

URBAN CULTURAL TOURISM AND CULTURAL ROUTES. AS A CASE STUDY: THE CITY OF ROME

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Abstract

The term "Urban Cultural Tourism" refers to the type of tourism that enables the visitor to experience the culture of a city. The main goal is to highlight and promote the cultural characteristics of the city, where the visitor has the opportunity to experience places of architectural, historical and cultural interest, while also coming in contact with other types of intangible forms of culture such as customs, traditions and perceptions of the residents.

Cultural Routes are emerging today as an important management and utility tool to highlight cultural resources and further promote the cultural tourism of a city. Through a pre-determined route, the visitor has the opportunity to experience the history and culture of the city and to know its special physiognomy.

This paper refers to the city of Rome and concludes with three specific suggestions for cultural routes, which are mapped with the help of Google Maps. The approach to the main cultural points of the city is based on the proximity and importance of monuments, buildings and landscapes of natural aesthetics.

Key words: *Cultural routes, cultural features, cultural heritage, Rome*

Introduction

It is widely known that culture is an important advantage for any city. This is due to the economic and social benefits it offers, but also due to its general contribution to sustainable development (Mitoula, Kaldis, 2018). The concept of culture consists of a large set of material and intangible resources. Cultural resources include historical resources, ethnic materials and intangibles, natural features of the place, features of the environment, visible human activities, natural factors and intangibles (Kafouros, 2015).

Culture is also associated with tourism. Culture and tourism are inextricably linked and mutually beneficial (OECD, 2009). In fact, MacCannell (1999) and Cohen (1979) argue that culture is a process of finding, on the part of tourists, authenticity and meaning in the tourist experience. It is a fact that all parts of the world would give the impression that they are the same, without culture (Boniface, 1995). The search for this cultural difference, diversity and the departure from the familiar "pushes us on the journey" (Moira & Parthenis, 2011).

Cultural tourism is defined as any activity that enables the visitor to experience the way of life of other peoples, giving him the opportunity to get to know his customs, traditions,

natural environment and perceptions, while having access to architectural, historical and cultural interest or other type of cultural values.

Cultural tourism is considered the oldest form of tourism, first from the time of Roman travelers and then with the religious pilgrimages that were established during the Middle Ages (Paschalidis & Hampouli-Ioannidou, 2002). However, it is experiencing even more development in recent years, due to the mass tourism and the diversification of trends in the tourism industry. An ever-increasing number of cities and entire regions rely on cultural tourism and the promotion of their cultural heritage in order to develop tourism (Richards, 1996).

Cultural tourism and its contribution to local development

According to the World Tourism Organization, cultural tourism refers to travel by people for a predominantly cultural purpose. This kind of travel includes educational tours, visits to archaeological sites and museums, monuments, architectural works, art galleries, festivals and other artistic events, theater, cinema, study of the natural environment, religious events and pilgrimages (ECTARC, 1989). Cultural tourism, therefore, refers both to the visit of tourists to sights and historical monuments, as well as to the elements that compose the living cultural production (Pavlogeorgatos and Konstantoglou, 2004; De Blavia, 1998). It is approached holistically, but emphasis is placed primarily on heritage (Huibin et al, 2012) (Hughes and Allen, 2005).

According to Kokkosis and Tsartas (2011) cultural tourism is a special form of tourism and has as its main motive the contact with cultural heritage, both in the countryside and in the urban area. According to Manola (2019a) it covers another basic human need to experience emotions, which is why it includes activities and unique experiences that create emotion through landscapes, experiences and drastic changes to everyday life.

Cultural tourism has been recognized as a special category of tourism since the late 1970s, when researchers and tourism authorities discovered that many people traveled to understand the culture heritage of the destination (Tighe, 1986). Cultural tourism today represents huge economic interests, which are constantly growing at a rapid pace.

Cultural tourism can offer multiple benefits to a place as it helps to strengthen the economy due to the inflow of financial resources from visitors. Thus, the general promotion of a city, region or the whole country internationally, investments in infrastructure projects and services in the field of cultural spaces, the development of handicrafts and the industry of folk art, souvenirs and all related products of this kind tourism, the promotion of local products are among the benefits of cultural tourism. Finally, the development of local production, the diversification of the tourism product and the extension of the tourist season contribute to general local development (Vagionis, 2005) (Holloway and Robinson, 1995) (Kafouros, 2015).

