorable, and resonates with both local residents and international travelers seeking a genuine and immersive experience.

Guaya Hostel is more than just a place to sleep—it’s a gateway to connection, culture, and comfort. Designed for solo travelers, couples, and families alike, the hostel offers cozy rooms with single and double beds, along with various amenities that blend modern convenience with local charm.

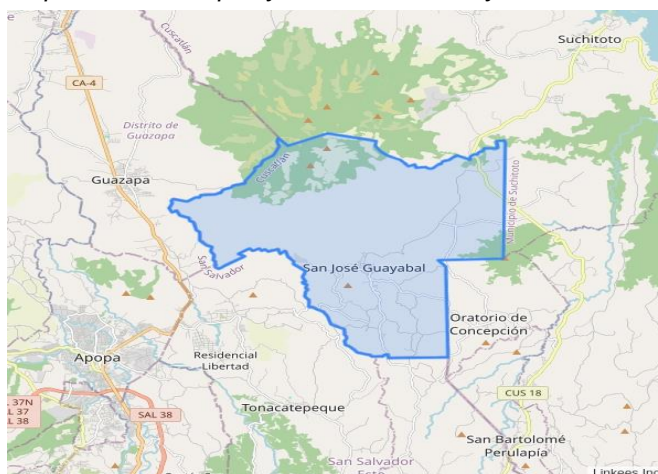
Guests can enjoy green outdoor spaces, participate in cultural and wellness activities, and cook their own meals in a fully equipped shared kitchen. Daily breakfast, 24/7 security, free Wi-Fi, and private parking ensure a practical and safe stay. With a pet-friendly policy and bicycle rentals available, Guaya Hostel invites guests to relax, explore, and engage with the community. The project also plays a meaningful role in promoting sustainable tourism and supporting local development through community involvement and eco-conscious practices.

### **1.3.2 Location**

Guaya Hostel is a new lodging space located in San José Guayabal, in the northern region of the Cuscatlán department, just 30 minutes from the municipality of San Martín in San Salvador. This unique location offers visitors the chance to explore a lesser-known area of El Salvador that is rich in culture, nature, and

community life. The town of San José Guayabal is known for its peaceful ambiance, welcoming locals, and religion tourism. Though close to the capital, the area retains a rural charm that makes it ideal for those looking to unwind and connect with authentic Salvadoran culture.

**Figure 1.**  
Map of the municipality of San José Guayabal



Note. Geographical map showing the boundaries of the municipality of San José Guayabal. Adapted from Linkees Inc. (n.d.).

[https://cache.linkees.com/images/regions/sv\\_320327931](https://cache.linkees.com/images/regions/sv_320327931)

### 1.3.3 Activities offered by Guaya Hostel

**Table 1**

*Activities offered by Guaya Hostel.*

Activities	Description	Schedule	Cost per person
Yoga and meditation classes	Professionals in the field will guide them.	Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.	\$ 5
Ceramic workshop	Local artisans will lead it.	Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday, 3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.	\$ 10

Relaxing massage service	Each session uses natural oils and aromatherapy techniques.	Daily from 3:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m  60 minutes for each session	\$ 10
Eco-Friendly Macramé Workshop	Macramé Artists will lead it.	Saturday and Sunday 10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.	\$10

*Note.* Own elaboration.

Guaya Hostel offers activities to enhance the tourist experience of its guests. Among them are yoga and meditation classes, ideal for starting the day with energy and well-being. These sessions will take place in the morning on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, with an additional cost of \$5 per person. Another highlight is the ceramic workshop, led by local artisans, taking advantage of the municipality's cultural richness. This activity will take place in the afternoon on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays, for an additional cost of \$10 per person, which includes all necessary materials.

The hostel offers a relaxing massage service of 60 minutes designed to provide guests with physical and mental well-being. Guests may choose from a full-body massage, a foot massage, or a back and neck massage, according to their preferences. Every treatment is delivered in a carefully prepared environment with soft music, clean towels, and a complimentary herbal infusion. The service is available daily from 3:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., with an additional cost of \$10 per person. Additionally, an Eco-Friendly Macramé Workshop will take place on Saturdays and

Sundays. Each session will be led by a skilled macramé artist, who will focus on teaching essential knotting techniques for an additional cost of \$10 per person.

#### **1.4 Qualities of the Product Service**

The qualities of Guaya Hostel go beyond the services it provides. These attributes represent the key differentiators that make the hostel a valuable proposition for local tourism.

First and foremost, its strategic location in San José Guayabal—just 30 minutes from San Martín and relatively close to San Salvador—makes it an attractive option for visitors looking to explore areas outside the traditional tourist routes, without the need to travel long distances.

Another key quality is its inclusive nature. The hostel is designed to welcome all types of guests, from solo travelers to families and small groups. The goal is to create an accessible and functional space for a wide range of tourist profiles.

Security is also a top priority, with 24-hour surveillance providing peace of mind for guests. In addition, the hostel offers a calm, well-oriented environment, with green spaces where guests can relax or engage in outdoor activities. This makes it an ideal place to disconnect from the fast pace of urban life.

The hostel is also a pet-friendly space, allowing guests to bring their pets—an advantage over more restrictive lodging options. Moreover, it promotes sustainable and responsible tourism by integrating local culture and encouraging community participation in tourism-related activities.

One of its most notable qualities is its commitment to eco-friendly mobility, offering bicycle rentals as a healthy and alternative way to explore the municipality. It also supports digital connectivity through free Wi-Fi, meeting the needs of visitors who wish to stay connected or work remotely.

In summary, Guaya Hostel aims not only to provide lodging, but to establish itself as a purpose-driven tourism project: accessible, secure, environmentally conscious, and committed to the local development of San José Guayabal.

## **1.5 Tourism Typology**

### **1.5.1 Sustainable Tourism**

According to the World Tourism Organization and UNEP (2005),<sup>1</sup> “sustainable tourism takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities.” Some Tourism accommodation services commit to implementing this type of tourism, such as Guaya Hostel, which implements sustainable practices, positioning itself as an exemplary tourism service in the municipality.

Guaya Hostel efficiently uses essential resources such as water and energy, which are key elements for environmental sustainability. It also promotes waste separation using appropriate containers, helping to reduce long-term pollution. It uses renewable energy sources, significantly lowering its ecological footprint. It hires local staff, which allows the municipality’s population, since it is challenging to find employment in the area, and it purchases local products, supporting the regional economy and the development of the city.

### **1.5.2 Religious Tourism**

Accommodation services during religious holidays are essential for hosting national and international visitors who visit religious sites throughout the country. In this regard, religious tourism can be a significant opportunity for tourism

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<sup>1</sup> World Tourism Organization & United Nations Environment Programme. (2005). *Making tourism more sustainable: A guide for policy makers*. <https://www.e-unwto.org/doi/book/10.18111/9789284408214>

development, as tourists with religious motivations tend to be more loyal to the destinations they visit than those with other motivations (Salgado, 2001).<sup>2</sup>

Guaya Hostel is intrinsically linked to religious tourism, which has been a significant type of tourism for several decades in San José Guayabal. The hostel's strategic location, just a short distance from the Catholic Church, allows guests to fully participate in the religious activities that take place both during the day and at night. Additionally, the hostel offers special discounts for pilgrims, especially during dates of religious importance.

It also provides guests with accurate and up-to-date information about mass schedules, processions, and dates of religious festivities such as the pilgrimage to Jesus of the Rescue and the patron feast of Saint Joseph, ensuring that visitors do not miss any of these important celebrations.

### **1.5.3 Family Tourism**

Many families travel together and prefer to stay in places that offer safety and comfort. Park et al. (2020)<sup>3</sup> defined family travel as “a purposive time spent together as a family group, which may include extended family, doing activities different from normal routines that are fun, but that may involve compromise and conflict at times.” Guaya Hostel promotes family bonding by welcoming guests of all ages. The hostel offers safe spaces for children and seniors, a calm and clean environment, and activities for families to enjoy together. In addition, families staying at the hostel can explore the tourist attractions and emblematic places of San José Guayabal. This tourism service provides detailed information about the attractions, including

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<sup>2</sup> Salgado, J. R. (2001). *Turismo religioso: Alternativa de apoyo a la preservación del patrimonio y desarrollo*. *Revista Bibliográfica de Geografía y Ciencias Sociales*, 6(316), 742–798. Retrieved from <https://revistes.ub.edu/index.php/b3w/article/view/24762>

<sup>3</sup> Park, S. Y., Pan, B., & Ahn, J. B. (2020). Family trip and academic achievement in early childhood. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 80, 102795. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2019.102795>

directions and entry fees.

It encourages unforgettable family moments by accepting pets, which are an important part of many families. The pet-friendly lodging option offered by Guaya Hostels meet the needs of those who travel with their pets.

### **1.6 Principles for the sustainable development of Guaya Hostel**

In Guaya Hostel project, several principles of sustainable tourism are practically and thoughtfully integrated, aligning with both the realities of the municipality and the goals of the lodging initiative.

**Prioritizing Local Communities** is one of the most important principles. The hostel aims to hire staff from San José Guayabal and establish relationships with local suppliers. This approach strengthens the local economy, creates jobs, and ensures that the benefits of tourism are directly distributed within the community.

**Preserving Heritage** is also applied, as the project encourages the appreciation and understanding of the customs, traditions, and cultural elements unique to the municipality. The goal is for guests not only to stay at the hostel but also to engage with and respect the local context.

**Protecting Nature** is reflected in the responsible use of resources within the hostel, the preservation of green areas, and the promotion of a harmonious relationship with the natural environment. Low-impact tourism is encouraged, prioritizing environmental respect.

Additionally, **Responsible Production and Consumption** is evident in the management of services: conscious use of water and energy is promoted, waste is minimized, and sustainable practices are encouraged among guests.

Finally, **Balancing Infrastructure** ensures that the hostel's design and scale are appropriate for the surrounding environment. The aim is not to build a large-scale

facility, but rather a functional space that respects both the urban and natural setting of San José Guayabal.

These principles make the hostel a genuinely sustainable tourism proposal—not only in theory, but in real, actionable ways tailored to the local scale and with a positive impact on the community.

**CHAPTER II**

**ELEMENTS FOR THE**

**DESIGN OF A TOURISTIC**

**PRODUCT OR SERVICE**

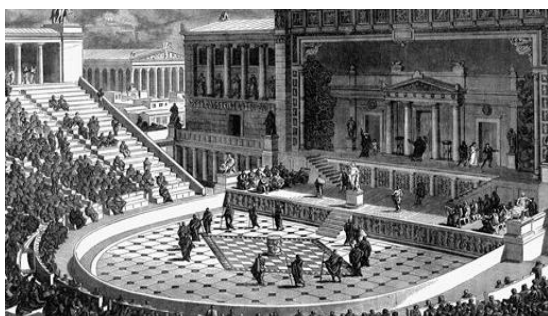
## 2.1 History of Tourism

Tourism, understood as the voluntary and temporary movement of people outside their usual place of residence mainly for recreational, cultural, or leisure purposes, is a practice that has evolved throughout human history. Far from being a recent phenomenon, tourism has deep roots in civilization, linked to leisure, religion, commerce, and the pursuit of knowledge (Boyer, 2003).<sup>4</sup>

### 2.1.1 Tourism in Antiquity

In ancient civilizations, tourism was associated with religion, sports, and culture. In Egypt, for example, trips to the pyramids of Giza, the temples of Karnak and Luxor, or the tombs in the Valley of the Kings show an early interest in visiting constructions and rituals tied to religious worldviews (Casson, 1994).<sup>5</sup>

**Figure 3.**  
*Theater in Ancient Greece.*



*Note.* This image shows represents theater in Ancient Greece. Adapted from iStock (2015). <https://www.istockphoto.com/es/vector/antigua-grecia-teatro-de-dioniso-atenas-gm497865082-79360523>

cultural attraction centers (Towner, 1996)<sup>6</sup>

**Figure 2.**

*The highest pyramid and other attractions in Egypt.*



*Note.* This image shows the most symbolic attraction in Egypt. Adapted from National Geographic (2023). <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/historia/2023/06/la-piramide-mas-alta-y-otras-atracciones-que-descubrir-en-egipto>

In Greece, tourism played a fundamental role thanks to the Olympic Games, held since 776 B.C. in Olympia, which attracted thousands of visitors from different city-states. Additionally, theaters, temples, and literary festivals also functioned as

<sup>4</sup> Boyer, R. (2003). *The History of Tourism: Roots and Origins*. Oxford: Routledge

<sup>5</sup> Casson, L. (1994). *Travel in the Ancient World*. London: Routledge.

<sup>6</sup> Towner, J. (1996). *An Historical Geography of Recreation and Tourism in the Western World*. Chichester: Wiley.

**Figure 4.**  
*Circus Maximus in Rome.*



*Note.* This image represents chariot races in the Circus Maximus. Adapted from Andén 27 (2016). <https://anden-27.blogspot.com/2016/03/el-circo-de-roma.html>

In Rome, tourism was linked to leisure and the rest of the elite, who traveled to coastal villas such as Capri, Pompeii, and the Naples Riviera. Similarly, the Colosseum, Circus Maximus, and public baths were spaces for domestic tourism with elements of entertainment and socialization (Molina, 2006).<sup>7</sup>

### 2.1.2 Tourism in the Middle Ages

During the Middle Ages, tourism was closely associated with religious pilgrimages. Places such as Jerusalem, Rome, and Santiago de Compostela became highly important destinations, which promoted the creation of routes, lodgings, and services for travelers (Vukonic, 1996).<sup>8</sup>

Additionally, in the Islamic world, the pilgrimage to Mecca (Hajj) constituted, and still constitutes, one of the largest religious tourism movements (Timothy & Olsen, 2006).<sup>9</sup>

**Figure 5.**  
*The Camino de Santiago.*



*Note.* This image shows hundreds of pilgrims who embarked on an unpredictable journey to Santiago de Compostela. Adapted from National Geographic (2022). [https://historia.nationalgeographic.com.es/a/camino-santiago-edad-media-odisea-llegar-a-compostela\\_14987](https://historia.nationalgeographic.com.es/a/camino-santiago-edad-media-odisea-llegar-a-compostela_14987)

<sup>7</sup> Molina, C. (2006). *Roman Leisure and Tourism*. Madrid: Editorial Complutense.

