

Sustainable rural tourism in Mas Vinyoles

Since the acquisition of the Mas Vinyoles farm in 2011, we have been asking ourselves two basic questions: "Why" rehabilitate it and "How" to do it.

To answer the first question (What for) we simply turn to the historical function of a traditional Farmhouse: to be a peasant residence and a center of economic activity. This is how we made the new Mas Vinyoles a family home and a rural tourism center complemented by other local economic development activities (coworking, entrepreneurship...).

We will set clear criteria on "how" to do the rehabilitation:

- Architectural rehabilitation respecting traditional forms without falling into *nasveism*
- Look for functionality combined with comfort, quality and the creation of welcoming environments while avoiding unnecessary luxuries.
- Create a sustainable system based on deep conviction, both in terms of the design of the construction elements (insulations), as well as the energy installations, water management and the treatment of solid and liquid waste. This is how we set up the almost autonomous electricity supply with photovoltaic energy, the thermal consumption based on forest biomass, the use of rainwater or the treatment of waste water by means of a septic tank.
- In general, create a set of harmonious spaces with the rich natural environment of the estate.

Later we had to tackle the day-to-day management of the estate and the accommodations and we will have no doubts: we needed to gather an excellent team, committed to the objectives and values of excellence of Mas Vinyoles and always willing to learn and to continuous improvement. And so we do; the constant feedback from our guests certainly backs this up.

Among the improvements we have introduced there have been measures to improve the accessibility of spaces, to facilitate the sale of pets and the incorporation of chargers for electric vehicles with a reinforcement of photovoltaic generation. Facilitating the arrival of our customers with sustainable vehicles helps us reduce the carbon footprint of the stays.

When we came into contact with the Biosphere Program we had the opportunity to review the principles and objectives adopted at the World Summit on Sustainable Development 2015, COP 21 and the World Charter for Sustainable Tourism +20. We have verified that we already comply with many of the recommendations of these regulations, but the dynamics that we have initiated thanks to the Biosphere team will undoubtedly help us to continue improving the service offered to our customers and the sustainability of our tourist activity.

Cordially,

Ermen Llobet Martí (Director of Mas Vinyoles Hub)