Other benefits of tourism are the strengthening of social cohesion, which enhances the dynamics of the local community with a focus on the vision for the culture of the region and the transcendence of cultural boundaries (Moomas, 2004; Craik, 1995).

As Mitoula and Kaldis (2019) emphasize, culture, tourism and urban development are concepts that are directly related to each other. The developmental dimensions of the utilization of the cultural heritage and modern cultural activity are directly connected with the revitalization of urban areas and development of tourism.

Cultural Routes

In recent years, Cultural Routes have emerged as an important management and utility tool for the promotion of cultural resources and the further promotion of cultural tourism of a

city. Through a pre-determined route, the visitor has the opportunity to experience the history and culture of the city and to get to know its special physiognomy (Stratantonakis et al, 2019).

It is noteworthy that international organizations, such as the Council of Europe and UNESCO, have taken the initiative to design and promote transnational cultural routes. The Council of Europe also set up the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe program to promote common European cultural heritage and to encourage co-operation between countries through cross-border cultural exchanges and the dissemination of ideas (Moulin & Boniface, 2001) (Moira & Parthenis, 2011).

Therefore, the integration of cultural routes in tourist planning and its continuous evaluation ensures the qualitative characteristics, such as its studied spatio-temporal distribution, the protection of the natural and man-made environment with respect to transport capacity, tourism capacity and sustainable development, as well as the protection and utilization of the cultural heritage of each region (Karavasili & Mikelakis, 2011).

Historical or cultural routes include walks, hikes and tours that are designed and implemented in a place and aim at promoting its culture and history, and integrate into the tours architectural, archaeological and historical monuments, but also traditional settlements and places of life and traditions.

The above data can be related to each other based on the type that they are classified as, the time period which they belong to or even their geographical location. Cultural routes connect archeological sites and monuments, suggest new ways of highlighting and engaging them in the life of the area where they belong geographically and historically, help and promote cultural values and the protection of the environment.

According to the literature, cultural routes can be categorized as follows:

- Thematic cultural routes that include a specific thematic element,
- Historical cultural routes, which include monuments and cultural elements of a specific period or time
- Mixed cultural routes, which include cultural elements of the overall cultural identity of a place.

In addition to the above categories, cultural routes, based on their scale, can be classed as:

- Urban cultural routes, which concern monuments and cultural elements of a city-urban area
- Local cultural routes, concentrated in a limited geographical unit
- Supra-local cultural routes, with the scale of a wider geographical area, especially when it comes to routes with clear and precise themes (Papageorgiou & Gandouna, 2012).

In the present case study, the criterion of scale was chosen, specifically the city of Rome, an urban area which has a rich cultural heritage of unique international fame and value.

Case Study: Proposal of Cultural Routes in Rome

Italy has had a rich history since antiquity and has offered much to human civilization. The official language of Italy, Italian, is the number one language used, while German is second, and French and Slovenian play a small role in the nation's linguistic history (www.italia.it/it/home.html). Italian is derived from Latin, which is the official language of the Vatican. According to research conducted by Manola and Papanis and published in Manola and Chatzitheodorou (2020), 80% of today's Italian tourist terminology consists of words that have Italian roots.

Much of Western culture such as religion, science, education, philosophy or even art, is attributed to Italy. It should be noted that unlike in antiquity, today Italy has a mix of people who have immigrated from different parts of the world. Italians are known for their love of

the arts and their tradition is rich and includes literature, music, fashion and design sculpture and theatrical arts

Italy is considered the place where Roman Catholicism began and spread throughout the world. As a result, the majority of Italians are Roman Catholics and the common religious beliefs in Italy are based on the teaching of the Roman Catholics. In fact, the seat of the Roman Catholic Church is located in the Vatican of Italy (www.thoughtco.com/italian-history-and-culture-4133065).

In terms of the economy, agriculture currently contributes only 4% of gross national product. Locally grown agricultural products include wheat, vegetables, olives, grapes and fruits. However, the country imports dairy products and meat. Italy today relies heavily on the industrial economy, as it has shifted its focus from agriculture in the aftermath of World War II.

The main industries of the Italian economy include the production of textiles, chemicals, automobiles, shipbuilding, iron and steel, etc. In addition, the Italians produce the fastest cars in the world, although they are not mass-produced (www.italia.gr).