<sup>8</sup> Vukonic, B. (1996). *Tourism and Religion*. Pergamon.

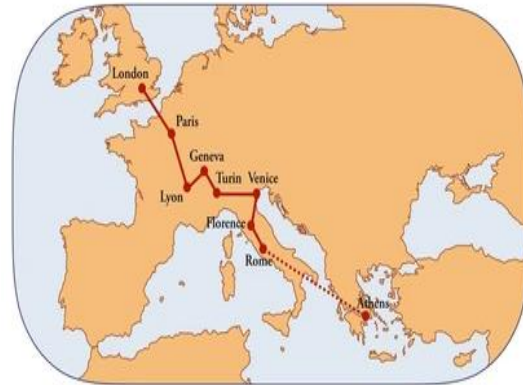
<sup>9</sup> Timothy, D. J., & Olsen, D. H. (2006). *Tourism, Religion and Spiritual Journeys*. Routledge.

Meanwhile, in the 16th and 17th centuries, the Grand Tour emerged in Europe—a cultural training journey undertaken by young aristocrats and bourgeois, which included visits to cities such as Paris, Rome, Florence and Venice. This precedent is considered the basis of modern cultural tourism, linking travel to education and the appreciation of art and history (Boyer, 2003; Towner, 1996).<sup>10</sup>

### 2.1.3 Tourism in Modernity and the Industrial Revolution

Modernity brought substantial changes to tourism practices. During the 18th and 19th centuries Industrial Revolution, free time increased, especially with the introduction of paid vacations in some European countries. The development of railways, steamships, and later the automobile made travel faster and more accessible (Burkart & Medlik, 1981).<sup>11</sup>

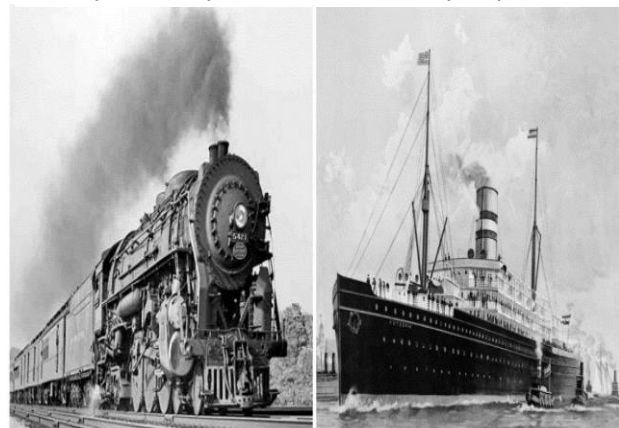
**Figure 6.**  
*The Grand Tour of Europe.*



*Note.* The map indicates the route through key cities in Europe for the study of art and classical culture. Adapted from iStock (2022).

<https://www.istockphoto.com/vector/the-grand-tour-of-europe-gm1384339383-443713784>

**Figure 7.**  
*Railways development and steamships operation.*



*Note.* The image shows the extension of the steam railroads and the operation of the first steamships to cross the Atlantic Ocean in 1819. Adapted from Icon Road (2021).

<https://www.iconroad.es/historia/coches-a-vapor/>

<sup>10</sup> Boyer, R. (2003). *The History of Tourism: Roots and Origins*. Oxford: Routledge; Towner, J. (1996). *An Historical Geography of Recreation and Tourism in the Western World*. Chichester: Wiley.

<sup>11</sup> Burkart, A. J., & Medlik, S. (1981). *Tourism: Past, Present, and Future*. Heinemann.

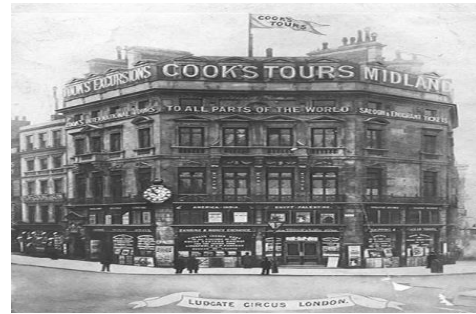
During this period, the first organized travel agencies also emerged, with Thomas Cook pioneering the commercialization of excursions and scheduled trips in the mid-19th century (Holloway & Humphreys, 2019).<sup>12</sup> At the same time, spas such as Bath in England or Baden-Baden in Germany became fashionable destinations among the upper class.

#### 2.1.4 Tourism in the 20th Century

The 20th century marked the beginning of mass tourism, due to the growth of the middle class, expansion of labor rights, and more affordable access to transportation. After World War II, international tourism expanded as a global phenomenon, boosted by the invention of large-scale commercial flights and the creation of international organizations such as the World Tourism Organization (WTO) in 1975 (OMT, 2020).<sup>13</sup>

During this period, sun-and-beach destinations, such as the Mediterranean, Caribbean, and Southeast Asia, gained prominence. At the same time, European

**Figure 8.**  
*Cook's Tours Agency.*



*Note.* The image shows the pioneer tour agency, Thomas Cook and Son, created by Thomas Cook in 1845. Adapted from Turismo Pase Prioritario <https://turismopaseprioritario.wordpress.com/2019/09/27/thomas-cook-innovacion-constante/>

**Figure 9.**  
*Invention of large-scale commercial flights.*



*Note.* The image represents the 50's and 60's where large-scale flights reached its zenith. Adapted from Air Crew Canarias (2019). <https://www.aircrewcanarias.com/blog/14-como-era-volar-en-los-anos-50-y-60.html>

<sup>12</sup> Holloway, J. C., & Humphreys, C. (2019). *The Business of Tourism*. Routledge.

<sup>13</sup> Organización Mundial del Turismo (OMT). (2020). *International Tourism Highlights 2020 Edition*. Madrid: OMT.

cities with cultural heritage consolidated as global tourism references (Hall & Lew, 2009).<sup>14</sup>

### **2.1.5 Tourism in the 21st Century**

In the 21st century, tourism has evolved into diversified modalities beyond leisure. Ecotourism, cultural tourism, community tourism, and sustainable tourism have gained relevance in response to growing environmental and social concerns. Tourism is no longer conceived solely as a recreational activity but as an industry capable of generating economic development, preserving cultural heritage, and promoting environmental conservation (Weaver, 2006).<sup>15</sup>

Moreover, contemporary phenomena such as globalization, digital platforms, and social media have transformed tourism consumption habits, generating new trends such as experiential tourism and creative tourism (Richards, 2018).<sup>16</sup>

Sustainability now stands as a guiding principle of global tourism, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), promoting a balance between visitor satisfaction, destination protection, and community welfare (OMT, 2020).<sup>17</sup>

## **2.2 History of Tourism in El Salvador**

### **2.2.1 The Beginning of Tourism in El Salvador**

Tourism in El Salvador began in the early 20th century. In 1924, during the administration of President Alfonso Quiñónez Molina, the Tourism Development Board (*Junta de Fomento de Turismo*) was created to promote the country as a cultural and historical destination at the international level (Anonymous, 1924).<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Hall, C. M., & Lew, A. A. (2009). *Understanding and Managing Tourism Impacts: An Integrated Approach*. Routledge

<sup>15</sup> Weaver, D. (2006). *Sustainable Tourism: Theory and Practice*. Elsevier.

<sup>16</sup> Richards, G. (2018). Cultural Tourism: A Review of Recent Research and Trends. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*.

<sup>17</sup> Organización Mundial del Turismo (OMT). (2020). *International Tourism Highlights 2020 Edition*. Madrid: OMT.

<sup>18</sup> Anonymous (1924). *Creación de la Junta de Fomento de Turismo*. San Salvador: Diario Oficial.

On June 20 of that same year, the government became aware of the importance of tourism in the country, not only as a source of foreign exchange but also as a way for the international community to become acquainted with El Salvador's cultural and historical values, and to establish new relationships that could benefit trade.

In 1930, the National Tourism Board (*Junta Nacional de Turismo*) was officially established, linked to the Ministry of

Development (*Ministerio de Fomento*), serving as a liaison between the government and the departmental boards responsible for roads and access to tourist areas.

In 1947, a National Tourism Assembly was held, involving various related institutions, including Customs, Immigration, Public Works, and Popular Culture, among others. The National Tourism Board was composed of Mr. Raúl Contreras from 1949 to 1959, to whom much of the development of several tourism projects is credited; he was the pioneer of the *Turicentros*, which are currently known as Recreational Parks (ISTU, n.d., para. 4).<sup>19</sup>

Tourism in El Salvador has gone through various stages of development, influenced by social, political, and economic factors. During the first half of the 20th century, tourism was an incipient activity, mainly reserved for national and international elites. It was not until the 1960s and 1970s that the country began to

**Figure 10.**

*Portrait of Dr. Alfonso Quiñónez Molina.*



*Note.* This image shows to Dr. Alfonso Quiñónez Molina served as President of El Salvador. Adapted from La Prensa Gráfica (2025).

<https://www.laprensagrafica.com/salvador/enisimo/El-presidente-salvadoreno-que-previo-a-su-mandato-dirigio-un-manicomio-FOTOS-20250714-0070.html>

<sup>19</sup> ISTU. (n.d.) ISTU. (n.d.). *Marco institucional del Instituto Salvadoreño de Turismo (para 4)*. Retrieved from <https://istu.gob.sv/marco-institucional/>

take more formal measures to boost this industry.

## 2.2.2 Creation of the Salvadoran Tourism Institute (ISTU)

During the 1960s, tourism became more systematized. In 1961, the Salvadoran Tourism Institute (*Instituto Salvadoreño de Turismo*, ISTU) was created by executive decree, marking the beginning of an organized and formal tourism policy. It was officially founded in 1973 through Legislative Decree No. 517 (ISTU, n.d.),<sup>20</sup> as part of the state's efforts to strengthen domestic tourism and provide the population with access to public recreational spaces.

**Figure 11.**

*Logo of the Salvadoran Institute of Tourism.*



*Note.* This image shows abstract shapes that suggest movement and nature. Adapted from ISTO. (n.d.).

[https://isto.international/isto\\_members/instituto-salvadoreno-de-turismo-istu/](https://isto.international/isto_members/instituto-salvadoreno-de-turismo-istu/)

Unlike other institutions focused on international tourism, ISTU concentrated on social and local tourism, offering recreational areas at affordable prices and promoting tourism as a right for all Salvadorans. Its functions included the administration of recreational parks, protected natural areas, and public resorts such as Balboa Park, Apulo Tourist Center, and Cerro Verde National Park.

In 1967, the Law for the Promotion of the Tourism Industry was enacted (Decree No. 367, 1967),<sup>21</sup> encouraging private investment in hotels, travel agencies, and related services.

<sup>20</sup> ISTU. (n.d.). *Marco institucional del Instituto Salvadoreño de Turismo*. Retrieved from <https://istu.gob.sv/marco-institucional/>

<sup>21</sup> Ley de Fomento de la Industria Turística, Decreto N° 367, Diario Oficial N° 117, Tomo 215 (28–29 de junio de 1967). Retrieved from <https://www.jurisprudencia.gob.sv/DocumentosBoveda/D/2/19601969/1967/06/888E5.PDF>

### 2.2.3 Tourism in the 1970s and 1980s

The 1970s are considered the golden age of tourism in El Salvador, a decade marked by relative political and economic stability. With the development of four major hotels in San Salvador, the hotel infrastructure was significantly enhanced. Iconic hotels such as Camino Real, Alameda, Ritz, and Terraza were built in San Salvador. Coastal projects were also promoted in Jaltepeque, and the Comalapa International Airport was constructed to improve connectivity.

In 1975, El Salvador hosted the Miss Universe pageant. The venue was considered one of the best in the contest's history, and the country was branded as a destination of sun, sand, and beach, with marketing strategies developed to promote it.

**Figure 12.**

*Panoramic view of the Camino Real Hotel.*



*Note.* This image shows the Camino Real Hotel. Adapted from Hip Postcard (n.d.). <https://www.hippostcard.com/listing/postcard-el-salvador-hotel-camino-real-san-salvador/43155587>

### 2.2.4 Tourism in El Salvador during the Civil War

When the civil war broke out, internal violence caused an abrupt decline in both domestic and international tourism. After having gained international recognition, in the 1980s, the country was declared dangerous for tourists. With the onset of the armed conflict in 1980, tourism practically disappeared.

Insecurity and violence kept foreign visitors away, and many tourist areas were abandoned or destroyed. This period lasted until the signing of the Peace Accords in 1992, when the sector began to make a slow recovery.

During the armed conflict (1980–1992), many recreational centers were abandoned or deteriorated. However, in the postwar period, ISTU resumed its mission, implementing renovation projects and expanding services in various tourist areas. Tourism had stalled due to the war, and El Salvador disappeared from the map as a tourist destination. Nevertheless, the hotel industry remained active due to the presence of international observers and journalists covering the conflict. The only foreign visitors at the time were related to the armed conflict: military advisers, leftist sympathizers, international organization officials, journalists, or curious outsiders.

### 2.2.5 Tourism in the 1990s

With the signing of the Peace Accords in 1992, El Salvador began rebuilding its tourism image. In 1996, the Salvadoran Tourism Corporation (*CORSATUR*) was created, with legal autonomy, to regulate and promote the sector (*CORSATUR*, 1996).<sup>22</sup>

*CORSATUR* (*Corporación Salvadoreña de Turismo*) logo.

