

SUSTAINABILITY REPORT

Izola is an authentic Mediterranean town that was originally founded on a former island and the deep connection between its inhabitants and the sea is strongly felt still today. In addition to the charming little streets and varied beaches, Izola also boasts green surroundings and a pristine connection with nature.

The destination of Izola officially committed to the implementation of sustainable policies on all levels in July 2020, with the solemn signing of the Green Policy. One of the main pillars of the economy of Izola is tourism and the newly accepted Tourism Development Strategy of the Municipality of Izola 2021-2025 is an important milestone. The main goal of the strategy is to continue with the development of the green & blue tourism for 365 days, as Izola aims to propose its best in a sustainable, socially and economically efficient way, for each of the 365 days of a year.



KILOMETER ZERO – LOCAL AND FRESH

Izola strongly endorses the green economy and the Kilometer Zero initiative, which encourages local catering providers to use local and seasonal ingredients. By doing so the unnecessary transport and processing of products are avoided, while the quality and the satisfaction are greater – both for local cultivators and consumers. Supporting local agriculture importantly contributes to the preservation of the natural environment, values, knowledge and local identity. Local providers co-create the offer

of Izola in many ways: they are invited to bring their products to the seasonal market "Ruba sz moje njive" and take part in traditional events, like Šalšijada, Bazilikijada, Čiliada, Festival of Olives, Wine and Fish, etc. Each year in cooperation with local catering providers, we also organize different culinary campaigns, during which chefs add to their menus typical and local culinary specialities.



PICTORIAL HINTERLAND AND PRISTINE NATURE

Our destination offers many panorama viewpoints, from where stunning view of nature may be admired. In 2019, the Tourist Association of Izola identified 10 most beautiful viewpoints and marked them with eye-catching ground marks and signs.

Tourist Association Šparžin Korte each year organizes a hike along the water resources of the countryside of Izola, in order to emphasize the importance of water resources and to preserve the heritage of the hinterland.

The municipality is also well aware how important is to preserve the intangible heritage, especially customs from the countryside, like for example drywall construction. Cultural associations play an important role in preserving the intangible heritage, that is why the municipality finances some 25 of them each year.

The INHERIT project, dedicated to the protection of natural heritage and the development of sustainable tourism in the Mediterranean, recognized Strunjan Landscape Park with its 80 m high flysch cliff as the INHERITURA site. As part of the project, the footpath from Belvedere to Bele skale was repaired using sustainable drywall techniques. The restoration of the trail was completed

in order to protect the natural and cultural heritage of the area and to reduce erosion caused by the impact of tourism.

SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY

The Municipality of Izola received the award for the absolute lowest carbon dioxide emissions of its fleet. The set low level of average emissions that was planned to be reached by 2020, was already achieved in 2014.

The municipality in collaboration with the humanitarian association Golden net, which aims to improve the sustainable mobility for social purposes, made available within the project Prostofer a vehicle for the transportation of the senior citizens.

With an integrated transport strategy, the destination encourages the introduction of green tourism products, like e-scooters and sup rentals. In 2018, the municipality also installed 5 electric charging stations, which were subsidized by the Eco Fund. Four filling stations are located in town, while one is on the countryside.



CENTER OF REUSED GOODS

In order to raise the awareness and the importance of reused objects, the Center of Reused Goods was established at the Collection Center, where users may bring and take items to be reused free of charge. As suggested by the users, in 2019 another Center of Reused Goods, based on

innovative exchanging system, set up in town. The center not only collects and recycles old things, but it also spreads the importance of environmental awareness through its activities.

CLEAN AND TIDY ENVIRONMENT

One of the priorities of the municipality is to improve the sustainable waste management, with the reduction of waste at source and the increase of the separately collected waste. The public company Komunala Izola is raising the awareness among users with campaigns and activities that promote proper waste handling. Separate collection is well accepted among citizens, as the share of separately collected waste is growing from year to year.

