

Entering the European market for the FIT segment

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FIT tourism is a key market for local tour operators in developing countries. The segment offers many opportunities, thanks to its wide demographic range, from backpacking teenagers to wealthy travellers in their seventies. Most FITs use the internet widely to plan and book trips and experiences, so local operators need to build attractive websites to compete effectively in the market.

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1. What are the requirements for travel products in the FIT segment to be allowed in the European market?

European tourism providers are subject to strict regulations to ensure safety and financial protection for FITs travelling abroad. As you will be selling travel products to them, it is important that you understand what these requirements are.

What are the mandatory requirements?

Travel products aimed at the FIT segment in developing countries must comply with the following:

- The European Package Travel Directive
- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- Liability insurance and insolvency protection

As a first step, read the CBI report on the [requirements for tourism services in the European market](#) and familiarise yourself with the comprehensive details of legal, non-legal and common requirements.

COVID-19: Preparing to reopen following the pandemic

In summer of 2021, the COVID-19 pandemic continued to have a considerable impact on the tourism industry worldwide. The rules for travelling to and from Europe are complex and every country has imposed different regulations for outbound and inbound travellers. Most European countries identify other countries as green, amber or red list destinations with red list countries subject to the strictest regulations, such as compulsory quarantine in government facilities and travel for leisure forbidden.

This includes returning residents from countries such as India, South Africa and Brazil where new virus variants pose a significant threat. Neighbouring countries tend to be under similar restrictions, such as Bangladesh, countries in southern Africa, and other South American countries.

Travel within the EU for European nationals has become easier with the introduction of the EU Digital Covid Certificate of Vaccination. UK travellers are subject to different restrictions within Europe as the UK is no longer a member of the EU. However, every country has different rules and you should do your own research to find out what they are.

- [Re-open EU](#) is an interactive tool developed by the European Union (EU) to provide information about the current COVID-19 situation in each country. It is regularly updated and provides the latest information about the health situation, coronavirus measures and travel information.
- Keep abreast of advice given to UK nationals about travel to red, amber and green list countries on the government's [Foreign Travel Advice](#) page.
- Consult IATA's [interactive travel restrictions map](#) for travel restrictions in most other countries. You should also be aware of the restrictions placed on inbound travellers to your own country and keep checking in the event of any developments. Visit your own country's government website to find out more.

As national vaccination programmes around the world gather pace, the tourism industry is optimistic that it will see recovery to some level in the second half of 2021. Domestic tourism will be the first segment to recover. In the short term, this will offer local tour operators the chance to reach out to local markets. This is likely to be followed by increased travel to short-haul destinations. For Europeans, this means travel to a neighbouring country on the continent.

Long-haul travel to developing countries will recover more slowly and travel abroad will depend on conditions of entry imposed on visitors and safety protocols. Research shows that demand for travel is very high in Europe, particularly among adventure travellers, who are often FITs.

A survey in early 2021 among British and American tourists found that [70% plan to take a holiday this year](#), but that COVID-19 worries are their biggest concern. Being able to travel safely, being vaccinated, low infection rates in the countries they want to visit and the availability of travel insurance that insures against COVID-19 are likely to have an impact on travel decisions.

You should use this 'downtime' to prepare your travel product for a European market that is keen to travel, but will need reassurance that there are excellent safety protocols and cleanliness measures in place to keep visitors safe. You must also establish relevant booking terms and conditions and clearly state what cancellation and/or waivers you will offer to your buyers during the pandemic.

Consult the CBI study [How to respond to COVID-19 in the tourism sector](#) for tips on preparing for the future recovery of the tourism sector. The study includes detailed information about revising terms and conditions to help you amend yours.

Many tourism businesses have produced helpful guides to support the recovery of the industry. Viator, the world's largest online travel agency (OTA) for trips, tours and experiences, has gathered a number of useful resources for tour and activity operators, [COVID-19: Resources and How to Navigate Your Business Through a Crisis](#).