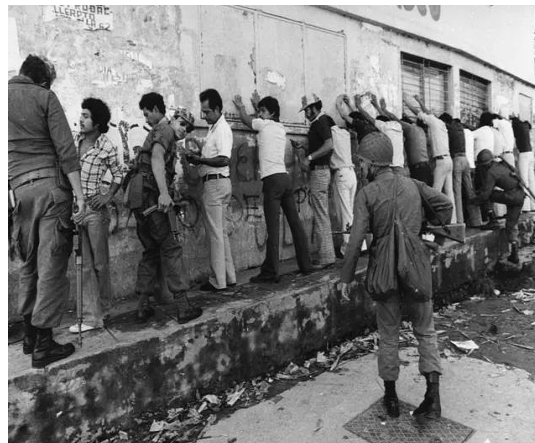


*Note.* This image shows combines stylized to reflect El Salvador's tourism identity. Adapted from Iconape. (n.d.). <https://iconape.com/corsatur-logo-icon-svg-png.html>

<sup>22</sup> *CORSATUR*. (1996). *Ley de creación de la Corporación Salvadoreña de Turismo*. Decreto Legislativo N.º 719. San Salvador: Asamblea Legislativa. <https://corsatur.gob.sv/marco-institucional/>

**Figure 13.**

*Civil conflict in El Salvador.*



*Note.* This image shows a moment of military and social tension characteristic of that historical period. Adapted from BBC/Getty Images. (n.d.). Retrieved from [https://ichef.bbci.co.uk/ace/ws/800/cpsprodpb/1F37/production/93619970\\_gettyimages-3333721.jpg.webp](https://ichef.bbci.co.uk/ace/ws/800/cpsprodpb/1F37/production/93619970_gettyimages-3333721.jpg.webp)

with promoting and coordinating the development of the tourism sector in El Salvador. Its creation was part of a strategy to decentralize and professionalize tourism functions, which had previously been concentrated in institutions such as ISTU (ISTU, n.d.).<sup>23</sup>

During these years, the country began promoting destinations such as the *Ruta de Las Flores*, Surf City, Lake Coatepeque, and El Boquerón National Park. CORSATUR's mission includes international promotion of the country, training and certification of tourism businesses, management of the National Tourism Registry (RNT), and coordination of public policies with other institutions. Through the RNT, the Corporation seeks to regulate and formalize the Salvadoran tourism industry (CORSATUR, 2022).<sup>24</sup>

## 2.2.6 Tourism in the 21st Century

Starting in 2000, tourism consolidated as a strategic activity for the country's economic development. Under the administration of the President of El Salvador, Mr. Elías Antonio Saca, the Ministry of Tourism (MITUR) was created through Executive Decree No. 1 on May 24, 2004. This institution became the governing body in tourism matters, responsible for defining and ensuring compliance

**Figure 15.**

*Official logo of the Ministry of Tourism of El Salvador.*



*Note.* This image shows the national coat of arms encircled by stars alongside the text "Ministerio de Turismo." Adapted from Gobierno de El Salvador. (n.d.).

[https://www.transparencia.gob.sv/cargar\\_imagen.php?id=NTc%3D](https://www.transparencia.gob.sv/cargar_imagen.php?id=NTc%3D)

<sup>23</sup> ISTU. (n.d.). *Marco institucional del Instituto Salvadoreño de Turismo*. Retrieved from <https://istu.gob.sv/marco-institucional/>

<sup>24</sup> CORSATUR (2022). *CORSATUR - RNT - Registration guide*. Retrieved from <https://www.mitur.gob.sv/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/CORSATUR-RNT-Guia-de-inscripcion-15X15cm-Mda2-ENe.pdf>

with National Tourism Policy and Plan (*Diario Oficial*, 2004) [Official Gazette].<sup>25</sup> In 2005, the Tourism Law was passed, granting tax incentives for new investments.

**Figure 16.**

*Tazumal archaeological site.*



Note. This image shows a prominent Maya complex in Chalchuapa. Adapted from El Salvador Travel (n.d.).

<https://elsalvador.travel/system/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/SantaAna.jpg>

In 2008, the country welcomed 1.8 million visitors, generating about \$720 million. From the mid-2010s onward, initiatives in community-based, eco, and cultural tourism emerged, including archaeological routes (Joya de Cerén, Tazumal), the *Ruta de Las Flores*, Jiquilisco Bay, and El Imposible National Park. El Salvador sought to position itself as an emerging destination in Latin America, leveraging its natural, cultural, and historical diversity.

Adventure, nature, sun and beach, and rural tourism became the most promoted segments (CORSATUR, 2021).<sup>26</sup>

According to the Ministry of Tourism of El Salvador (2020),<sup>27</sup> tourism activity in the country showed a positive increase in January 2020, with a total of 225,529 visitors and visitor spending of \$169.3 million. In 2024, El Salvador received 3.9 million international tourists, generating 14% of GDP and positioning itself as one of the fastest-growing tourism destinations in Central America (The Washington Post, 2025).<sup>28</sup> In recent years, ISTU has modernized its management, working alongside MITUR and other entities to provide better recreational experiences, foster

<sup>25</sup> Diario Oficial. (2004, 1 de junio). *Decreto Ejecutivo No. 1: Creación del Ministerio de Turismo*. Gobierno de El Salvador.

<sup>26</sup> CORSATUR. (2021). *Informe anual de turismo*. San Salvador: Corporación Salvadoreña de Turismo. <https://corsatur.gob.sv/download/informe-estadistico-de-turismo-cierre-2021/>

<sup>27</sup> Ministry of Tourism of El Salvador. (2020, February 24). *Tourism in El Salvador grows 14.7% in January 2020 and exceeds \$169 million*. Retrieved from <https://www.mitur.gob.sv/turismo-en-el-salvador-crece-14-7-en-enero-2020-y-supera-los-169-millones/>

<sup>28</sup> The Washington Post. (2025). *El Salvador wants America's prisoners. And its tourists*. Washington, DC: WP Publications.

ecotourism, and revalue the country's natural heritage

## 2.3 Natural Resources

### 2.3.1 Location on the Tourist map of El Salvador

San José Guayabal, located in the Cuscatlán Department, exhibits rich hydrological and ecological diversity. Numerous rivers and streams traverse the municipality, enhancing its potential for ecotourism and water resource management. The area's subtropical humid forests include species like conacaste, madrecaño, nance, and roble, indicative of its rich vegetation (EcuRed, s.f.).<sup>29</sup>

. Prominent among its natural attractions is Cerro Guazapa, valued for ecological tourism and its historical role during the civil war, with an estimated 200 plant species and a diverse array of fauna.

Figure 17. Tourist map of El Salvador.



Note. The official tourist map highlights El Salvador's main cities, cultural and natural destinations. Adapted from El Salvador Turismo. (s.f.).

[https://www.elsalvadoriturismo.com.sv/viajeelsalvador/mapaelsalvador/index.html?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://www.elsalvadoriturismo.com.sv/viajeelsalvador/mapaelsalvador/index.html?utm_source=chatgpt.com)

<sup>29</sup> EcuRed. (n.d.). *San José Guayabal (El Salvador)*. Retrieved from [https://www.ecured.cu/San\\_Jos%C3%A9\\_Guayabal\\_%28El\\_Salvador%29](https://www.ecured.cu/San_Jos%C3%A9_Guayabal_%28El_Salvador%29)

### 2.3.2 Rio Guaza (Guaza River)

The Rio Guaza, also known as the Rio Guazapa, is part of the hydrographic

**Figure 18.**

*Rio Guaza.*



*Note.* This image captures its natural watercourse as part of the region's local hydrology. Adapted from Alcaldía de Guazapa (n.d.).

<https://alcaldiaguazapa.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/05/rio-guaza.jpg>

(Mindat.org, n.d.).<sup>30</sup>

During the rainy season, its flow increases considerably, generating stronger currents, while in the summer, it maintains a calm flow, favoring its recreational use. A notable attraction of this river is the presence of the “Cazalcubas,” natural pools formed along its course, which have become popular sites for bathing and local recreation.

### 2.3.3 Rio de Piedras (Stone River)

The Piedras River is a stream located in the municipality of San José Guayabal, department of Cuscatlán, El Salvador. It is situated near the localities of Rodríguez and the village of Piedra Labrada, at an approximate altitude of 511

network that crosses the municipality of San José Guayabal. This river is characterized by its clean and clear waters, with the presence of small fish, and a natural environment that combines rural landscapes with areas near the urban center. It is a watercourse (stream or creek) located in the department of Cuscatlán, El Salvador, and can be geographically pinpointed at 13°56'34" N latitude and 89°11'22" W longitude

<sup>30</sup> Mindat.org. (n.d.). *Rio Guazapa, Departamento de San Salvador, El Salvador*. Retrieved from <https://www.mindat.org/feature-3585634.html>

meters above sea level. Its coordinates are 13.83333° North latitude and – 89.11667° West longitude (Mapcarta, n.d.).<sup>31</sup>

It is considered a minor water body, with a reduced flow and no records of navigability. Although there are no detailed references about its fauna, flora, or recreational use, it is recognized as part of the hydrological system that contributes to the local water supply and runoff.

#### 2.3.4 The Forests of Llano Grande, San José Guayabal

The forests of Llano Grande, a village located in the municipality of San José Guayabal, form part of the natural heritage of the department of Cuscatlán in El

Salvador. This ecosystem corresponds to a subtropical humid forest, characterized by dense vegetation and a mild to warm climate. Among the most common tree species in this region are papaturro, volador, conacaste, oak, and madrecacao, which play an important role in soil conservation and biodiversity

**Figure 19.**

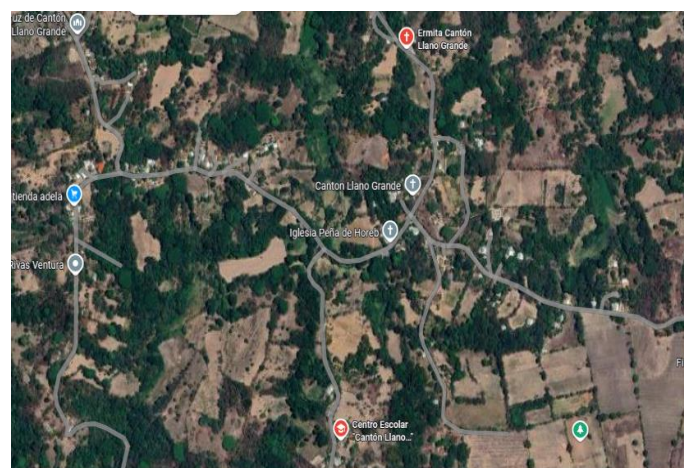
*Satellite view of Río de Piedras*



*Note.* This image shows *the* location is in a rural area near the communities of Rodríguez and Piedra Labrada. Adapted from Alcaldía de Guazapa. (n.d.). <https://mapcarta.com/19513836>

**Figure 20.**

*Satellite view of Cantón Llano Grande.*



*Note.* The image shows the rural area's topography and vegetation. Adapted from Google Maps. (n.d.). [https://www.google.com/maps/search/canton+llano+grande+san+jos%C3%A9+guayabal/@13.8278284,-89.0832155,1240m/data=!3m1!1e3?entry=ttu&g\\_ep=EgoYMDI1MDgxNy4wIKXMDSoASAFQAw%3D%3D](https://www.google.com/maps/search/canton+llano+grande+san+jos%C3%A9+guayabal/@13.8278284,-89.0832155,1240m/data=!3m1!1e3?entry=ttu&g_ep=EgoYMDI1MDgxNy4wIKXMDSoASAFQAw%3D%3D)

<sup>31</sup> Mapcarta. (n.d.). *Río de Piedras*. Retrieved from <https://mapcarta.com/es/19513836>

maintenance. In recent years, these areas have attracted the interest of tourists and residents due to their ecological and scenic value, as well as their potential for the development of sustainable ecotourism.

The forests of Llano Grande, part of the municipality of San José Guayabal in the department of Cuscatlán, are recognized as environmental areas with ecotourism potential. They are part of a forested landscape that also includes the forests of Palacios village and Guazapa, integrated into the environmental management micro-region known as MICGUAZAPA (MICGUAZAPA, n.d.).<sup>32</sup>

From a territorial perspective, Llano Grande is located at an approximate altitude of 576 meters above sea level, just a few kilometers from the municipal center of San José Guayabal, with which it closely borders (Mapcarta, n.d.).<sup>3033</sup>

### 2.3.5 Cerro de Guazapa (Guazapa Hill)

Cerro de Guazapa is an extinct volcano belonging to the country's ancient volcanic chain. It covers an approximate area of 7,253.91 hectares and reaches an altitude of 1,438 meters above sea level.

*Panoramic view of Cerro de Guazapa.*



*Note.* This image shows an extinct volcano located between the San Salvador and Cuscatlán departments. Adapted from Ministry of Tourism of El Salvador. (n.d.). <https://elsalvador.travel/experience/cerro-de-quazapa/>

altitude of 1,438 meters above sea level.

Currently, the Cerro de Guazapa area and its zone of influence are shared by the municipalities of Suchitoto and San José Guayabal, in the department of Cuscatlán, and the municipalities of Guazapa and Tonacatepeque, in the department of San Salvador.

<sup>32</sup> MICGUAZAPA. (n.d.). *Microregión Cerro Guazapa: Gestión ambiental y ecoturismo*. Retrieved from <https://sites.google.com/view/micquazapa/p%C3%A1gina-principal/historia>

<sup>33</sup> Mapcarta. (n.d.). *Llano Grande, San José Guayabal*. Retrieved from [mapcarta.com/es/19515128](http://mapcarta.com/es/19515128)

Its area and surroundings were among the most affected places during the armed conflict, especially rural areas where communities directly suffered from the ravages of war. The intense bombings and fires caused by the armed insurgency also had a severe impact on the natural ecosystem of this area. Although the signing of the Peace Accords marked the beginning of a process of physical and social reconstruction.

Located between the departments of Cuscatlán and San Salvador, the mountain extends over approximately 7,253.91 hectares shared by the municipalities of Suchitoto, San José Guayabal, Guazapa, and Tonacatepeque. During the armed conflict of the 20th century, it was one of the main strongholds of the FMLN, with its slopes marked by guerrilla shelters, trenches or “tatús,” and airstrips, which today are preserved as historical heritage (MICGUAZAPA, n.d.).<sup>34</sup>

The mountain is also rich in biodiversity, estimated to host more than 200 plant species and approximately 27 species of birds, mammals, and reptiles, in addition to forests, waterfalls, and natural springs distributed along ecological trails (Suchitoto Blog, 2013).<sup>35</sup>

## 2.4 Soil Types in El Salvador

Based on the document *Classification of Soils by Political Division of El Salvador*, prepared by the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (2012),<sup>36</sup> the following soil orders are recognized in the country:

**Andisols:** soils derived from volcanic ash, generally with a surface horizon between 20 and 40 centimeters thick, a loamy texture, high porosity, and a great

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<sup>34</sup> MICGUAZAPA. (n.d.). *Microrregión de manejo ambiental Cerro Guazapa*. Retrieved from <https://micguazapa.org>

<sup>35</sup> Suchitoto Blog. (2013). *Historia, naturaleza y cultura*. Retrieved from <https://elsalvadorawtd.blogspot.com/2013/02/historia-naturaleza-y-cultura.html>

<sup>36</sup> Ministerio de Agricultura y Ganadería. (MAG). (2012). *Clasificación de suelos por división política de El Salvador*. San Salvador: MAG.

capacity for nutrient retention; highly suitable for intensive mechanized agriculture.

