QUALITY RECOGNITION
IN WEDDING TOURISM

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IADWP
International Association of Destination Wedding Professionals

eb turismo

Quality Recognition in Wedding Tourism

What is the Recognition?

A Quality Tool

Quality Recognition in Wedding Tourism is a tool that helps service providers who provide Wedding Tourism services, offering them a framework as a reference of quality for their services.

Purpose of the Recognition

To recognize individuals and/or companies that provide Wedding Tourism services whose services are distinguished for the professionalism and quality of their processes and installations, as well as the attention and services that they provide to their clients and users.

Service providers who provide Wedding Tourisms are divided into five groups:

- Travel Agents and/or DMCs
- Strategic Allies
- Wedding Planners - Event Planners
- Venues
- Banquet Service

To participate in the Recognition the interested parties must comply with established guidelines, providing information on the form of the services provided, by them the capacity and maintenance of their installations and operating equipment, training of their collaborators, operating process, as well as attention to regulatory standards.

It is important that the services providers included in the Recognition have specific procedures established to assure their clients, collaborators, and suppliers of their good practices in the areas of:

- Hygiene
- Security
- Training

Once you participate in the Recognition, satisfying the guidelines established, you will obtain a Distinction as a recognized WTS, Wedding Tourism Specialist, positioning you with potential clients as a reliable service provider.

Creating the Recognition

To create the Quality Recognition in Wedding Tourism we were required to make a profound analysis of tourism programs and/or standards in Mexico as well as the international standards related to tourism quality and certification, in order to assure that successful cases take into account the guidelines set.

This review of Tourism Quality and Certification programs and standards provided valuable information on guidelines, themes and activities that are necessary to generate a quality model.

The researched focused on:

A. National Tourism Certification System: Mexico

This consisted of analyzing the subject of tourism quality, distinctions, and certification in the principal programs currently in operation under the Mexican Department of Tourism.

B. International Models of Tourism Quality and Certification

This consisted of analyzing international models of tourism quality and certification currently implemented in countries leaders in international tourism, as classified by the World Tourism Organization.

A. National Tourism Certification System: Mexico

The Federal Secretary of Tourism currently operates the National Tourism Certification System which offers distinctions, seals and recognitions to tourism service providers and destinations that adopt best practices in their service standards and processes.

The objectives of the National Tourism Certification System are:

- To guarantee the quality of tourism services and destinations
- To promote improvements in the tourism sector, according to the highest quality standards.
- To prioritize the tourist's satisfaction

- To promote technological solutions aimed at improving the competitive[illegible] tourism services and destinations

The Department of Tourism offers different distinctions and seals within the framework of the National Tourism Certification System. These include:

Modernization Distinction "M":

Based on a training program that helps MSMEs (micro, small and medium enterprises) to incorporate effective tools and modern administrative practices into their operations, designed to improve client satisfaction, personnel performance and control of their business, as well as to decrease waste and increase profit, making the company more competitive and allowing it to offer quality services to visitors, thus fomenting the development of a culture of continuous improvement.

Distinction "H":

Recognition granted to fixed food and beverage establishments that comply with health standards applicable to food and beverages.

Distinction "S":

Promotes the adoption of responsible environmental and community practices in order to foment competitiveness and market position. Business groups that can obtain this distinction include Lodging Establishments, Restaurants, Airports, Convention Centers, Golf Clubs and Tourism Transportation

Clean Point:

Distinguishes MSMEs that incorporate good health practices in their management models in order to protect the health of their clients, workers and communities.

Treasures of Mexico:

Recognizes excellence in hotels and restaurants whose high service standards, architectural characteristics and gastronomy reflect and promote the richness of Mexican culture.

The specialized seals granted by the Department of Tourism are certifications given to new products, attractive destinations and specialized tourism service providers. These reinforce market diversification and capture the new tourism demand.

Close to China: distinguishes tourism service providers who have established first contact, installations, attention and hospitality standards and a marketing protocol directed at visitors from China.

Halal Mexico: Similar to the Close to China seal, directed at Muslim tourists.

Inclusive Tourism Seal: granted to tourism companies with knowledge in serving people with handicaps of different kinds, and whose external and internal installations, signage and information services allow them to provide quality service to this market segment.

Health Tourism Seal: distinguishes medical service providers who receive international travelers for consultation, treatment, hospitalization, or clinical attention and/or for medications.

National Distinction of Tourism Quality:

Recognizes companies that obtain different seals and distinctions. These are classified at five levels: Bronze, silver, gold, platinum and diamond, according to the results achieved.

Hotel Classification:

The National Hotel Classification System operated by the Federal Department of Tourism works in parallel with the National Tourism Certification System, sometimes on a voluntary and in others case on a mandatory basis. The system:

- Orders, standardizes and homologates the category of hotel establishments in the country through processes and a classification instrument
- Informs tourists and tourism service providers of the specialized areas and category of hotel and lodging establishments registered in the system.
- Promotes productivity and transformation and increases the competitiveness of hotel and lodging establishments based on the information generated in the categorization process.

Official Mexican Tourism Standards:

Official Mexican Standards (NOM for the Spanish acronym) are mandatory technical regulations that establish specifications and procedures and set minimum requirements for the safety, security and quality of products, processes and services.

B. International Tourism Quality and Certification Models

There are different international tourism certifications given the economic, business and tourism evolution of each country, as well as the growing importance of tourism as an economic sector.