The World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) has launched a new set of measures to rebuild consumer confidence, reduce risk and encourage the resumption of travel. The measures were developed in partnership with others, including the Adventure Travel Trade Association (ATTA). Some of the measures include:

- reducing the number of participants to allow for social distancing;
- ensuring activity difficulty levels are easy for participants to meet so as to reduce the need for rescue

services;

- providing clear, consistent and up-to-date communication on health and hygiene protocols;
- providing clear information in advance and on arrival about protocols such as the wearing of face masks, hand hygiene guidance and social distancing requirements;
- encouraging online sales wherever possible;
- encouraging travellers to handle their own luggage for the duration of the trip;
- limiting queuing and physical contact wherever possible.

You can download WTTC's [Tour Operators - Global Protocols for the New Normal](#) for more details about the measures and decide whether to apply for the '[Safe Travels](#)' stamp.

Together with some major international tour operators, ATTA has also published a range of insights and frameworks to help local tour operators reopen niche adventure tourism markets safely. Download the [overarching guidelines](#) to see what you can adopt for your business.

For the remainder of this report, all discussion, insight and advice has been provided on the basis of travel in normal circumstances.

What additional requirements do buyers have?

Adopt Standards

FITs like to be in control of the decision-making process in their holidays and trips and they are generally considered to be adventure tourists. As such, they are likely to take part in a range of different activities during a trip abroad. If you are providing an activity to the FIT market, it is preferable that your business also complies with the standards set for the adventure tourism market where possible.

Adventure tourism standards commonly used by adventure tour operators include the following:

- The international standards for adventure tourism [ISO 21101:2014](#) (safety management systems) and [ISO 21103:2014](#) (information to be provided to participants)
- The [ISO 21102](#) standard for the personal competence of adventure tourism leaders, revised and updated in August 2020
- The British standard for adventure tourism [BS8848:2014](#)

You can find out more about these in the Managing Risk section of the CBI report about entering the [European market for adventure tourism](#).

Tip:

Comply with the adventure tourism standards if you think they are suitable for your business.

What are the requirements for niche markets?

Immersive Experiences

FITs have fully embraced the trend for unique, authentic experiences instead of going on traditional holiday packages. FITs want more than just visiting the major tourist attractions among large tour groups. They like to immerse themselves into a different culture and truly experience life like a local. Local tour operators have a unique opportunity to tap into this growing trend by offering authentic tours and trips.

FITs like immersive experiences for several reasons:

- The growth of online booking platforms like [Tripadvisor](#), [Viator](#) and [Airbnb Experiences](#) has facilitated the coordination of immersive experiences, allowing FITs the flexibility and spontaneity of booking either before travelling or on the go.
- FITs can meet like-minded people by taking part in immersive experiences and small-group activities.
- FITs like to know they are contributing to helping local economies to grow as well as helping to preserve and protect local cultures. They are also motivated by altruism and like to know they are making a positive impact on other people's lives.
- FITs enjoy seeing how locals live and do everyday things, which often is very different from their own lives.
- Many FITs are time poor, so short immersive experiences that offer a concentrated, yet authentic experience may turn out to be the highlight of a trip.

Table 1: Examples of immersive experiences for FITs

Type	Common Experiences
Activities	Boat trips; landscape photography trips; jeep safaris; walking, cycle, Segway tours; sunrise and sunset trips; farm visits; mountain, jungle, desert or waterfall hikes; visits to caves, canyons, waterfalls, hot springs, geysers or volcanoes; sea turtle monitoring; whale and dolphin watching; horse riding; mountain biking or fat biking; sailing or yachting; windsurfing or kitesurfing lessons; camping
Animal experiences	Observing, playing with or caring for animals; grooming and walking animals; honeybee therapy; hikes with various types of animals; yoga with animals; spotting and visiting animals in the wild; horse whispering; visiting an animal sanctuary; conservation activities
Community-based tourism experiences (CBT)	Visiting local villages or tribal communities; engaging in regional games or sporting events; homestays; cooking or handicrafts classes; home hosting activities
Culinary experiences	Food trails; wine trails; tastings; distillery or winery visits; local markets; gastronomic experiences; local producer visits; hands-on harvesting or farming; cooking classes; food festivals; visits to local tea and coffee shops; organic farms; farm-to-table experiences
Cultural experiences	Sightseeing lesser-known sites; local festivals; historic tours or ancient, modern cities or ruins; architecture or design tours; local markets; seasonal traditions; light shows; ghost tours