**Alluvial soils:** recent soils formed by sediments transported and deposited by rivers and streams in valleys and plains. They are stratified, with variable texture and high fertility, suitable for intensive and with variable texture and high fertility, suitable for intensive and mechanized agriculture and appropriate for all types of crops

**Grumosols:** clayey soils, gray to black. When wet, they are plastic and sticky; when dry, they crack. They have slow drainage, low permeability, and moderate to low productivity, which makes them unsuitable for permanent high-value crops because the cracks can break plant roots.

**Halomorphic soils:** saline soil found in mangroves or coastal estuaries, with poor drainage and very low suitability for agricultural production. They have silty, sandy, and clayey textures.

**Acid clay Latosols:** deep, old soils with high acidity and lower nutrient content; they require fertilization and are mainly used for reforestation.

**Regosols:** young, loose, deep, or sandy soils with poorly developed horizons, usually 10 to 20 centimeters thick, with high

**Figure 22.**

*Close-up view of alluvial soil.*



*Note.* This image shows a common soil in El Salvador. Adapted from Deposit photos. (n.d.).

[https://st5.depositphotos.com/86560692/78289/i/450/depositphotos\\_782894258-stock-photo-dry-soil-forest.jpg](https://st5.depositphotos.com/86560692/78289/i/450/depositphotos_782894258-stock-photo-dry-soil-forest.jpg)

**Figure 23.**

*Profile of a Regosol soil.*



*Note.* This image shows a poorly developed soil with roots penetrating shallowly. Adapted from Source: ELSV. (2019). <https://www.elsv.info/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Suelos-regosoles.jpg>

organic matter content; mainly used for pastures or coconut plantations.

**Red clay Latosols:** found in mountains and hills. They are deep, block-structured, usually red (sometimes yellowish or brownish), with moderate to high fertility and suitable for crops on gentle slopes.

**Lithosols:** shallow soils over pure rock. Most have their surface horizons truncated due to severe sheet erosion. Their textures are very stony, poorly developed, and with low agricultural yield.

## **2.5 Cultural Identity and Intangible Resources of San José Guayabal**

Cultural identity refers to the set of values, traditions, beliefs, practices, and symbols that shape the sense of belonging of a community or nation. It is built through history, collective memory, and the interaction of a society with its environment. Cultural identity not only defines who we are but also provides continuity and a sense of recognition in the world, influencing the way a community relates to its territory and social environment (Hall, 1990).<sup>37</sup> In the context of tourism, cultural identity becomes a fundamental resource since it enriches the visitor's experience and strengthens the preservation of traditions that otherwise might be lost.

### **2.5.1 Festivities and Celebrations**

Festivities are one of the most representative intangible resources of San José Guayabal. The Ministry of Culture of El Salvador (2020)<sup>38</sup> states that the patronal festivities in honor of San Jose, celebrated every March, include religious activities, traditional dances, gastronomic fairs, and cultural events where community participation is highly evident.

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<sup>37</sup> Hall, S. (1990). Cultural identity and diaspora. In J. Rutherford (Ed.), *Identity: Community, culture, difference* (pp. 222–237). Lawrence & Wishart.

<sup>38</sup> Ministry of Culture of El Salvador. (2020). *Patrimonio cultural inmaterial de El Salvador*. Gobierno de El Salvador.

These festivities are not only a space of religious devotion but also expressions of cultural identity that convey values of unity and hospitality to visitors. Likewise, Ramírez (2018)<sup>39</sup> argues that celebrations such as Christmas, Holy Week, and national commemorations represent moments of high social participation that allow tourists to closely experience the traditions of rural Salvadoran communities.

### 2.5.2 Religious Syncretism

Religious syncretism in El Salvador is the result of the encounter between pre-Columbian traditions and Catholicism introduced during the colonial period. Ramírez (2018)<sup>40</sup> explains that this syncretism is reflected in religious celebrations that integrate Catholic elements with ancestral practices related to nature and community life. In San José Guayabal, this is manifested through processions, religious music, the use of fireworks, and folk dances, which

**Figure 24.**  
*Sculpture of San José.*



*Note.* The image shows a sculpture of the Patron Saint, San José, during a procession. Adapted from Facebook Hermandad Jesús del Rescate San José Guayabal.  
<https://www.facebook.com/jesusdelrescat esanjoseguayabal/>.

**Figure 25.**  
*Procession of Domingo de Ramos.*



*Note.* The image presents the beginning of Easter, with the procession of the palms. Adapted by Hermandad de Jesús del Rescate San José Guayabal 2025.  
<https://www.facebook.com/share/p/1Gh1C8j2k V/>

<sup>39</sup> Ramírez, J. (2018). *Tradiciones y religiosidad popular en El Salvador*. UCA Editores.

<sup>40</sup> Ramírez, J. (2018). *Tradiciones y religiosidad popular en El Salvador*. UCA Editores.

symbolize the fusion between faith and local culture. These expressions, in addition to their spiritual value, constitute a highly relevant cultural-tourism attraction.

### 2.5.3 Gastronomy

Gastronomy constitutes another pillar of intangible cultural heritage. Hernández (2015) highlights that dishes such as pupusas, tamales, atoles, and traditional sweets represent not only the culinary identity of El Salvador but also a social practice that strengthens community cohesion. Pupusas, declared Intangible Cultural Heritage of El Salvador in 2005, are among the most attractive elements for visitors.

UNESCO (2003)<sup>41</sup> emphasizes that traditional gastronomy should be understood as an essential part of intangible cultural heritage, as it preserves knowledge, techniques, and collective meanings. In San José Guayabal, traditional drinks such as horchata and chilate are also preserved, enriching the tourist experience by offering authentic flavors of the region.

### 2.5.4 Legends, Stories, and Tales

Oral tradition is essential for the cultural identity of communities, as it transmits values, fears, and aspirations of previous generations. Aguilar<sup>42</sup> compiles legends such as *La Siguanaba*, *El Cipitío*, and *El Cadejo* which are widely know

**Figure 26.**  
*Salvadoran dishes.*



*Note.* The imagen shows the diverse gastronomy of El Salvador. Adapted from Enlaces 2024.

<https://www.utec.edu.sv/enlaces/articulo/comida-tipica-resultado-del-talento-salvadoreno-en-la-gastronomia>

<sup>41</sup> UNESCO. (2003). *Convention for the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage*. UNESCO Publishing.

<sup>42</sup> Aguilar, F. (2019). *Mitos y leyendas de El Salvador*. Editorial Universitaria.

in the Salvadoran imagination and transmitted in rural areas, including San José Guayabal. These narratives not only serve as an entertainment function but also reflect the local worldview and have an educational character. According to the Ministry of Culture of El Salvador <sup>43</sup>, the municipality also preserves stories about the origin of its name, linked to the abundance of guava trees, as well as accounts of miracles attributed to Saint Joseph, its patron saint. Such narratives offer tourists the possibility of emotionally connecting with the symbolic universe of the community.

**Figure 27.**  
*The most emblematic characters of Salvadoran legends.*



*Note.* The image presents some of the most recognized characters of Salvadoran legends. Adapted from *Leyendas de El Salvador y 35 cuentos de Terror* 2019.

## 2.6 The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are 17 interconnected global goals adopted by the United Nations in 2015 as part of the 2030 Agenda, aimed at ending poverty, protecting the planet, and ensuring peace and prosperity for all (United Nations, n.d.).<sup>44</sup>

### 1. No Poverty

Aim: End extreme poverty everywhere by 2030.

This includes ensuring equal rights to resources, access to basic services, and social protection systems for vulnerable groups such as women, children, and the elderly.

<sup>43</sup> Ministry of Culture of El Salvador. (2020). *Patrimonio cultural inmaterial de El Salvador*. Gobierno de El Salvador.

<sup>44</sup> United Nations. (n.d.). *The 17 goals*. United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. Retrieved August 22, 2025, from <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

## 2. Zero Hunger

Aim: Eradicate hunger and malnutrition while promoting sustainable agriculture.

It seeks to double agricultural productivity, ensure food security, and improve nutrition, especially among children and vulnerable populations.

## 3. Good Health and Well-Being

Aim: Ensure healthy lives for all.

Key areas include reducing maternal and child mortality, ending epidemics like AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis, strengthening universal healthcare, and ensuring access to essential medicines and vaccines.

## 4. Quality Education

Aim: Guarantee inclusive and equitable quality education.

Goals include free primary and secondary education, equal access to technical and higher education, improving literacy, and promoting lifelong learning.

## 5. Gender Equality

Aim: Achieve equality and empower all women and girls.

Focuses on eliminating discrimination, violence, harmful practices (like child marriage), and ensuring equal participation in leadership, decision-making, and economic life.

**Figure 28.**  
Sustainable Development Goals infographic.



*Note.* The image appears to come from a United Nations source, commonly used in official SDG materials. Adapted from United Nations( n.d.).

<https://a.storyblok.com/f/67295/787x608/b13be9c60d/sd-goals.jpg>

## **6. Clean Water and Sanitation**

Aim: Ensure universal access to safe drinking water and sanitation.

Includes improving water quality, increasing water-use efficiency, protecting water ecosystems, and supporting community management of water systems.

## **7. Affordable and Clean Energy**

Aim: Provide reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all.

Encourages investment in renewable energy, energy efficiency, and international cooperation to expand clean technology access.

## **8. Decent Work and Economic Growth**

Aim: Foster inclusive and sustainable economic growth.

Involves reducing unemployment, eradicating forced and child labor, supporting entrepreneurship, and ensuring decent working conditions with equal pay for equal work.

## **9. Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure**

Aim: Build resilient infrastructure and foster innovation.

Includes upgrading industries for sustainability, supporting small businesses, investing in research and development, and expanding affordable internet access.

## **10. Reduced Inequalities**

Aim: Reduce inequality within and among countries.

Targets include ensuring income growth for the bottom 40%, promoting social, economic, and political inclusion, and eliminating discriminatory laws and practices.

## **11. Sustainable Cities and Communities**

Aim: Make cities inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable.

Focuses on improving housing, public transport, urban planning, and reducing pollution, while protecting cultural and natural heritage.

## **12. Responsible Consumption and Production**

Aim: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.

Encourages efficient use of resources, reducing waste, promoting recycling, and raising awareness for sustainable lifestyles.

## **13. Climate Action**

Aim: Take urgent measures against climate change.

Goals include strengthening resilience to climate-related disasters, integrating climate policies into national strategies, and supporting education and awareness on climate issues.

## **14. Life Below Water**

Aim: Protect oceans, seas, and marine resources.

Includes reducing marine pollution, protecting ecosystems, regulating overfishing, and supporting small-scale fisheries and marine conservation.

## **15. Life on Land**

Aim: Protect, restore, and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems.

Targets involve halting deforestation, restoring degraded land, protecting biodiversity, and combating desertification.

## **16. Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions**

Aim: Promote just, peaceful, and inclusive societies.

It emphasizes reducing violence, ensuring access to justice, combating corruption, protecting fundamental freedoms, and building accountable institutions.

## **17. Partnerships for the Goals**

Aim: Strengthen global partnerships for sustainable development.

Encourages financial support, technology transfer, capacity-building, and cooperation between governments, the private sector, and civil society.

## 2.7 Strategic Plan of Action

**Table 2**

*Strategic Plan of Action for Guaya Hostel.*

Action	Responsibility	Improvement
<p>Guaya Hostel staff will place posters in authorized spaces by the municipality and in establishments supporting local entrepreneurship</p>	<p>This action will be in charge of Marcela Marroquín</p> <p>She will be responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Managing the authorization process with the San José Guayabal municipality for the placement of posters.</li> <li>● Visit the most recognized establishments in the city to request their collaboration in promoting Guaya Hostel.</li> </ul>	<p>Guests who stay at Guaya Hostel for a full three days, totaling more than 70 hours, will receive a 15% discount on their stay. This promotion is designed to reward those who enjoy an extended experience at Guaya Hostel.</p>
<p>Guaya Hostel will implement a local cultural experience program, inviting guests to participate in traditional cooking workshops and guided visits led by local artisans. This action will highlight the cultural heritage of San José Guayabal and support community entrepreneurship.</p>	<p>This action will be in charge of Jennifer Juárez</p> <p>She will be responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Coordinate with local artisans, manage logistics, and promote the workshops through authorized channels.</li> <li>● Organize schedules, welcome guests to the activities, and collect feedback from participants to improve their experience.</li> </ul>	<p>Guests who register for the cultural experience program will receive a 10% discount on their next booking at Guaya Hostel. This promotion encourages repeat visits while strengthening the connection between visitors and the local community.</p>

<p>This will include phone number, WhatsApp contact, social media accounts, and a section to respond to questions, comments, or requests from guests and potential clients.</p>	<p>This action will be in charge of Jennifer Juárez and Marcela Marroquín. They will be in charge of designing and developing the Guaya Hostel website, including as much information as possible about the services offered to both national and international guests.</p>	<p>Guests staying at Guaya Hostel on their birthday will receive a 25% discount. For Salvadoran minors, proof of age may be presented through a birth certificate. For Salvadoran adults, a DUI or another official ID showing the date of birth will be required. International guests may present a passport or another valid document with their date of birth.</p>
<p>Guaya Hostel will create a social media campaign showcasing the amenities offered at Guaya Hostel and inviting local entrepreneurs to recommend their business.</p>	<p>This action will be in charge of Marcela Marroquín and Jennifer Juárez.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Marcela Marroquín will be in charge of coordinating content creation with local entrepreneurs and manage partnerships.</li> <li>● Jennifer Juárez will be in charge of publishing and monitoring posts, interact with followers, and manage guest-generated content (reviews, photos).</li> </ul>	<p>Guests who share their experience at Guaya Hostel on social media and tag the hostel will receive a 5% discount voucher for a future stay.</p>