Food is a classic tradition in Italy and is usually combined with a love of wine. There are differences in the type of food from region to region, as well as in the way of cooking. However, pasta (*Paste* alimentary), soup (minestra), bread (pane) and meat, whether white or red, are common in all regions of Italy. Therefore, Italian food is more or less homogeneous and there is diversity in the types of food consumed in Italy (Parasecoli, 2004). In Italy, coffee is an "institution" and it is no coincidence that caffè espresso and cappuccino were born there. Italian ice cream (gelato italiano) is also considered one of the best in the world, while the famous limoncello liqueur is produced in Italy. Types of restaurants encountered are 1. Bacaro: typical café restaurants which serve over the counter. 2. Enoteca: Traditional Italian bars with wine and a few dishes, 3. Osteria - Trattoria: with the well-known traditional cuisine 4. Ristorante: belong to the upper category with excellent cuisine and refined dishes.

Rome, as the capital of Italy, has justifiably taken the title of eternal city. Its historic center, along with the Holy See within the city and the Basilica di San Paolo Fuori le Mura, is a UNESCO World Heritage Site, as are 54 other Italian sites. Surrounded by the Aurelian Walls (on the left of the Tiber) and the Gianicolense Walls (on the right of the river), the historic center contains 25,000 points of environmental and archaeological interest. It is the sixth largest city in Europe, smaller than Athens, with rich ancient history and of course numerous monuments, such as large and imposing squares, historic bridges, imposing walls, churches, fountains, beautiful buildings, each with its own history (Manola, 2019b). The ways that one can tour Rome are the metro, the tourist buses and of course as a pedestrian. The present paper highlights specific cultural elements of the city, which are also its characteristic features. Three specific cultural route are suggested, which are captured on maps with the help of google map. The approach to the main cultural points of the city is based on the proximity and importance of monuments, buildings and landscapes of natural aesthetics.

1st Cultural Route

The 1st proposed route starts from the north of Rome city center, where Piazza Del Popolo is located. This means People's Square and is located inside the north gate of the city, which was once called Porta Flaminia. The square is located at the beginning of Via Flaminia and was the main entrance to the city during the Roman Empire. It used to host various events, including public executions. In 1810 four (4) Egyptian lions with their fountains were placed there, framing the oldest obelisk in Rome. On the main route to the north, Piazza del Popolo is still strategically located. Three (3) important streets start from the square: to the left, Via del Babuino, to the right, Via di Ripetta and in the center Via del Corso, one of the main streets of

Rome. Visitors can enjoy a spectacular view of the square by climbing the stairs, located on the east side of the square, in Pincio Park.

One of the most important renaissance churches, Santa Maria Del Popolo, is built there and is a monument of art and architecture. The origin of the basilica is very unusual. According to a legend, the place where the church was finally erected was haunted by the ghost of Nero, a Roman Emperor who reigned from 54 to 68 AD. To end this myth, Pope Paschal II, in 1099, ordered a tree to be cut down and commissioned a chapel to be built. The chapel was enlarged in 1227 and later rebuilt between 1472 and 1477. In 1513, several of the most important artists of the that time, such as Pinturicchio, Raphael, Caravaggio and Bernini, were asked to decorate the walls and ceilings of the church. Pincio is the highest point of the square overlooking the Vatican. In the 4th century it took its name from its owners, the Pincius family. This shady garden was designed by Giuseppe Valadier in the early 19th century. It is located on the edge of Villa Borghese and is an ideal place for a walk, while the view of the church of St. Peter from the terrace is incredible. From there start the amazing gardens of Villa Borghese which are of exceptional beauty. Villa Borghese Park occupies a large area in the heart of the city. The villa contains buildings, sculptures, monuments and fountains, works by prominent Baroque artists, neoclassical and eclectic art, surrounded by ancient trees, lakes, Italian gardens and large open spaces.

The construction of the villa was entrusted by Cardinal Scipione Borghese (dal cardinale Scipione Borghese), nephew of Pope Paul V (del Pontefice Paolo V), to Flaminio Ponzio and his pupil Giovanni Vassantgio, who succeeded Girila in 1621. Rainaldi). Domenico Savino da Montepulciano was the architect of the garden layout. The works were carried out from 1608 to 1633, the year of the Cardinal's death.