Music	Music concerts in a private houses, clubs or outdoor locations; music lessons; DJ workshops; dance lessons and typical local experiences
Wellness	Hot springs; sanctuary retreats; forest bathing; meditation, yoga, tai chi, reiki; mindfulness; detox and rejuvenation; spiritual immersion

Source: Acorn Tourism Consulting

Sustainability

Sustainability has become one of the most important issues in the global tourism industry. FITs like to think of themselves as responsible travellers, so if you can show that your activities are sustainable, your product will be appealing for them. Since sustainability applies to most tourism segments, the following CBI studies provide examples of initiatives you can implement:

- [Entering the European market for nature and ecotourism](#) – see the section on [sustainability](#).
- [Entering the European market for sun and beach travel products](#) – see the section on sustainability in coastal destinations.

Build and Improve Your Website

FITs of all ages use the internet intensively to plan their trips. They may spend many hours researching destinations, finding experiences, activities and assessing suitable accommodation for their needs. Having your own website and updating it will put you in a better position to reach them.

There is lots of information online to help you build an effective website for your tourism business. Read this article, [Top 5 Tools for Building a Tour Operator Website](#), which discusses online resources for building a website. This blog, [10 Tactics to Get More Bookings](#) gives tips on improving your online presence.

To learn more about how to set up your own website, consult the CBI study [How to be a successful tourism company online](#).

2. Through what channels can your travel products for the FIT segment reach the European market?

How is the end market segmented?

Europe's FIT market comprises a large group of travel consumers, including from Germany and the UK, Europe's largest markets. The FIT market intersects with other consumer groups, including a broad age range from Generation Z teenagers to age baby boomers in their seventies. FITs travel solo, in couples, and in groups with friends and family. However, each group has distinctive characteristics as follows:

- Baby Boomers (born between 1946 and 1964) – Although they are ageing, boomers are active, discerning and influential. Many baby boomers are keen FITs, but they may also use a conventional tour operator to help plan a trip. Baby boomers are the wealthiest travellers and still hold much of the world's wealth. Consequently, prices are less important for them when the experience meets their needs. They are keen to take part in unique experiences and are prepared to pay more for an authentic experience.
- Generation X (born between 1965 and 1980) – This group of consumers is typically still working full time, so they have less time to travel. Family life is still a priority, so budgets are tighter, although they are keen to have family learning experiences. They are careful how they spend money on travel and will engage in

considerable online research. As they age and their children leave home, they have more money to spend on travel. Gen Xers place emphasis on authenticity and skills development in their travel experiences.

- Millennials or Generation Y (born between 1980 and 1995) – Travel is very important to Millennials, currently the world’s largest consumer group. They are a key target group for immersive travel experiences, which they use to offset the stress of their busy lives. They are heavy users of technology and will typically research and book their trips and experiences online. Social networking is second nature to Millennials, who rely heavily on word of mouth in their decision-making processes.
- Generation Z (born between 1995 and 2010) – This is the youngest group of FIT consumers. They are typically cash-poor but time-rich backpackers. Their limited budgets take them to popular destinations in developing countries, which are generally cheaper to travel to and around. Naturally adventurous, Gen Z travellers are keen to enjoy adventure experiences but limited by cost.

Table 2: Characteristics of European FITs

Demographic	Budget	Mid budget	Luxury	Time rich	Time poor
Baby Boomers		✓	✓	✓	
Gen X	✓	✓	✓		✓
Millennials (Gen Y)	✓	✓			✓
Gen Z	✓			✓	

Source: Acorn Tourism Consulting

Consider the following:

- If your product is aimed at young backpackers, promote activities that are adventurous and exciting but make sure to take the relevant safety precautions. Young FITs do not want added extras, such as food or beverages which they can supply themselves.
- If your product is aimed at the luxury end of the market, including baby boomers, you must consider the quality of your travel product more than price. Baby boomers will normally demand good standards of accommodation and service levels.
- Your experiences must be good value, good quality and authentic to attract millennials. Accommodation can be basic, but must meet high cleanliness standards.