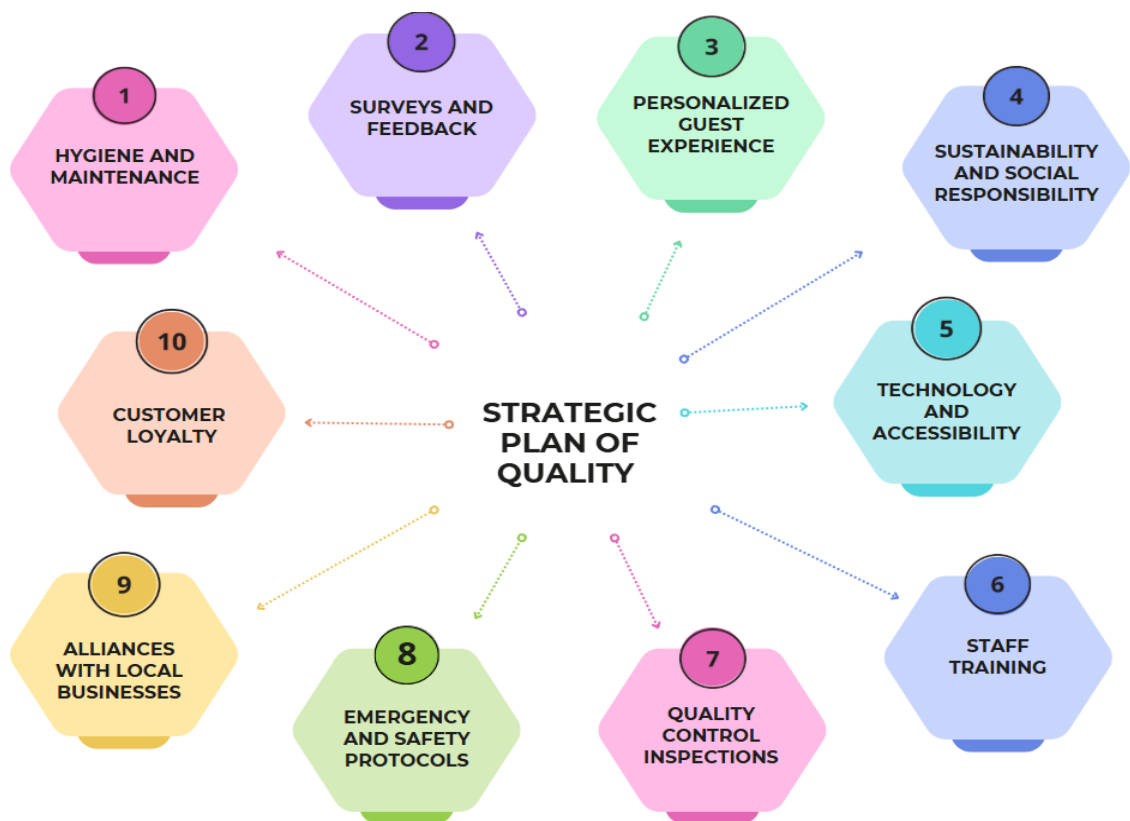
*Note.* Table provided by the team members

## 2.8 Strategic Plan of Quality

Implementing strategies coherently and systematically will help raise Guaya Hostel's standards, improve the guest experience, and enhance the reputation of the tourism service. First, a concept map is presented, which includes the keywords for each quality control; then, each of them is presented in detail.

**Figure 29.**

*Concept Map about Strategic Plan of Quality*



*Note.* Own elaboration

### Detailed Analysis of the Strategic Plan of Quality for “Guaya Hostel”

#### 1. Hygiene and Maintenance

This is considered an essential quality strategy for our tourism service, as guest satisfaction increases when hygiene and maintenance are prioritized. Daily cleaning throughout the hostel, along with regular maintenance of facilities and equipment, helps prevent accidents and ensures a pleasant stay.

## **2. Surveys and Feedback**

Guaya Hostel will enhance its services through active guest participation, utilizing satisfaction surveys, a physical suggestion box, service ratings, and regular reviews of feedback on the website.

## **3. Personalized Guest Experience**

A hostel welcomes a diverse range of guests, which is why Guaya Hostel will offer services tailored to meet different guests' needs. This includes providing information on the area's main tourist attractions, including their locations and trusted contact details.

## **4. Sustainability and Social Responsibility**

Guaya Hostel is committed to using biodegradable products and conserving natural resources, including sunlight and water. We also recycle waste according to its type. Collaborating with the local community of San José Guayabal, such as hiring local staff, is essential for ensuring a positive reception of our tourism services.

## **5. Technology and Accessibility**

Technology is becoming fundamental in tourism services or products, Guaya Hostel will offer free and stable Wi-Fi in all areas. Guests can book directly through our website, saving time and ensuring a secure reservation. We will also have active social media to respond to guest queries, and the hostel will have clear signage in all areas so guests can easily recognize them.

## **6. Staff Training**

Employees represent the face of any tourism service or product. Therefore, it is essential to train our staff in areas such as customer service, assertive communication, basic foreign language phrases, complaint management, hospitality

techniques, and knowledge of local culture and history. Employees will be trained in first aid.

### **7. Quality Control Inspections**

Guaya Hostel will conduct regular internal quality inspections to verify that all standards are being met. This includes checking the cleanliness of rooms, the functionality of equipment, and the condition of common areas. These inspections ensure consistency in service and help detect issues before they affect guests.

### **8. Emergency and Safety Protocols**

Safety is a crucial component of quality in tourism services. Guaya Hostel will implement clear emergency procedures, including designated evacuation routes, visible fire extinguishers, and readily accessible first-aid kits. Staff will be trained to handle emergencies, ensuring that guests feel safe and supported during their stay.

### **9. Alliances with Local Businesses**

Guaya Hostel will establish partnerships with nearby businesses such as restaurants, tour guides, and transportation services. This allows us to offer trusted recommendations and discounts to our guests, improving their overall experience while supporting the local economy.

### **10. Customer Loyalty**

Guaya Hostel's customer loyalty is essential to the success and growth of its business. Maintaining satisfaction, repeat customers not only strengthens the hostel's reputation in the tourism sector but also helps identify opportunities for improvement in its service offering. Loyalty contributes to building trust, positive recommendations, and a steady flow of visitors, which directly impacts the hostel's sustainable development.

**CHAPTER III  
LOCAL DEVELOPMENT  
THROUGH A TOURIST  
PRODUCT OR SERVICE.**

### 3.1 Definition of an Entrepreneur

An entrepreneur is an individual who identifies business opportunities, organizes the necessary resources, assumes financial and personal risks, and creates value through innovation and new ventures. Entrepreneurs are often seen as agents of change who transform ideas into viable businesses that contribute to economic and social development.

Sobel (n.d.)<sup>45</sup> defines an entrepreneur as “someone who

organizes, manages, and assumes the risks of a business or enterprise” and describes this person as “an agent of change”. This definition emphasizes the entrepreneur’s active role in transforming ideas into economic and social value. Similarly, Hisrich and Peters (2002)<sup>46</sup> explain that entrepreneurship involves organizing resources, managing a business, assuming financial and personal risks, and creating value through innovation. They also point out that entrepreneurs use resources efficiently and take calculated risks to meet market needs. Therefore, entrepreneurship is not limited to starting a business but also includes developing creative solutions that foster progress and generate employment within the community.

In the same vein, Kuratko (2017) characterizes entrepreneurship as “the

**Figure 30.**

*Definition of an Entrepreneur*



*Note.* The image shows some of the characteristics that define an entrepreneur. Adapted from Entrepreneurship Sense 2016.

<https://entrepreneurshipsense.blogspot.com/2016/07/an-entrepreneur-complete-definition.html>

<sup>45</sup> Sobel, R. S. (n.d.). *Entrepreneurship*. Library of Economics and Liberty. Recuperado de <https://www.econlib.org/library/Enc/Entrepreneurship.html>

<sup>46</sup> Hisrich, R. D., & Peters, M. P. (2002). *Entrepreneurship* (5th ed.). McGraw-Hill.

pursuit of opportunities beyond the resources currently controlled” (p. 45)<sup>47</sup> highlighting the proactive and opportunity-seeking nature of entrepreneurs.

This perspective shows that entrepreneurs act even in uncertain conditions, motivated by innovation and by the potential to make a meaningful impact on their environment.

Therefore, an entrepreneur can be defined as a person who identifies and exploits opportunities, organizes resources effectively, assumes calculated risks, and creates value through innovation, playing a crucial role in both economic growth and local development.

### 3.2 Profile of an Entrepreneur

#### 3.2.1 Characteristics of an Entrepreneur

The essential qualities of an entrepreneur encompass a combination of technical and personal skills. “The set of desirable traits that characterize an entrepreneur is made up of knowledge, attitudes, aptitudes, and values that enable them to turn their ideas into results” (JICA, 2011, p. 24)<sup>48</sup>.

The main characteristics of an entrepreneur are presented below:

**Figure 31.**

*An entrepreneur.*



*Note.* The image shows an entrepreneur managing tasks in a workspace. Adapted from GoDaddy. (2020).

<https://www.godaddy.com/resources/es/wp-content/uploads/sites/9/2020/04/cualidades-de-un-emprendedor.jpg>

<sup>47</sup> Kuratko, D. F. (2017). Entrepreneurship: Theory, process, and practice. *Journal of Entrepreneurship Education*, 20(2), 1–10.

<sup>48</sup> JICA. (2011). *Manual de emprendedorismo*. Agencia de Cooperación Internacional de Japón. [https://www.jica.go.jp/paraguay/espanol/office/others/c8h0vm0000ad5gke-att/info\\_11\\_01.pdf](https://www.jica.go.jp/paraguay/espanol/office/others/c8h0vm0000ad5gke-att/info_11_01.pdf)

- **Creativity and Innovation**

Creativity allows the generation of original ideas, while innovation brings those ideas into action, turning them into solutions, products, or services that add value. A creative entrepreneur not only identifies a market need but also seeks different ways to meet it. This quality promotes differentiation from competitors and enables the company to adapt to changes in the industry.

- **Clarity of Ideas**

Having mental clarity means knowing exactly what one wants to achieve and how. This avoids confusion in decision-making and allows for coherent strategic planning. An entrepreneur with a clear vision can effectively communicate their ideas to their team or investors, facilitating cooperation and the execution of plans.

**Figure 32.**

*The power of prioritization.*



*Note.* This image shows serves as a conceptual visual for professional growth and continuous learning. Adapted from Getty Images (n.d.).

<https://d3njicbhbojbot.cloudfront.net/api/utilities/v1/imageproxy/https://images.ctfassets.net/wp1lcwdav1p1/7lxgL7JU9URYocb6mSFd0v/996d75721e646d2c797b1e947e88a3a3/GettyImages-924558950.jpg?w=1500&h=680&q=60&fit=fill&f=faces&fm=jpg&fl=progressive&auto=format%2Ccompress&dpr=1&w=1000>

- **Knowing How to Prioritize**

A successful entrepreneur knows how to distinguish between what is urgent and what is important. This means focusing time and resources on activities that generate the greatest impact, avoiding dispersion of less relevant tasks. Proper prioritization increases efficiency and improves business outcomes.

- **Ability to Face and Take Risks**

Every entrepreneurial endeavor involves uncertainty. Entrepreneurs with this quality assess risks, make calculated decisions, and are not afraid of failure. Facing

risks allow them to seize opportunities others avoid and learn from mistakes to improve.

- **Passion**

Passion is not just enjoyment for what you do; it is an inner drive that pushes you to dedicate time, effort, and energy even when things get tough. A passionate entrepreneur transmits enthusiasm to the team, inspires trust in partners and clients, and maintains constant motivation, which increases the chances of success.

- **Vision**

Having vision means being able to see beyond the present and project where you want to go. This involves identifying trends, anticipating market changes, and having clarity about long-term goals. Vision helps make consistent strategic decisions and align efforts toward a common purpose.

- **Learning Ability**

In a rapidly changing world, constant learning is essential. This includes learning from one's own experiences, from mistakes, from competitors, and from new technologies. An entrepreneur should have a high learning capacity, adapt quickly, improve their skills, and make more informed and effective decisions

- **Ability to Communicate and Socialize**

Having good ideas is not enough; one must be able to communicate them. This quality includes active listening, persuasion, and maintaining positive relationships with clients, suppliers, and the team. Effective communication facilitates

**Figure 33.**

*Vision of an entrepreneur.*



*Note.* The image shows a conceptual representation of the entrepreneur's vision. Adapted from Revista Mercado (2024).

[https://d1ih8jugeo2m5m.cloudfront.net/2024/12/Vision\\_emprededora.webp](https://d1ih8jugeo2m5m.cloudfront.net/2024/12/Vision_emprededora.webp)

negotiation, collaboration, and the creation of support networks that strengthen the business.

- **Tenacity**

Entrepreneurs face obstacles, failures, and criticism. Tenacity allows them to stay focused on their goals, learn from mistakes, and keep moving forward.

- **Flexibility and Ability to Adapt to Circumstances**

The business environment is constantly changing. Flexibility allows entrepreneurs to adjust plans, embrace new ideas, and adapt to market, technology, or customer changes. This ability helps seize unexpected opportunities and overcome challenges that might stop others.

- **Optimism and Self-Confidence**

Maintaining a positive attitude toward challenges helps motivate both the entrepreneur and their team. Self-confidence builds security in decision-making and conveys credibility to clients, partners, and investors. Optimism also helps entrepreneurs find solutions where others see problems.

- **Organization**

Organization is reflected in the ability to arrange tasks, resources, and time efficiently. An organized entrepreneur can manage multiple responsibilities, meet deadlines, reduce errors, and maintain control over complex projects, increase productivity and effectiveness in entrepreneurship.

**Figure 34.**

*Time organization.*



*Note.* The image shows an entrepreneur organizing tasks and managing time efficiently. Adapted from Uvirtual (n.d.). [https://blog.uvirtual.org/hubfs/Marketing%20-%20Recursos/Blog/Fotos%20Blog/gestion-del-tiempo-emprendedores-Cabecera%20\(3\).webp](https://blog.uvirtual.org/hubfs/Marketing%20-%20Recursos/Blog/Fotos%20Blog/gestion-del-tiempo-emprendedores-Cabecera%20(3).webp)

- **Determination and Courage**

Determination is the firmness of purpose that keeps a person on track despite difficulties, while courage is the bravery to face risks and challenges. Together, these qualities allow entrepreneurs to make tough decisions, innovate, and overcome obstacles that might discourage others.

- **Persistence**

Persistence is the ability to remain steadfast and keep striving despite failures or delays. This quality helps an entrepreneur achieve their goals.