Some nations have prepared structured certification systems through the coordination of a government agency; in other cases, independent organizations have been constituted that collaborate with government agencies, although they have a stronger tie with the business sector. And in some cases private associations have granted distinctions or recognitions since before the creation of the government agency.

The tourism quality standards and/or systems of different countries were analyzed in preparing this Quality Recognition Wedding Tourism, including countries who are leaders in receiving international tourists according the World Tourism Organization. These include:

- **France (1st place in the world)**
- **Spain (2nd)**
- **United States (3d)**
- **Mexico (7th)**
- **United Kingdom (10th)**

In 2019 these countries together received more than 35 million international tourists, with an economic benefit of US$ 441 billion dollars, consolidating their leadership in the sector.

In some countries tourism certifications are concentrated principally in lodging establishments while others also cover different tourism services providers, both individuals and companies, recognizing the importance of the entire chain of services and tourism activities that complement the travel experience.

In all cases the models reward company efforts to raise the quality of their services, improve productivity, respect health and safety standards and provide a satisfactory experience to the tourist-user.

I. United States

The hotel and restaurant quality standard most recognized by American consumers is the seal of the non-profit organization *"American Automobile Association" (*AAA*).*

American Automobile Association

For almost eight decades the AAA has carried out inspections on behalf of its almost 60 million affiliated members.



Currently 27 thousand lodging and 30 thousand food and beverage establishments bear the AAA seal in one of their branches. Establishments are reviewed firstly for aspects such as cleanliness, comfort, amenities, safety and experiences, and secondly for avant-garde cuisine, ingredients and preparation, service and extraordinary surrounding in the second.

American Hotel & Lodging Association

The American Hotel & Lodging Association grants specialized training and certification through the American Hotel & Lodging Education Institute (AHLEI) in areas such as Guest Service, Food and Beverages, Reception, Human Resources, Housekeeping and Maintenance, as well as Risk Administration.



Given their link to the Recognition, we analyzed those that refer to Food and Beverages.

National Restaurant Association

The National Restaurant Association certifies food and beverage establishments through the ServSafe model, and offers training to help its members to develop a solid labor force.

Its programs focus on tools to correctly serve food and alcoholic beverages as well as to create a safe, harassment-free workplace. ServSafe Certifications are granted in the areas of Manager, Food Handler, Alcohol, Allergens, and Workplace.

II. United Kingdom

The United Kingdom is a unique case based on its political organization and the historic treatment which is differentiated by regions. Consequently, there are different tourism agencies: Visit Britain (covering the four countries); individual marks for each country: Visit Northern Ireland, Visit Scotland, Visit Wales and Visit England (which covers England except London); and Visit London. For purposes of the Recognition, we reviewed the terms of Visit England.

According to the United Kingdom philosophy, being accredited or obtaining a star qualification from the national tourism agency demonstrates a company's commitment to quality, giving the client a degree of confidence in the company and distinguishing it from its competitors.

To date over 20 thousand tourism service providers are incorporated in twenty different systems or branches.

III. France

France, the leading country in international tourism, created the distinction or trademark Qualite Tourisme™ as a mark of continuous improvement in tourism services and to improve their service quality.

Close to 5200 tourism service providers are associated with the Qualite Tourisme trademark, ranging from the most famous to the most unusual places, including large internationally famous groups as well as small independent establishes. The quality procedure extends the length of the chain of French tourism services.

To obtain this distinction, service providers must follow quality procedures that respect the essential need to satisfy the tourist. They are likewise subject to regular and independent inspections without prior notice, which constitute a guarantee that the client can trust that the tourism establishments bearing the mark offer true quality services.

IV. Spain

The Institute for Spanish Tourism quality (ICTE for the Spanish acronym) is the national coordinator of policies to assure policies for quality in the tourism business sector. This is done through specific quality management and auditing and certification processes under the “Q for Quality Tourism” mark for Quality Assurance.

The ICTE is an independent body formed of the State Department of Tourism and the private sector, who back it as the only administrator and certifier of the Q for Quality Tourism Mark.

The objectives of the quality system are:

- To foment the improvement of tourism services offered to clients and the level of satisfaction from the service received.
- To inculcate a culture of quality and improvement in the sector, driving a management model that is accessible to businesses and to public administrations.
- To improve and broadcast the image of the tourism product through a nationally and internationally recognized system, offering the client a guaranteed quality.
- To develop and implement a self-regulated system that can integrate or link with other groups or subsectors of the tourism sector in general in order to establish Tourism Quality as a competitive strategy and/or with other quality systems.

In this service universe, 1412 organizations, both public and private, are associated with the Q Mark for Tourism Quality, including 361 Hotels and Tourism Apartments, 237 Restoration Service establishments and 272 Beaches.

A Transversal Analysis

To build guidelines for incorporation and permanence in the Quality Recognition in Wedding Tourism, after analyzing the Mexican system and the international models, a study was made of where they converged in order to assure that the principal requirements related to Wedding Tourism and in some cases adapted to the segment studied.

The study basically focused on services provided, and therefore the guidelines, services, process and installations of the principal types of businesses that intervene in the wedding tourism.

Note that none of the cases analyzed directly considered any specific service area or provider, such as venues, Wedding Planners – Event Planners or strategic allies.

The philosophy, indeed, the essence of the Recognition is to raise the quality of services provided in Wedding Tourism; that is, to assure that service providers who specialize in providing the services offered in this important segment operate with good practices, for the benefit of their clients, collaborators, the environment, tourism and of course for their best business performance and profitability.