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for the Faroe Islands. In fact, peace and tranquillity often equal boredom in many people's eyes – probably precisely the people who really need peace and tranquillity the most – stressed-out people in big cities and metro poles. But they might not realise that – not until they experience in flesh and blood what peace and tranquillity really means. Peace and tranquillity is probably not the main reason why people want to come here. Most people seem more concerned by what there is to do while they're here. They want a variety of activities to choose from.

And they don't necessarily find the polished picture of the Faroe Islands attractive. The real picture is also, in fact, much more rough and dramatic. For example, when foreign photographers come here, the resulting pictures are typically of misty or stormy and rough landscapes. So why not make that the attraction. I think we have been promoting the wrong image of our country. No doubt about it, this is a beautiful country, and most of the people who come here know it. But that's no longer enough. People need to know about the real Faroe Islands – and they don't want to sit back and watch: they want to feel alive and vibrant. In other words, they want exciting experiences.

Sea Angling – an Exciting Activity on Offer

There are plenty of activities on offer for tourists, but SamVit and other players on the tourism field are working hard to introduce even more. For example, sea angling has become very popular of late. Local fishermen take tourists out on their boats and the tourists have the opportunity to taste the Faroese fisherman's life and catch their own fish. Afterwards, they are offered a nice meal made from the fish they caught.

Halibut, porbeagle sharks, good-sized haddock... they're all here in the nutrient-rich waters of the Faroe Islands. UK's main fishing operator, Kings Angling Holidays is convinced and UK's largest Sea Angling magazine »Sea Angler« who visited the Faroe Islands in June has a clear view: As more and more skippers start to specialise in sport fishing and more anglers visit these wonderful islands, only then will the full sport fishing potential of this excellent destination be discovered.

Unforgettable Experiences on the Faroes

Some offers have existed for many years. Worth mentioning are the tours to the magnificent Vestmannaþjórgini, that have

been among the favourites with tourists for a long time. In a small boat, people sail past massive cliffs rising from the sea – an experience which few will ever forget.

Another classic excursion is the »concerto grotto«, where musicians and visitors go on a boat trip into one of the deep caves under the islands. Once inside, the music starts, and the natural sounds and unique acoustics of the caves are used as integral parts of the music.

But new offers are on their way. Sea angling is – as I said – about to become an established activity on offer, while many other activities are still just good ideas and need further development.

Extreme Tourism and Ecotourism on their Way

For some years now, some tourists have come to the Faroes to enjoy some of the more unusual niche activities, such as diving in sub-sea caves, but this has not yet developed into an established service on offer. A couple of months ago, Faroese TV interviewed some American surfers who had come to our islands to try our waves. They were amazed that no-one seemed to have noticed the potential for surfing on the islands. Other extreme sports such as rock climbing and base jumping are also possible offers we could develop. These activities are not yet part of the mainstream offers to visitors, but this is another area of interest to SamVit.

There are other specialised forms of tourism on the horizon. Ecotourism, for instance, lies close to our hearts. TIES, The International Ecotourism Society, defines ecotourism as, "Responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the well-being of local people." Ecotourism is one of the fastest-growing forms of tourism today. With all the unspoiled scenery in Faroe Islands, and with tourist numbers increasing every year, it is of utmost importance that we do everything we can to prevent the negative effects of mass tourism. So ecotourism will be, and already is, a priority for Faroese tourism in the future.

All in all – we can expect a great increase in the number of tourists over the next few years, so we must prepare. That is exactly what we're trying to do, and we're very excited about it.

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Eivør Páldóttir

Faroese Music Going Global

By Unn Poulsen,
Samvit

Music has always played an important role in Faroese society. The interest in music might be greater here than anywhere else in the world – this may be a result of the times we live in or the nature surrounding us, or it may be the inspiration from our most successful contemporary musicians. Whatever the reason, the inclination to make music here grows day by day.

The music scene in the Faroes is very diverse, offering everything from metal bands to singer-songwriters, jazz, blues, country, folk and so on. The pop and rock scene is burgeoning these days, and with increased investment and a thriving pool of talent, we see more and more successes abroad, where the Faroe Islands have become increasingly recognized as a potential source of contemporary talent. Local bands such as Boys in a Band and 200 have played at internationally recognized festivals. Teitur has taken the title of Best Male Singer at the Danish Music Awards, and Eivør won Best Vocalist and Best Album at the Danish Folk Music Awards. This is just to name a few.

The public institution SamVit - Faroe Islands Enterprise, which is to carry out the chosen national policy regarding trade and industry, has supported the Faroese music scene for a long time. However, in 2005 the public institution allocated half a million DKK (approx. USD 95,000) a year to support music business development in various ways. At the time, this was an extensive slice of the overall budget of the institution.

»We regard music as very important in many different aspects; it is an important part of Faroese identity, of our brand as a nation and as a business opportunity. It is our main

function to encourage innovation and enterprise, and that includes encouraging a growing music business on the Faroe Islands«, says Elin Heinesen, Managing Director of SamVit – Faroe Islands Enterprise (FIE).

FIE was the organizer behind the successful event Funky Faroe Islands, which took place in London last fall. This was a marketing showcase aimed at introducing Faroese musicians and fashion designers to British tastemakers. It also offered the Faroese music industry to be inspired and to establish contacts with people in the industry through workshops and meetings.

A similar project for the US

market is in the pipeline. FIE is looking into opportunities to promote the Faroes, as well as Faroese music and fashion design in the US. Some Faroese designers and musicians are already active on the US market. An example of this is Teitur, who has had over 150 shows in the US in the last few years; and this is something to build on.



Teitur Lassen