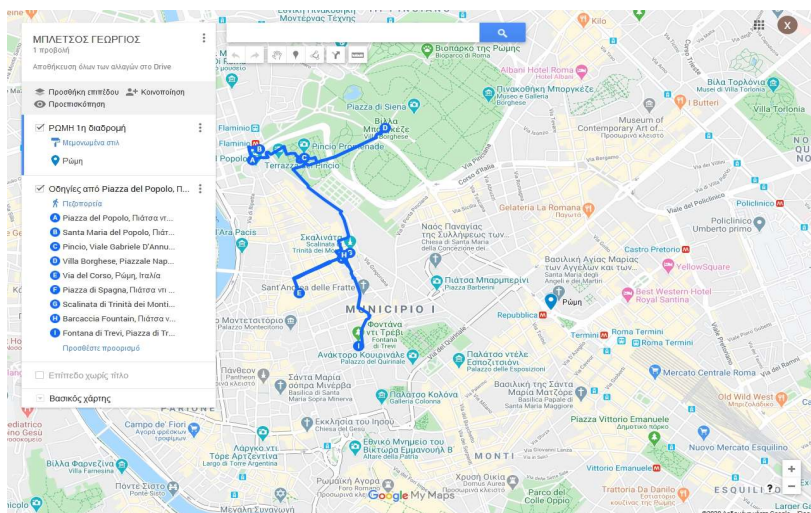
Via Del Corso is Rome's most famous shopping street with amazing buildings and picturesque alleys. It starts from Piazza Venezia.

There are many very interesting popular markets full of traditional products, works of art, clothes and antiques:

- Porta Portese Market: Open only on Sunday mornings. This traditional flea market, which sells books, clothes, CDs etc., is the largest market in Rome. It stretches all the way to Trastevere train station.
- Mercato dei Fiori: This market is open every morning and mainly sells flowers, vegetables and fruits. Located in Campo dei Fiori.
- Piazza Fontanella Borghese: Opens every morning except Sunday and specializes in books and antiques. Visitors will find it near Piazza di Spagna.
- Via Sannio Market: Five minutes from San Giovanni Metro Station Located on Via Sannio Market. Open daily until 8 p.m. (approx.). Clothes and jewellery are mainly sold there.

Piazza di Spagna is located in one of Rome's most popular neighborhoods, close to well-known streets such as Via dei Condotti, Via Frattina and Via del Babuino, home to many impressive 17th- and 18th-century villas. This is one of the most impressive squares in the city and is shaped like an hourglass. Its name comes from the Palazzo di Spagna, the seat of the Spanish Embassy for the Vatican, located in this square since the seventeenth century. The majestic Spanish Steps (Scalinata di Trinità dei Monti) connect the road with the catholic church of the Holy Trinity of the Mountains (Chiesa di Santissima Trinità dei Monti) built in the French style. The famous fountain located in the center of the Spanish Square is called Barcaccia and was built by Beningi. The Spanish Steps were built in the early eighteenth (18th) century and connect the Piazza di Spagna with the Church of the Trinità dei Monti. It is one of the most famous places in Rome. Every July the square and the 135 steps are decorated to host the Donne Sotto le Stelle fashion show.

One of the most famous sights of Rome is the Fontana di Trevi fountain. It is 26 meters high and 20 meters wide and is a magnificent water spectacle. At the top are the famous four large symbolic statues of the Trevi Fountain: From left to right these are the abundance of fruit (l'Abbondanza dei frutti) by Agostino Corsini, the fertility of the fields by Bernardo Ludovisi, the gifts of autumn (i Doni dell'autunno) by Francesco Queirolo and the ease of the meadows (la Fertilità dei campi) by Bartolomeo Pincellotti. In the center, at the top, there is an inscription by Clement XII, under the Corinthian columns that border two side niches where there is a statue depicting the abundance on the left (l'Abbondanza) and another statue that depicts health (la Salubrità) on the right and both by Filippo della Valle.



Source. Google Maps

2nd Cultural Route

The Colosseum or Flavian Amphitheater (Colosseum), is the symbol of the Roman Empire. It was built over 2,000 years ago and is the starting point of the second route. With a perimeter of 500 metres, it is 200 meters long, 50 meters wide and 48 meters high. It has four floors and it had a capacity of 45,000 people. It had 80 gates so that it could be filled in fifteen minutes and emptied in just five. Then there is the triumphal Arch of Constantine, on the way to the Palatine Hill, which is considered the most central of the seven hills of Rome and one of the oldest parts of the city. It has a history older than the founding of Rome itself with evidence of human life before 10,000 BC.

