



2017 Certification and Awards Programme



Version 1.4 - June 2017

Accelerator Guide
Tips & Tools for QualityCoast and QualityTourism
Awarded Destinations

Introduction

Congratulations with your recent QualityCoast Award! But now the real work begins...

This Accelerator Guide outlines your opportunities as Awarded Member of the Green Destinations certification programme. Now make sure you take advantage!

Let's first clarify **what QualityCoast does for you:**

- We recommend the QualityCoast destinations to the 200,000 readers of our Dutch [magazine](#).
- We make [flags and banners](#) available for you to display throughout the destination (fig 1).
- BookDifferent.com displays the ratings of QualityCoast destinations on its [Green Travel Destinations map](#) (fig. 2). In this way, its clients can compare destinations with information from our assessments. Our awarded destinations will be better visible on this map (usually with a green dot, and detailed information) than destinations that are not participating in the program.
- We can help you creating posters clarifying what QualityCoast means (fig 3).
- QualityCoast Platinum, Gold, and Silver Award destinations were included in the [2016 Sustainable Destinations Top 100](#). This will again be the case for the 2017 competition. The Top 100 launch and presentations at [Global Green Destinations Day 2017](#) received massive media coverage.
- We share submitted Good Practices with other users of the platform; but also give you the opportunity to share your good practices during our national and international "Green Destinations Day" events.

We are also preparing a special webpage featuring the "[Green Destinations Collection](#)". The page will go live before the next Global Green Destinations Day, and include our Awarded destinations and Top 100 Sustainable Destinations.



Search hotels

Destination

Check-in date

Check-out date

Search!

How green is your travel destination?

As a responsible tourist it is important to be informed about the efforts your travel destination has developed towards a green, clean and responsible destination and to be aware of the impact your presence has. Unfortunately, it is hard to know what impact your visit is having on your destination and how you are affecting the environment or the local communities. With the Green Destination Rating (GDR) we have found an easy understandable tool to show you how green and clean your destination is now and in the future. From now on you can now easily contribute to the sustainable development by choosing a green destination.

Legend:

- High score for sustainability
- Medium score for sustainability
- Low score for sustainability

Fig. 2. BookDifferent.com enables its clients to compare destinations with information from the GD database. This screenshot shows the example of the Portuguese Lisbon region, where Cascais, Sintra and the Oeste region (from Torres Vedras and S. Cruz up to Peniche and Nazaré) make a true green belt along the sea. www.bookdifferent.com/en/green-travel-destinations/



Engage your stakeholders

If you haven't done so yet for the QualityCoast assessment, it is highly recommended to create a Destination Committee, consisting of:

- a political leader, an elected member of your local or regional council;
- your destination manager responsible for sustainability;
- your destination marketing manager;
- business leaders, like hotel managers and owners
- civil society and opinion leaders.

This is the best way to strengthen the support of the local community for your sustainable tourism policy and management, and to help build *Destination Stewardship*. Your destination committee should be given a clear profile, visibility, tasks and responsibilities in pushing the sustainable tourism agenda forward. The members of the destination committee can be extremely useful (if not necessary!) in several respects:

- considering the recommendations of the QualityCoast International Jury, and consider actions to meet the recommendations in the future;
- keeping the destination's information on the QualityCoast online platform up-to-date;
- advancing the process of strategy development and action planning;
- identifying the short-term opportunities (low-hanging fruit) to make progress for jobs and growth, environment and local community;

It is crucial to involve the members of your destination committee in important strategic discussions and decisions. From a governmental, economic development, or investors point of view it can be useful to

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develop a destination master plan. However, it is important to consider that developing a master plan is a big task that all too often results in having no time or forgetting to identify and harvest the low-hanging fruit. A destination committee will be away to be constantly aware of that, and not miss opportunities.

An important role within the destination committee can be fulfilled by destination ambassadors. They are vital to represent the destination externally, and to prepare and be involved in storytelling. It is recommended to register up to five of your destination committee members as Green Destinations Ambassadors, and to link them to our global community of Green Destinations Ambassadors.

Join the Green Destinations Ambassadors Community

Green Destinations Ambassadors are people who are committed to the well-being of their own destination and to the development of responsible tourism. They are encouraged to share experience with colleagues from around the world. This may be useful when considering new approaches and implementing 'green solutions' from elsewhere.

The benefits of joining as a GD Ambassador can be:

- Inspiration: Ambassadors are encouraged to share knowledge with other ambassadors in workshops, at Green Destinations Days, and in the "Green Destinations Ambassadors" groups on Facebook and LinkedIn.
- Visibility: Active ambassadors can greatly benefit from combined publicity around Green Destinations Days, where new Ambassadors are inaugurated, and present their success stories.
- Marketing: Ambassadors play an essential role in Green Destinations' [Viami initiative](#), showing green travellers what the destination has to offer.

GD Ambassadors do not pay a fee, but make one of the following commitments:

- Taking initiatives in your destination to become a Green Destination.
- Helping to host or organise a national or international Ambassadors meeting, or Green Destinations Day, or to contribute with a presentation of good practices from your destination.
- Helping to select the special experiences and the typical natural and cultural offer in your destination, for the **Viami** maps.

A destination can be represented by several Ambassadors. [Check here for more information](#).

Join or host a Green Destinations Day

QualityCoast destinations are encouraged to learn from the good practices and to get inspired by the success stories of other destinations at the international Green Destinations Days. Especially the Green Destinations Ambassadors are highly welcome at these events, to present their own destination's success stories.

Every QualityCoast destination can organise its own local Green Destinations Day. If you consider to organise a regional, national or international GD Day, contact the Green Destinations Secretariat.

Make your destination visible through *Viami*

Viami is an initiative of Green Destinations and the International Institute for Animal Ethics (IIAE). It will include a global portal that can help your destination and its businesses to visualize your “green” quality and sustainability to travelers, in a.o.:

- Water & Air Quality;
- Nature & Scenery;
- Culture & Tradition;
- Environment & Climate;
- Nature & Animal Protection;
- Socio-economic;
- Food;
- Waste Management;
- Sustainability Policy.

Simply put: Together with your Ambassadors we collect, analyze, and visualize data in different thematic layers, to help your destination its businesses to develop sustainably and directly profit from “going green”. By giving destinations and businesses a different color for every thematic layer, we will show your data in a user-friendly way for different purposes and different audiences.

The benefits of this map for YOU are best worded in unique opportunities:

- show the world who you are (we are sure you have many untold stories);
- offer your responsible products (\$ for your local economy and business);
- improve and grow your business (again more \$, time to wrap it up);
- improve your sustainability gradually (growing greener every day).

Do you want to know more to get started? Download the QTM pilot program from [this page](#).

More information and suggestions

Contact the Green Destinations - QualityCoast Team, e-mail to:

secretariat@qualitycoast.info, or contact@greendestinations.org

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