- **Assertiveness**

Being assertive means communicating clearly and directly, expressing opinions, and defending ideas without being aggressive or passive. An entrepreneur's assertiveness improves communication with colleagues, clients, and partners and reduces conflicts.

- **Strategic Long-Term Planning**

This consists of defining goals and designing a concrete path to achieve them, considering resources, timing, risks, and opportunities. This quality prevents entrepreneurs from improvising, allows them to prioritize actions, and ensures that daily efforts are aligned with future objectives.

Every positive quality or characteristic mentioned above contributes to achieving a more successful entrepreneurial endeavor. "Entrepreneurs possess strong 'being' skills — that is, they are proactive, risk-takers, creative, self-aware, and self-efficient, with enough self-confidence in their abilities to tolerate uncertainty and remain perseverant" (Chocobar Reyes, 2023, p. 32).<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Chocobar Reyes, E. J. (2023). Emprendedores y sus habilidades. *Revista Científica de la UCSA*, 10(2), 32–42. <https://doi.org/10.18004/ucsa/2409-8752/2023.010.02.032>

### 3.2.2 Competencies of an Entrepreneur

McClelland (1987)<sup>50</sup> identified that business success depends more on the competencies of the entrepreneurial team than on the business idea or model itself, since these skills and attitudes are key to distinguishing successful entrepreneurs.

The key competencies of an entrepreneur are presented below:

#### Personal / Intrapersonal Competencies

- Adaptability and continuous learning: Rapid technological and social changes require an open mindset that embraces new knowledge and constant skill improvement.
- Independence and Self-Confidence: An entrepreneur is optimistic, self-confident, and secure in their abilities. They set ambitious challenges for themselves and take responsibility for achieving them, regardless of others' actions.
- Persistence: An entrepreneur does not easily give up when faced with obstacles. They persist in their goals, adapt their strategies to the environment, and take responsibility for achieving them.

Figure 35.

Competencies of an entrepreneur.



Note. This image shows A professional stock image likely illustrating the concept of business efficiency, digital management, or hybrid work. Adapted from Revista EyN. (2022). Retrieved from [https://www.revistaeyn.com/binrepository/1333x750/167c0/1000d750/none/26086/YM EA/eficaz-para-empresa\\_2580469\\_20220930093702.jpg](https://www.revistaeyn.com/binrepository/1333x750/167c0/1000d750/none/26086/YM EA/eficaz-para-empresa_2580469_20220930093702.jpg)

<sup>50</sup> McClelland, D. C. (1987). *Characteristics of successful entrepreneurs*. *Journal of Creative Behavior*, 21(3), 219–233. <https://doi.org/10.1002/j.2162-6057.1987.tb00479.x>

### Cognitive / Strategic Competencies

- Goal Setting: They establish clear, specific long-term objectives and measurable short-term goals that represent a personal challenge.
- Systematic Planning and Monitoring: They decide in advance what to do, assess the feasibility of their plans, divide major tasks into subtasks with well-defined deadlines and responsibilities, and use indicators that help them adjust plans according to results.
- Critical and analytical thinking: An entrepreneur should analyze information, challenge assumptions, and make evidence-based decisions.
- Agile and Efficient decision-making: Since an entrepreneur often operates with incomplete information, they must be capable of evaluating alternatives and risks quickly to seize opportunities without delay.
- Strategic vision: An entrepreneur needs to set long-term goals, foresee challenges, and design flexible roadmaps that can adapt to market changes.

**Figure 36.**

*Critical thinking and analytical skills.*



*Note.* This image shows the importance of deep learning and cognitive development. Adapted from Panbai International School (2025). Retrieved from <https://panbaiinternationalschool.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/Develop-Critical-Thinking-and-Analytical-Skills.webp>

### Social / Interpersonal Competencies

- Customer orientation: A successful venture requires understanding client needs, incorporating their feedback, and ensuring that the product or service provides real value.
- Persuasion and Networking: An entrepreneur uses well-defined strategies to influence others' behavior, persuading them to do what they intend. They

establish a solid network of contacts and use it to achieve their goals.

- Effective communication skills: Clear communication is required in negotiations, presentations, and everyday leadership to align teams and attract investors or clients.

**Figure 37.**

*Strategic networking.*



- Strategic networking: An entrepreneur needs to build strong professional connections to provide access to resources, collaboration opportunities, and knowledge exchange.
- Inspirational leadership skills: Beyond managing teams, an entrepreneur should inspire motivation, foster trust, and encourage collaboration toward common objectives.

*Note.* The image illustrates the concept of professional networking. Adapted from CareerPivot, (2012) Retrieved from <https://careerpivot.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/networking.jpg>

### **Technical / Execution Competencies**

- Demand for Quality and Efficiency: An entrepreneur continually strives to enhance the quality and efficiency of their products and services, meeting standards of excellence and implementing the necessary procedures to complete tasks on time and to the required quality standards.
- Calculated Risk Taking: An entrepreneur evaluates consequences before taking risks. They place themselves in situations that involve moderate risks, calculate them, explore alternatives, and take measures to reduce and control the outcomes.
- Technological proficiency: Mastering digital tools enhances efficiency, improves processes, and boosts competitiveness in modern markets.

- Innovation capacity: Creativity is not only about generating ideas but also about transforming them into practical solutions and disruptive business models.

- Financial and budget management: Understanding expenses, revenues, and cash flow is essential for ensuring business sustainability and reducing the likelihood of failure due to poor financial planning.

An entrepreneur requires not only creativity and innovative ideas but also the development of a wide set of abilities that ensure the sustainability of competencies in competitive environments. Entrepreneurial

competencies are essential in the development of more sustainable solutions.

Individuals must be encouraged and empowered to take risks, invest their time and resources, and provide leadership in the development of more sustainable products, systems, and environments (Moore, White, & Paull, 2021, p. 15).<sup>51</sup>

### 3.3 Entrepreneur profile of Guaya Hostel

The profile of an entrepreneur encompasses a set of personal and professional attributes that enable the successful creation, management, and growth of a business venture. In the context of Guaya Hostel, these characteristics are

**Figure 38.**

*Financial and budget management*



Note. The image features an individual in a simple setting, highlighting clarity and focus. Adapted from LinkedIn (2023). Retrieved from [https://media.linkedin.com/dms/image/v2/D4D12AQH88J1Sbi8\\_rw/article-cover\\_image-shrink\\_720\\_1280/article-cover\\_image-shrink\\_720\\_1280/0/1697820362513?e=2147483647&v=beta&t=aagPSuohV9Gp0iDA\\_CXk9BOKiITFN2Awycr8Z6d6VK4](https://media.linkedin.com/dms/image/v2/D4D12AQH88J1Sbi8_rw/article-cover_image-shrink_720_1280/article-cover_image-shrink_720_1280/0/1697820362513?e=2147483647&v=beta&t=aagPSuohV9Gp0iDA_CXk9BOKiITFN2Awycr8Z6d6VK4)

<sup>51</sup> Moore, J., White, J., & Paull, J. (2018). *Boundary crossing ahead: Perspectives of entrepreneurship by sustainability educators in higher education* (p. 15). Plymouth Marjon University Repository. <https://marjon.repository.guildhe.ac.uk/id/eprint/17548/1/Boundary%20crossing%20ahead%20perspectives%20of%20entrepreneurship%20by%20sustainability%20educators%20in%20Higher%20Education.pdf>

essential to ensure the project's sustainability, innovation, and competitiveness within the tourism and hospitality industry.

- **Knowing How to Prioritize**

An effective entrepreneur demonstrates the ability to establish clear priorities and allocate resources efficiently. This competence involves identifying which tasks or objectives require immediate attention and which can be postponed. The capacity to prioritize allows the entrepreneur to maintain organizational order, optimize time management, and ensure that strategic goals are achieved.

- **Ability to Face and Take Risks**

Entrepreneurship involves uncertainty and the constant possibility of encountering challenges. A successful entrepreneur must possess the courage to assume calculated risks and confront difficulties with confidence and determination. This ability reflects not only resilience but also the strategic vision required to seize opportunities and innovation within the business environment.

- **Clarity of Ideas**

Having clarity of ideas is fundamental for any entrepreneurial endeavor. It implies a precise understanding of the business objectives, mission, and long-term vision. Entrepreneurs with clear ideas can effectively guide their teams, make coherent decisions, and communicate their goals persuasively to stakeholders, clients, and partners. This clarity fosters consistency and coherence in all business operations.

- **Learning Ability**

Continuous learning is a core component of entrepreneurial success. In a constantly changing sector such as tourism, entrepreneurs must remain open to acquiring new knowledge, adapting to technological advancements, and improving

their management practices. A strong learning capacity allows entrepreneurs to respond effectively to market demands and maintain the relevance of their ventures over time.

- **Persistence**

Persistence represents the determination to pursue business objectives despite difficulties or setbacks. An entrepreneur's path is often marked by challenges that test their motivation and commitment. Persistent entrepreneurs approach failures as learning opportunities and maintain their focus on achieving sustainable growth. This quality is vital for ensuring the long-term viability of any project.

- **Teamwork**

The ability to work collaboratively is another essential characteristic of an entrepreneur. Effective teamwork fosters creativity, strengthens problem-solving, and enhances productivity. Within the hospitality sector, fostering a cooperative and respectful work environment is crucial to achieving service excellence and customer satisfaction. An entrepreneur who values teamwork can build a cohesive organizational culture and drive collective success.

### **3.4 Types of Entrepreneurs**

Entrepreneurs can be classified in several ways depending on their motivations, goals, resources, and the type of business they develop. Understanding the different types of entrepreneurs helps to identify how each contributes to innovation, employment, and local development.

#### **Small Business Entrepreneurs:**

These individuals establish small-scale businesses such as local restaurants, shops, or hostels. Their primary objective is to earn a stable income and support their families, rather than expanding nationally or internationally.

**Figure 39.***A Small Business Entrepreneur*

*Note.* The image shows an example of a small business entrepreneur. Adapted from Gateway Technical College.

<https://www.gtc.edu/programs/associate-degrees/small-business-entrepreneurship>

### **Scalable Start-up Entrepreneurs:**

These entrepreneurs create innovative ideas with the intention of expanding them to national or global levels. They usually rely on external investors, venture capital, and technology-driven models. Hisrich and Peters (2002)<sup>53</sup>

explain that scalable start-up entrepreneurs tend to assume higher financial risks but also possess greater potential for significant returns due to their focus on innovation and growth.

### **Social Entrepreneurs:**

Social entrepreneurs focus on solving social, environmental, or community problems through innovative and sustainable business models. As Dees (1998)<sup>54</sup> highlights, their motivation lies in creating social value rather than maximizing profit.

According to Scarborough (2018)<sup>52</sup>,

small business entrepreneurs are essential to the local economy because they generate employment and meet community needs through accessible services and personalized attention.

**Figure 40.***Definition of Scalable Start-Up Entrepreneurship*

*Note.* The image shows scable sart-up entrepreneurs. Adapted from College of Arts and Technology.

<https://www.ciit.edu.ph/scalable-startup-entrepreneurship/>

<sup>52</sup> Scarborough, N. M. (2018). *Essentials of entrepreneurship and small business management* (9th ed.). Pearson.

<sup>53</sup> Hisrich, R. D., & Peters, M. P. (2002). *Entrepreneurship* (5th ed.). McGraw-Hill.

<sup>54</sup> Dees, J. G. (1998). *The meaning of social entrepreneurship*. Center for the Advancement of Social Entrepreneurship (CASE), Duke University. [https://centers.fuqua.duke.edu/case/wp-content/uploads/sites/7/2015/03/Article\\_Dees\\_MeaningofSocialEntrepreneurship\\_2001.pdf](https://centers.fuqua.duke.edu/case/wp-content/uploads/sites/7/2015/03/Article_Dees_MeaningofSocialEntrepreneurship_2001.pdf)

For example, an eco-friendly hostel that promotes cultural exchange and sustainable tourism would fit this category, as it aims to generate a positive impact while remaining economically viable.

### **Innovative Entrepreneurs:**

These entrepreneurs introduce new products, services, or processes to the market. Schumpeter (1934)<sup>55</sup> was among the first to describe this type, emphasizing that innovation is the driving force of economic progress. Innovative entrepreneurs are characterized by creativity and curiosity, constantly searching for improved solutions to existing problems, which in turn fosters competitiveness and growth.

### **Imitative Entrepreneurs:**

Unlike innovators, imitative entrepreneurs adopt existing business ideas or models and adapt them to new markets or local demands. Kuratko (2017)<sup>56</sup> explains that imitation, when combined with contextual adaptation, can also be a form of creativity, as it allows entrepreneurs to meet specific community needs more effectively. For instance, a

**Figure 41.**

*Social Entrepreneurship: Business on a Social*



*Note.* The image shows graphically an example of social entrepreneurs. Adapted from Sharjah Shams UAE Business 2018. Retrieved from <https://www.shams.ae/media-center/blog/social-entrepreneurship-business-on-a-social-level/>

**Figure 42.**

*Innovation and Entrepreneurship*



*Note.* The image shows a picture that includes ideas of innovation that can be applied on businesses. Adapted from Sharikat Mubasher 2024. Retrieved from <https://en.sharikatmubasher.com/media-hub/experts-thoughts/499>

<sup>55</sup> Schumpeter, J. A. (1934). *The theory of economic development*. Harvard University Press.

<sup>56</sup> Kuratko, D. F. (2017). *Entrepreneurship: Theory, process, and practice*. *Journal of Entrepreneurship Education*, 20(2), 1–10.

person who opens a hostel similar to others but incorporates personalized services for backpackers would exemplify this entrepreneurial type.

### **Technopreneurs:**

This modern category of entrepreneurs builds their ventures on technological foundations. Drucker (2015)<sup>57</sup> defines technopreneurs as innovators who leverage digital tools, software, or online platforms to enhance business efficiency and customer experience. Examples include the development of online booking systems or digital management tools for hospitality services.

**Figure 43.**

*Evolution of Technopreneurship*



*Note.* The picture shows entrepreneurs implementing technology in their business. Adapted from IT Munch (2025).

<https://itmunch.com/evolution-technopreneurship-visionaries-leaders/>

## **3.5 The Responsibilities of An Entrepreneur**

When someone decides to start a business (to undertake or become an entrepreneur), they take on broad responsibilities that go beyond the business and involve different stakeholders: customers, employees, society, the environment, and themselves. These responsibilities involve much more than generating profits: they are about generating an ethical, social, and personal impact.