Piazza Venezia is one of the most central squares in Rome. It is located at the foot of the Capitol Hill and is close to the Roman Agora. The imposing marble architectural masterpiece of Vittorio Emanuele II, built at the end of 1800 AD, makes an impression on the traveller. Specifically, the work, also known as the Altar of the Fatherland (Altare della Patria), began in 1885 and was completed in 1911. The statue of the Equestrian King took over 20 years to build and is located on a marble base with sculptures symbolizing the largest cities of Italy.

The Piazza del Campidoglio is one of the most historic squares in Rome and has been used in many ways throughout history. Today it houses the City Hall of the City of Rome. Access to the square is via a staircase called Cordonata and was designed by Michelangelo, who also designed the entire square.

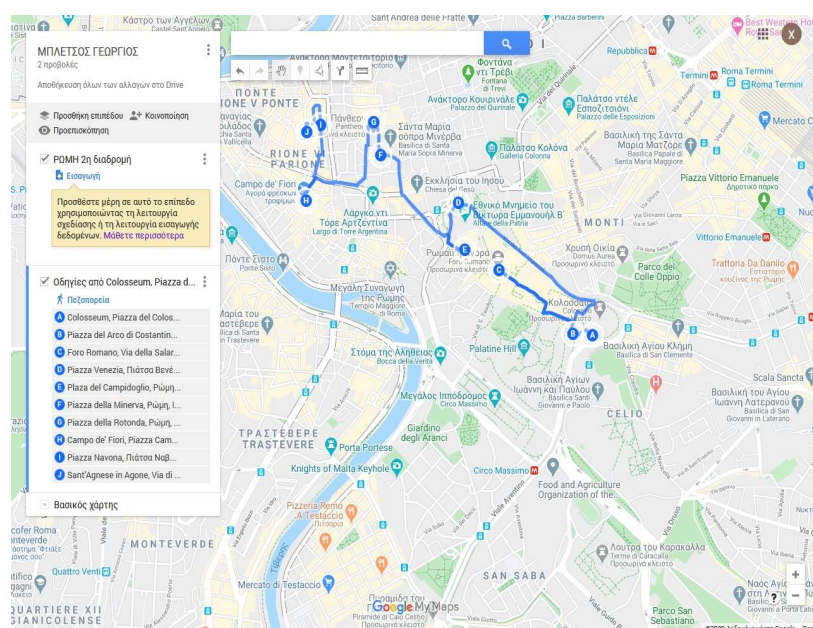
Piazza della Minerva is another special square in Rome. The half hour walk and tour, according to the tripadvisor page , includes the Church of Santa Maria Minerva.

(www.tripadvisor.it/ShowUserReviews-g187791-d243025-r506265772-Santa_Maria_Sopra_Minerva-Rome_Lazio.html)

In Piazza della Rotonda there is the imposing Pantheon as the church of Santa Maria Rotonda. The Pantheon is the only Roman monument that survives to this day almost untouched. It was built in the 1st c. BC and was originally dedicated to all the gods of Ancient Rome.

Campo de' Fiori (meaning "flower field") is a rectangular square and is flooded with flowers.

Piazza Navona is special and has an elongated oval shape because it used to be a stadium. It has three fountains with the most famous being the Fountain of the Four Rivers (Fontana dei Quattro Fiumi) created in 1651 by Bernini. Nearby is the 17th-century Sant'Agnese catholic church in Agone.



Source. Google Maps

3rd Cultural Route

Ponte Sant'Angelo Bridge is the first stop on the 3rd route. This is the bridge in front of the castle of Sant'Angelo and is definitely the most impressive that connects the banks of the Tiber.