In 2020, the Visit & Respect Izola leaflet was released, which encourages residents and visitors to take care of the environment (to separate waste, not throw rubbish on the ground, use sustainable mobile devices, like bicycles or e-scooters, look after marine flora and fauna, etc.). The main purpose of the leaflet is to encourage all to care for the environment and to support sustainable improvements.



ACCESSIBILITY

The Municipality of Izola has been considered a disability-accessible municipality for years. In cooperation with the Slovenian Association of Disabled Students, we have started to remove architectonic barriers around town and we are still improving the situation. In cooperation with the Association of the Blind and Partially Sighted Koper, we put floor markings for the blind and partially sighted at roundabouts. A special feature of the tourist offer of Izola is the beach Dom dva

topola, which is suitable to all, regardless their physical limitations. Our goal for the future is to further improve the accessibility of our municipality.

EDUCATION

Tourist Board Izola strives to further strengthen its development purpose and its cooperation with providers, as only with joint forces the new Tourism Development Strategy of the municipality, including its goals of creating a quality tourist offer, may be accomplished. In recent years we have focused on the education and expansion of knowledge within the hospitality and tourism industry with the goal to encourage the development of sustainable business models. We organize many lectures and workshops about the development of the tourist offer of Izola and we specially addressed our catering providers within our Culinary Academy project. In order to strengthen the relationship with our partners, we are available at Chat Hours, where our providers can meet us and discuss about the possibilities of collaboration, share their opinions or ideas. We also host Digital Sessions where we answer specific questions related to digital marketing and social media management.

CARE FOR THE CULTURAL HERITAGE

Izola boasts an extremely rich cultural and natural heritage. Our goal is to preserve it and include it in the new tourist products and experiences.



One of the main sites founded to preserve the tangible and intangible heritage is Izolana – House of the Sea, which opened its doors in 2017. Izolana will impress visitors with the history of our area and the maritime character of Izola.

In Izolana visitors will learn about ship modeling, admire the first preserved map of the Istrian peninsula or discover facts about the former Parenzana Railway. However, the main part of



Izolana is dedicated to fishing and fish processing industry, as they play an important role in the Izola tradition. Izolana is especially interesting for children, as it presents the heritage of Izola in an attractive and innovative way.

Izolana is also the starting and finishing point of a new experience, where a group of visitors will explore the old town through interesting challenges and accompanied by a mysterious historical figure. The experience is designed as an outdoor escape activity, where visitors will receive interesting tips and instructions from a mysterious person through the app.

The first known inhabitants in the area were the Histrians, who used to build fortified settlements or castle. One of their settlements was in Kaštelir near Korte, where an archeological site may be visited today. Besides the 2 botanical-archaeological trails, that are part of the Kaštelir project, many other tourist products that will include prehistoric gastronomy, dishes, souvenirs, mobile apps and information-interpretation points, are underway.

We are also very excited about the new tourist experience in the San Simon's Bay Archaeological Park. Since our goal is to further develop Izola as a culinary destination, and above all to connect gastronomy with our cultural heritage, we have developed an innovative tourist product in cooperation with the Faculty of Humanities. During that experience, visitors will taste traditional Roman times culinary specialties on the ruins of a former Roman seaside villa, while learning about history and life of the Romans in an innovative and interactive way.

COMMUNICATION WITH THE PUBLIC

Informing and raising public awareness are important parts of sustainable development. We communicate with the public according to modern guidelines and through digital channels, like websites, social networks (Facebook or Instagram) and newsletters. The local population is informed about the importance of sustainable tourism through the free local newspaper of Izola, Bobnič/La Crida, and additionally with the promotional brochures, leaflets and other printed material. We successfully cooperate with various media and host study tours. An important tool for spreading the news and the awareness are also trainings and workshops for tourism partners.

The goal of the destination of Izola is to propose experiences that connect cultural heritage, tradition, gastronomy and local products. Sustainable development with its supporting measures greatly contributes to the quality of life. We will continue to implement sustainable principles on all levels, further strengthen the cooperation between all the involved parties and consequently strive to raise the quality of life in our municipality.