The main responsibilities of an entrepreneur are:

### **1. Toward Customers:**

First and foremost, entrepreneurs must offer quality products or services with honesty and transparency, delivering on their promises and transparency, delivering on their promises and ensuring that the value received is

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<sup>57</sup> Drucker, P. F. (2015). *Innovation and entrepreneurship: Practice and principles*. Routledge.

**Figure 44.***Customer satisfaction.*

*Note.* The image shows a friendly retail interaction that represents good customer service. Adapted from Prendho (2024). Retrieved from <https://prendho.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/tipos-de-clientes-empresarios-ecuador-prendho-utpl.jpeg>

### 3. Toward society

Thirdly, the entrepreneur has the responsibility to create value through products or services that respond to real needs, comply with legal and tax obligations, generate employment, and contribute to the solution of social problems such as poverty or poor education.

### 4. Toward the Environment

Fourth, the entrepreneur needs to implement sustainable practices, such as reducing waste, recycling, minimizing the use of unnecessary resources, promoting energy efficiency, and fostering an environmental culture within the team.

proportional to the cost. Customer satisfaction is, therefore, paramount.

### 2. Toward Employees

Secondly, the entrepreneur's commitment involves ensuring a healthy, fair, and respectful work environment. This includes listening to opinions, providing feedback, recognizing achievements, paying fair wages, and complying with all legal obligations.

**Figure 45.***Environmental threat.*

*Note.* This image shows the urgent call to action for environmental protection. Adapted from Green Initiative (2025). Retrieved from <https://greeninitiative.eco/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/Why-Should-We-Protect-the-Environment-The-Urgency-to-Act-Now-1.jpg>

## 5. Toward Themselves

Finally, toward themselves, the entrepreneur must take care of their physical and mental health, maintain personal happiness and work-life balance, avoid burnout, and ensure adequate rest and nutrition.

Fulfilling all these responsibilities not only contributes to the well-being of others but also strengthens the sustainable success of the venture. An ethical and balanced entrepreneur generates trust, loyalty, and recognition, which positively impacts their business.

### 3.6 Challenges and Opportunities

Entrepreneurship, particularly within the tourism and hospitality sector, involves facing multiple challenges while also creating valuable opportunities for innovation and growth. For entrepreneurs, understanding both aspects are crucial to achieving long-term sustainability and contributing to local development.

#### 3.6.1 Challenges

##### Financial Limitations

Many entrepreneurs face difficulties obtaining sufficient funds to start or maintain their ventures. According to Kuratko (2017)<sup>58</sup>, small tourism enterprises often depend on personal savings or small loans, and limited access to credit restricts innovation and expansion. For instance, initial

**Figure 46.**

*Biggest challenges and opportunities for entrepreneurs.*



*Note.* The image shows a representation of the challenges and benefits encountered by entrepreneurs. Adapted from Collegenp (2023). <https://www.collegenp.com/article/the-benefits-and-challenges-of-entrepreneurship>

<sup>58</sup> Kuratko, D. F. (2017). *Entrepreneurship: Theory, process, and practice*. *Journal of Entrepreneurship Education*, 20(2), 1–10.

investment in property renovation or marketing campaigns may require external financing that is not easily available.

- **Market Competition**

The hospitality sector is highly competitive. Scarborough (2018)<sup>59</sup> notes that entrepreneurs must clearly differentiate their services to attract tourists. Without a defined niche or unique value proposition, small hostels often struggle to compete with large hotel chains or digital platforms such as Airbnb.

- **Seasonality in Tourism**

Tourism demand fluctuates throughout the year, often depending on the climate or holiday seasons. As Morrison (2013)<sup>60</sup> explains, during low seasons, entrepreneurs experience lower occupancy rates and reduced income.

- **Regulatory and Bureaucratic Barriers**

Starting and maintaining a business frequently involves dealing with regulations, permits, and taxes. Drucker (2015)<sup>61</sup> emphasizes that excessive bureaucracy can limit entrepreneurial activity, particularly in developing countries.

- **Human Resource Management**

Customer satisfaction with tourism depends heavily on the quality of service provided by employees. Hisrich and Peters (2002)<sup>62</sup> state that recruiting and retaining skilled staff can be challenging for small businesses with limited financial resources.

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<sup>59</sup> Scarborough, N. M. (2018). *Essentials of entrepreneurship and small business management* (9th ed.). Pearson.

<sup>60</sup> Morrison, A. (2013). *Marketing and managing tourism destinations*. Routledge.

<sup>61</sup> Drucker, P. F. (2015). *Innovation and entrepreneurship: Practice and principles*. Routledge.

<sup>62</sup> Hisrich, R. D., & Peters, M. P. (2002). *Entrepreneurship* (5th ed.). McGraw-Hill.

### 3.6.2 Opportunities

- **Growing Demand for Sustainable Tourism**

Modern travelers increasingly value eco-friendly practices, community engagement, and authentic experiences. According to the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO, 2020)<sup>63</sup>, sustainability has become a core element of modern tourism strategies.

- **Digital Marketing and Technology**

Digital tools and online platforms provide entrepreneurs with affordable ways to reach global audiences. Kuratko (2017)<sup>64</sup> highlights that social media and booking platforms allow small ventures to market their services effectively.

- **Local Partnerships**

Collaborating with local artisans, tour guides, and restaurants not only strengthens the community economy but also enhances tourists' experiences. As Dees (1998)<sup>65</sup> suggests, these partnerships create social value while improving brand reputation and customer loyalty.

- **Cultural Tourism:**

Travelers increasingly seek cultural immersion rather than traditional tourism. Morrison (2013)<sup>66</sup> argues that this trend allows small businesses to design workshops, tours, and cultural events that enrich visitor experiences while generating additional income.

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<sup>63</sup> World Tourism Organization (UNWTO). (2020). *Sustainable tourism development in practice*. UNWTO Publications.

<sup>64</sup> Kuratko, D. F. (2017). *Entrepreneurship: Theory, process, and practice*. *Journal of Entrepreneurship Education*, 20(2), 1–10.

<sup>65</sup> Dees, J. G. (1998). *The meaning of social entrepreneurship*. Center for the Advancement of Social Entrepreneurship (CASE), Duke University. [https://case.fuqua.duke.edu/wpcontent/uploads/2025/03/Article\\_Dees\\_MeaningofSocialEntrepreneurship\\_2001.pdf](https://case.fuqua.duke.edu/wpcontent/uploads/2025/03/Article_Dees_MeaningofSocialEntrepreneurship_2001.pdf)

<sup>66</sup> Morrison, A. (2013). *Marketing and managing tourism destinations*. Routledge.

### 3.7 Social Responsibility of An Entrepreneur

An entrepreneur holds a significant social responsibility toward the local

**Figure 47.**

*Social responsibility of an entrepreneur*



*Note.* This image shows the importance of integrating ethics, sustainability, and a commitment to the community into the core business mod. Adapted from PQS. (2018). Retrieved from <https://pqs.pe/emprendimiento/como-ser-un-emprendedor-socialmente-responsable/>

community, as their actions directly impact on the social well-being, economic development, and quality of life of residents. According to McClelland (1961)<sup>67</sup>, every entrepreneur plays a vital role in the development of local communities, and those who act in a socially responsible manner contribute to building a better society.

Social responsibility involves reconciling the profit orientation with the community's

needs and expectations, including customers, employees, shareholders, and the environment, thereby promoting an ethical business conduct that supports sustainable success and a positive reputation.

#### Concrete Actions and Positive Impact

Concrete actions that reflect this responsibility include:

- Job Creation raises the standard of living in the community.
- The payment of fair wages contributes to social equity.
- The promotion of education through scholarships or training programs.
- The promotion of healthcare improves the health of residents.
- Environmental protection, through the responsible use of resources and the implementation of sustainable practices.

<sup>67</sup> McClelland, D. C. (1961). *The achieving society*. Princeton, NJ: Van Nostrand.

Together, these actions allow entrepreneurs to generate a positive impact on their community, fostering sustainable local development and strengthening legitimacy and respect.

### 3.8 Market Niches: Definition

A market niche refers to a specific and well-defined segment of a broader market that has its own distinctive needs, preferences, and identity. Instead of targeting the entire market, businesses that focus on niche segments aim to satisfy the specialized demands of a smaller group of consumers. Kotler and Keller (2016)<sup>68</sup> explain that this strategy allows firms to tailor products or services that directly meet the expectations of their chosen audience, creating a competitive advantage through differentiation.

According to Dalgic and Leeuw (1994)<sup>69</sup>, a market niche is “a small, profitable segment of a market suitable for focused marketing efforts” (p. 39). Such segments are characterized by unique customer needs that mainstream providers do not fully address. Niche marketing, therefore, emphasizes depth of understanding, specialization, and customer loyalty rather than broad market coverage.

From a strategic perspective, identifying a niche involves recognizing a gap within the existing market structure—an area where competition is limited or where

**Figure 48.**  
*Market Segmentation and Customer Attraction*



*Note.* The image shows the relevant population segment into the market in a business. Adapted from Worksheets Planet 2024. Retrieved from <https://www.worksheetsplanet.com/what-is-a-niche-market/>

<sup>68</sup> Kotler, P., & Keller, K. L. (2016). *Marketing management* (15th ed.). Pearson Education.

<sup>69</sup> Dalgic, T., & Leeuw, M. (1994). Niche marketing revisited: Concept, applications, and some European cases. *European Journal of Marketing*, 28(4), 39–55.  
<https://doi.org/10.1108/03090569410061178>

consumers feel underserved. Toften and Hammervoll (2010)<sup>70</sup> emphasize that firms operating in niche markets build strong relationships with customers and achieve higher satisfaction and retention rates through superior responsiveness and adaptability.

In modern marketing, technological tools and digital analytics have simplified the identification of niche markets. Kotler and Armstrong (2020)<sup>71</sup> note that companies can now analyze consumer behavior, demographics, and psychographics to uncover smaller market segments that share common interests lifestyles, or values.

Therefore, a market niche can be defined as a narrowly focused and specialized segment of a market where businesses aim to meet the unique preferences of a specific group of consumers more effectively than competitors targeting the mass market.

### 3.9 Types of Market Niches

Market niches can be classified in several ways, depending on the characteristics of consumers, the nature of consumers, the nature of the product or service, and the marketing approach adopted by a business. Identifying the appropriate type of niche allows companies to position themselves effectively and deliver greater value to their target audience.

#### **Demographic Niches:**

These niches are based on population characteristics such as age, gender, income, education, or occupation. Kotler and Keller (2016)<sup>72</sup> explain that

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<sup>70</sup> Toften, K., & Hammervoll, T. (2010). Niche marketing and strategic capabilities: An exploratory study of specialized firms. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, 28(6), 736–753. <https://doi.org/10.1108/02634501011078141>

<sup>71</sup> Kotler, P., & Armstrong, G. (2020). *Principles of marketing* (18th ed.). Pearson.

<sup>72</sup> Kotler, P., & Keller, K. L. (2016). *Marketing management* (15th ed.). Pearson Education.

demographic segmentation helps marketers understand who their customers are and tailor messages accordingly. For example, a company may target middle-income women aged 25–40 or retirees seeking cultural travel experiences.

### **Geographic Niches:**

Geographic niches focus on serving consumers within a specific region, city, or neighborhood. According to Kotler and Armstrong (2020)<sup>73</sup>, businesses can adapt products or services to local traditions, climate, or cultural preferences. A company might design tourism products specifically for coastal or mountain destinations.

### **Psychographic Niches:**

Psychographic segmentation divides the market based on lifestyle, values, attitudes, or interests. Solomon (2018)<sup>74</sup> emphasizes that understanding customers' motivations allows companies to build deeper emotional connections. For example, a niche could include travelers who value sustainability, adventure, or cultural authenticity.

### **Behavioral Niches:**

These niches are defined by customer behaviors such as purchasing frequency, brand loyalty, or benefits sought. Peter and Olson (2010)<sup>75</sup> note that understanding behavioral patterns enables marketers to personalize offers and improve customer satisfaction. For instance, some consumers prioritize convenience and speed, while others seek luxury or exclusivity.

### **Product-Based Niches:**

Some businesses specialize in a specific product or service that meets the

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<sup>73</sup> Kotler, P., & Armstrong, G. (2020). *Principles of marketing* (18th ed.). Pearson.

<sup>74</sup> Solomon, M. R. (2018). *Consumer behavior: Buying, having, and being* (12th ed.). Pearson.

<sup>75</sup> Peter, J. P., & Olson, J. C. (2010). *Consumer behavior and marketing strategy* (9th ed.). McGraw-Hill.

based niches rely heavily on quality and uniqueness to attract customers. Examples include companies offering organic foods, handmade crafts, or boutique accommodations.

### Price-Based Niches

Price-based niches are formed according to consumer purchasing power. Kotler and Keller (2016<sup>76</sup>) highlight that these can include luxury markets targeting high-income clients or low-cost markets serving price-sensitive consumers. Each segment requires a tailored strategy in branding, promotion, and service delivery.

By focusing on a well-defined segment, whether demographic, geographic, psychographic, behavioral, product-based, or price-based—companies can specialize, build strong market positions, reduce competition, and foster long-term customer loyalty. Properly identifying and serving a niche ensures that businesses provide greater value than competitors targeting the mass market.

### 3.10 Benefits of Niche Markets

**Figure 49.**

*Market Niche.*



*Note.* This image is commonly used in business and marketing content to represent the concept of segmentation. Adapted from Marketing Negocios (2021).

<https://www.marketingnegocios.pe/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Nicho-de-mercado.jpg>

Niches market represents specific segments of customers with particular needs, preferences, and expectations, allowing companies to offer highly personalized products or services. This specialized approach, known as niche marketing, provides significant strategic advantages compared to broader markets.

<sup>76</sup> Kotler, P., & Keller, K. L. (2016). *Marketing management* (15th ed.). Pearson Education.

One of the main advantages is reduced competition. Operating within a niche allows companies to establish themselves as leaders or experts in their sector, avoiding the typical saturation found in general markets. Lower competition not only reduces pressure on companies but also decreases costs associated with direct rivalry with larger.