The Vatican (Città del Vaticano) or the Patriarchate of Rome, is a continuation of the ecclesiastical (or papal) state as it was in the Middle Ages. It was founded during Mussolini's Fascist regime. It is internationally the smallest recognized state in the world in terms of both size and population, numbering just 842 "inhabitants" (Nickles, 2001). Upon entering the Vatican, one stands in St. Peter's Square. The Courtyard of the Pine Tree (Fontana della Pigna) is dominated by a huge pine cone almost four meters high, which once sprayed water from its top and the Sphere Within Sphere (Sfera con sfera). Inside the Vatican Museum (Musei Vaticani) there are numerous ancient statues, mosaic floors and impressive ceilings that add grandeur to the space, as well as exhibits of maps of the Roman Empire. The most special place is the Capella Sistina, the chapel of the official residence of the Pope. The four Halls of Raphael (Stanze di Raffaello) are a set of reception rooms and are famous for their murals painted by Raffaello Sanzio da Urbino. Together with the frescoes of Michael Angelos in

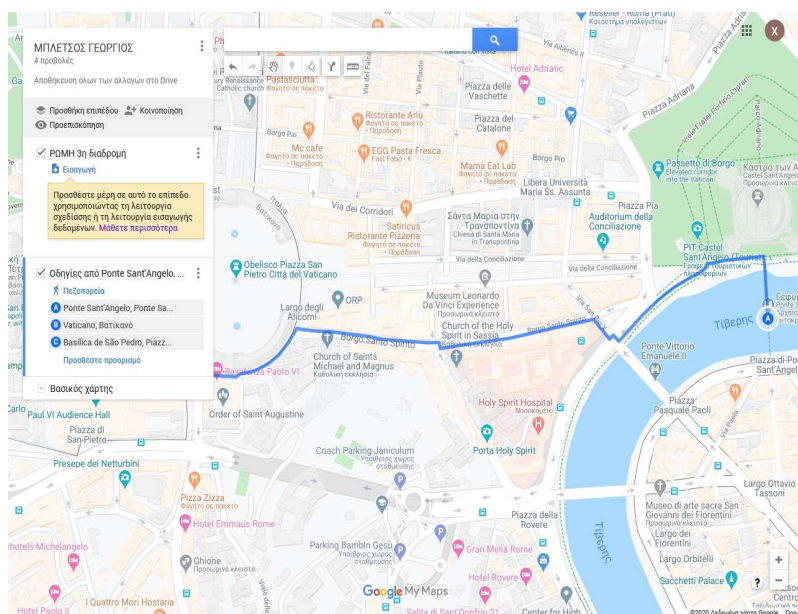
Capella Sistina, these murals are the large series of frescoes that marked the Acme of the Renaissance in Rome.

St. Peter's Basilica (San Pietro in Vaticano) is one of the largest churches in the world and the seat of the Catholic Church. It is one of the tallest buildings in the world, with a length of 218 meters, a dome that reaches a height of 133 meters and a total area of approximately 23,000 square meters.

It is connected to the Vatican palaces by an elevated corridor along the right aisle and the Scala Regia to the right of the façade, with 300 steps leading to the top (cupola).

Along the side corridors, there are 45 altars and 11 chapels that house many masterpieces of historical and artistic value, including many works by Bernini and others from the former basilica, such as the bronze statue of San Pietro attributed to Arnolfo di Cambio.

Rome also has the Casa di Pirandello at 13b via Antonio Basio. Here he lived the last years of his life and he was living here when he was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1934. Here he received some famous writers and friends. The museum preserves personal items and clothes as well as his typewriter (Manola, 2020). He was especially beloved by the intellectual people of Greece and his work had and still has a great impact on both Greek writers and directors as well as on the theatrical audience.



Source: Google Maps

Conclusions

The creation and use of the routes of cultural interest first of all acts on an educational level, in the direction of environmental awareness and reinforces historical and cultural memory. Cultural routes are one of the most popular categories in the tourism industry and have presented rapid growth. The role of cultural routes is very important, on the one hand for the management of the cultural heritage of a place and on the other hand for their connection with the tourism sector. They seem to guarantee concrete results and promise successful tourism development, while seeing them as complex cultural products, they can add value to any local culture by transforming local historical and cultural elements into a set of networks of financial resources.

The cultural heritage of each region is a lever for its sustainable development, a major demand at this time. This paper refers to the city of Rome and concludes with three specific

suggestions for cultural routes, which were mapped with the help of google maps. The approach to the main cultural points of the city was based on the proximity and importance of monuments, buildings and landscapes of natural aesthetics. Through three pre-determined routes, the visitor has the opportunity to experience the history and culture of the city and to know its special physiognomy.

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