Another important benefit is increased customer loyalty. By addressing the specific needs of a targeted segment, companies can create highly personalized experiences that enhance customer satisfaction and foster loyalty. Satisfied customers in niche markets tend to return and often become brand promoters, recommending the company to others, which strengthens the company's presence in the market.

Higher profit margins represent another advantage, as specialized products or services are often perceived as unique and valuable, allowing companies to set premium prices. Customers recognize this exclusivity and are willing to pay more, generating higher profit margins compared to more saturated markets.

Finally, niches enable focused and effective business strategies, both in marketing and operations. By having a precise understanding of their target audience, companies can direct advertising and promotional efforts to specific channels, optimizing resources and improving operational efficiency. This results in more efficient budget management and business strategies that connect directly with customers.

Niches market provides entrepreneurs with unique opportunities to differentiate themselves, reduce competition, build customer loyalty, increase profit margins, and optimize business strategies. The mass markets of previous decades have splintered into smaller market segments or niches, in which companies could

be safer from cut-throat competition and explore new market opportunities” (Dalgic & Leeuw, 1994, p. 39).<sup>77</sup>

### 3.11 Importance of Focusing on Niches

Focusing on specific niches allows a company to establish authority and expertise, increasing brand visibility and credibility. According to El-Sayed (2022): “Niche competitive advantage aims to target and reach a specific section of the market by reducing emphasis to one or two areas of specialization and utilizing those to the fullest. Smaller and fledgling businesses who lack the means to go after larger segments of the market can benefit from this strategy” (p. 72).

Importance of a niche market :

- Strategic focus: By concentrating marketing efforts on specific niches, resources and energy can be directed toward a group more likely to be interested in our products or services. This allows actions to be optimized and achieves more efficient and effective results for the business, company, or enterprise.
- Deeper connection: Thoroughly understanding the target audience allows communication in the customers’ own language and helps identify their specific needs and desires. This understanding

**Figure 50.**

*Deeper connection of niches market.*



*Note.* This image shows a segment of clients. Adapted from Shutterstock. (2015). [https://www.santanderopenacademy.com/es/blog/nichos-de-mercado/\\_jcr\\_content/root/container/responsivegrid/image\\_688851163\\_copy.coreimg.jpg/1725271988239/nichos-de-mercado-3.jpeg](https://www.santanderopenacademy.com/es/blog/nichos-de-mercado/_jcr_content/root/container/responsivegrid/image_688851163_copy.coreimg.jpg/1725271988239/nichos-de-mercado-3.jpeg)

<sup>77</sup> Dalgic, T., & Leeuw, M. (1994). *Niche marketing revisited: Concept, applications and some European cases*. *European Journal of Marketing*, 28(4), 39–55.

<https://doi.org/10.1108/03090569410061178>

strengthens customer relationships, builds trust, and fosters long-term loyalty to your product or service.

- **Better market understanding:** Studying and analyzing the niche market facilitates a clear view of customer needs, behaviors, and preferences. This enables precise adaptation of products, services, and marketing strategies, increasing the chances of meeting customer expectations and outperforming competitors.
- **Cost-effectiveness:** Focusing on a specific audience allows us to better leverage your marketing resources and efforts, resulting in more efficient budgets. It also allows for making better decisions about communication channels, personalized messages, and advertising strategies.
- **Profitability:** Focusing on a specific audience allows better utilization of marketing resources and efforts, resulting in more efficient budget use. It also enables smarter decisions regarding communication channels, personalized messaging, and advertising strategies.

Overall, focusing on niche markets helps foster deeper customer connections, optimizes marketing strategy efficiency, and supports sustainable, long-term business growth.

### **3.12 Key Elements for Selecting a Market Niche**

Selecting the right market niche is a crucial step in developing a successful business strategy. A carefully chosen niche allows entrepreneurs to focus resources efficiently, build strong customer relationships, and achieve long-term competitiveness. The process requires a deep understanding of the market, the target audience, and the business's capabilities.

## Market Size and Profitability

A good niche should be specific enough to avoid excessive competition but large enough to ensure sustainability. Kotler and Keller (2016)<sup>78</sup> highlight that entrepreneurs must evaluate potential demand and the purchasing power of target consumers. A niche that is too narrow may not generate sufficient revenue, while one that is too broad may dilute focus.

## Customer Needs and Preferences

Understanding the unique needs, values, and expectations of consumers within the niche is essential. Kotler and Armstrong (2020)<sup>79</sup> recommend conducting market research, including surveys, interviews, or data analysis, to identify gaps and tailor offerings to meet unmet needs.

## Competitive Advantage

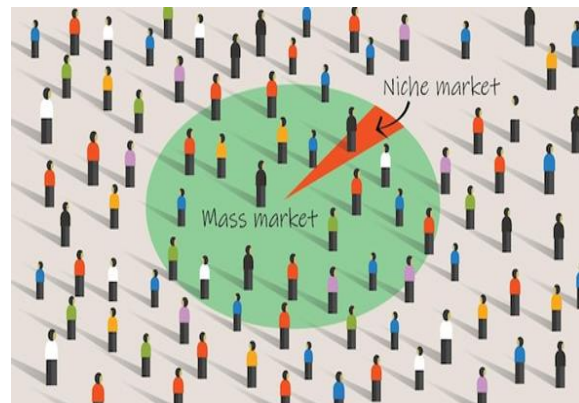
The chosen niche should enable the business to offer something distinctive, whether in product quality, service, pricing, or brand identity. Porter (1998)<sup>80</sup> states that sustainable competitive advantages arise when a company differentiates itself in ways that are valuable to customers and difficult for competitors to imitate.

## Accessibility and Reachability

A niche must be accessible through appropriate communication and

**Figure 51.**

*Characteristics to Find a Market Niche.*



Note The image represents the stages for selecting the target population in the market. Adapted from Freepik.

[https://www.freepik.com/premium-vector/niche-market-concept-selecting-specific-target-instead-mass-all-segment-marketing-strategy\\_156824169.htm](https://www.freepik.com/premium-vector/niche-market-concept-selecting-specific-target-instead-mass-all-segment-marketing-strategy_156824169.htm)

<sup>78</sup> · Kotler, P., & Keller, K. L. (2016). *Marketing management* (15th ed.). Pearson Education.

<sup>79</sup> Kotler, P., & Armstrong, G. (2020). *Principles of marketing* (18th ed.). Pearson.

<sup>80</sup> · Porter, M. E. (1998). *Competitive advantage: Creating and sustaining superior performance*. Free Press.

distribution channels. Dalgic and Leeuw (1994)<sup>81</sup> emphasize that entrepreneurs should consider how easily they can reach target consumers, whether through digital marketing, local advertising, or partnerships.

### **Growth Potential:**

A viable niche should not only be profitable in the short term but also adaptable to future trends. Toften and Hammervoll (2010)<sup>82</sup> note that markets evolve, and niches that respond to changing trends, technologies, or consumer behaviors are more likely to sustain long-term success.

### **Alignment with Entrepreneur's Values and Skills:**

The niche should align with the entrepreneur's expertise, interests, and ethical values. Scarborough (2018)<sup>83</sup> explains that personal motivation aligned with business mission enhances creativity, commitment, and authenticity.

Choosing the right market niche requires balancing focus with opportunity. Entrepreneurs must analyze the market structure, understand their audience, and assess internal capabilities before committing to a niche. When properly selected, a niche provides a strategic position that enhances competitiveness, customer loyalty, and business sustainability.

## **3.13 Market Niche of Guaya Hostel**

Guaya Hostel's market niche is aimed at people who travel and consider their pets as an essential part of the family. Guests are offered lodging options that allow them to stay with their pets without restrictions, enjoying comfort and safety for both

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<sup>81</sup> · Dalgic, T., & Leeuw, M. (1994). Niche marketing revisited: Concept, applications, and some European cases. *European Journal of Marketing*, 28(4), 39–55.  
<https://doi.org/10.1108/03090569410061178>

<sup>82</sup> Toften, K., & Hammervoll, T. (2010). Niche marketing and strategic capabilities: An exploratory study of specialized firms. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, 28(6), 736–753.  
<https://doi.org/10.1108/02634501011078141>

<sup>83</sup> Scarborough, N. M. (2018). *Essentials of entrepreneurship and small business management* (9th ed.). Pearson.

them and their travel companions.

Our market niche includes young adults, couples, and families with middle to upper-middle incomes who value the possibility of traveling without having to leave their pets in daycare centers, with third parties, or even alone at home. Additionally, this group of travelers is characterized by having a high level of emotional commitment to their pets, which is why Guaya Hostel prioritizes services and facilities that enhance the experience for both. Among these services are play areas, gardens, special food, pet accessories, and emergency veterinary care.

**Figure 52.**

*Pet-friendly hostel.*



*Note.* The image shows a friendly interaction between a customer, and her pet. reception area.

Adapted from RTVE (2023). Retrieved from <https://img2.rtve.es/i/?w=1600&i=1690458857070.jpg>

mouth recommendations, establishing itself as a preferred option for travelers with pets.

Another important aspect of this niche is its willingness to pay an additional amount for services that meet their needs and those of their pets. This represents an opportunity for the hostel to differentiate itself from the competition by offering special packages. By focusing on this specific audience, Guaya Hostel not only meets a growing demand but also fosters customer loyalty and word-of-

### 3.14 Logo

The logo of *Guaya Hostel* has been thoughtfully designed to capture the essence of the brand, combining visual harmony with deep symbolic meaning. Every element within the logo reflects the hostel's core values and its strong connection to nature, rest, and local identity. Inspired by the cultural and natural richness of San José Guayabal, the design seeks to evoke a sense of tranquility, hospitality, and authenticity.

Through its colors, shapes, and typography, the logo not only represents a place to stay but also an experience rooted in the warmth and beauty of its surroundings.

#### Guava Tree

This is the central and probably the most representative element. It depicts a lush tree with round, green fruits that clearly represent guavas. The tree appears firmly rooted, conveying a sense of life and growth. The guava directly references the hostel name, "Guaya," as well as its location, "San José Guayabal." This creates an immediate connection with the place and its local identity.

Figure 53.

*Slogan and logo of Guaya Hostel.*



*Each stay is a unique experience.*

Note. Own elaboration.

Figure 54.

*Guava Tree of the logo.*



Note. Own creation.

## The Bed or Bunk Bed and the Ladder

The elements are integrated into the trunk of the tree:

It depicts a structure reminiscent of a single bed or the lower part of a bunk bed, with a small ladder attached that leads upward.

The bed is a universal symbol of accommodation, clearly indicating the nature of the business as a hostel. The ladder, especially when combined with the bed, evokes the idea of bunk beds, which are common in hostels and help maximize space. Both elements convey the promise of a place to relax and sleep after a day of exploration.

## The Typography “GUAYA” and “HOSTEL”

“GUAYA” is written in a robust and elegant serif font, while “HOSTEL” uses a simpler and more modern sans-serif typeface in a smaller size.

“GUAYA” serves as the distinctive and primary name, prominently displayed to capture attention.

“HOSTEL” clearly identifies the type of business, ensuring that customers understand what to expect. Its sans-serif font and smaller size make it functional without competing with the main name.

The combination of both typefaces creates a balance between distinction and clarity.

**Figure 55.**

*The Bed or Bunk Bed and the Ladder of the Logo.*



Note. Own elaboration.

**Figure 56.**

*Hostel's name*

**GUAYA**  
HOSTEL

Note. Own creation.

### 3.15 Slogan

Guaya Hostel's slogan, "Each stay is a unique experience," conveys the idea that every guest's stay becomes a special and memorable moment.

This slogan emphasizes that Guaya Hostel not only provides accommodation but also offers unique experiences tailored to the needs and preferences of each guest. According to Kotler and Keller (2016)<sup>84</sup>, businesses that provide unique experiences to their customers achieve greater loyalty, word-of-mouth recommendations, and differentiation from competitors.

**Figure 57.**

*The power of a slogan.*



*Note.* This image shows the importance of a slogan in entrepreneurship. Adapted from IFFE Business School (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://iffe.es/wp-content/uploads/eslogan-cabecera-blog-768x369.jpg>

Guaya Hostel reinforces its value by ensuring that each visit is not just a stay but an experience that connects emotionally with the guest, strengthening the loyalty and reputation of both national and international customers.

### 3.16 Mission

To create a welcoming environment where every guest feels valued and cared for. We focus on delivering personalized attention, fostering genuine human connection, and ensuring that each stay is comfortable, memorable, and enriching. More than a place to rest, we strive to be a space that inspires relaxation, trust, and a true sense of belonging.

<sup>84</sup> Kotler, P., & Keller, K. L. (2016). *Marketing management* (15th ed.). Pearson.

### 3.17 Vision

To be the preferred accommodation option for national and international tourists, distinguishing ourselves through our quality services, including sustainability, affordability, and social responsibility. We aspire to connect people with the culture of San José Guayabal.

### 3.18 Guaya Hostel Values

Values are fundamental in tourism services or products; the main ones at Guaya Hostel are:

- **Hospitality**

At Guaya Hostel, hospitality is much more than a simple greeting; it is the foundation of our existence and the art of welcoming. We are dedicated to ensuring every guest feels instantly comfortable and valued from the moment they walk through our doors.

- **Friendliness**

We firmly believe that a positive experience begins with genuine human interaction. Friendliness at Guaya Hostel is demonstrated through consistent warmth, unwavering respect, and a genuine willingness to assist in any situation. We work hard to maintain a light, positive, and approachable atmosphere.

- **Innovation**

We continually seek creative and innovative ways to enhance our guests' experiences, adapting to their needs and exceeding their expectations. We do not settle for standard practices; instead, we constantly evaluate how technology, space design, and internal processes can optimize guest comfort and satisfaction.

- **Cultural Connection**

We promote cultural exchange and the appreciation of Salvadoran identity by

bringing visitors closer to local traditions. We aim to be a bridge that brings guests closer to the culture, gastronomy, and history of San José Guyabal, offering curated recommendations, facilitating access to local events, or even integrating authentic design.

- **Respect**

We value diversity and strive to create an inclusive, safe, and respectful environment for all visitors. This is translated into clear policies and continuous staff training to ensure every guest is treated with dignity and fairness at all times

- **Excellence**

We strive to go beyond what is expected, not just meeting, but consistently surpassing service expectations. This includes maintaining impeccable standards of cleanliness and maintenance, offering superior amenities, and responding to every request with efficiency and professionalism.

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