Tips:

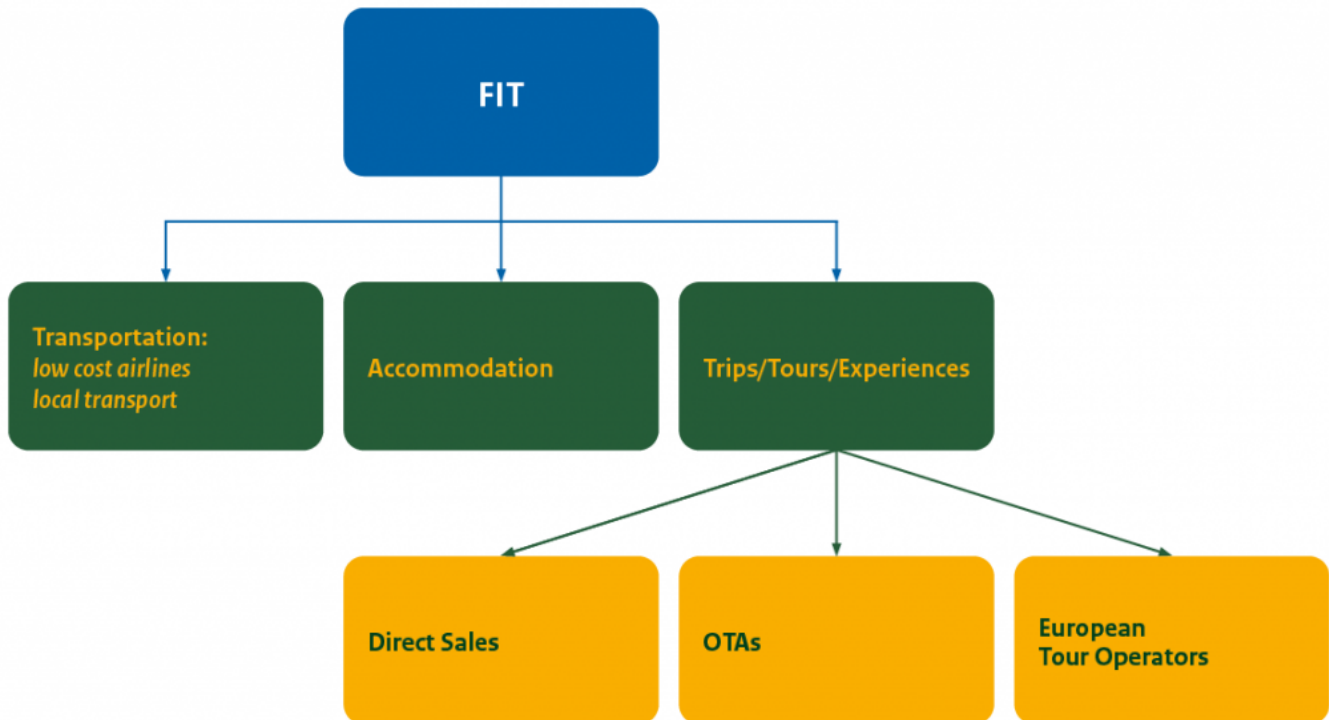
- Identify which market is the most relevant and build the experience and price your product appropriately.
- For more information on setting prices, read the CBI’s [tips for doing business with European tourism buyers](#), particularly the tip on [Setting a fair price for your services](#).

3. Through what channels do travel products for the FIT segment

reach the end market?

FITs use a variety of online resources to book their travel experiences. The chart below portrays this process.

Figure 1: How European FITs book their trips



Source: Acorn Tourism Consulting

- Transportation – FITs look for good value in transportation and like to use low-cost airlines where possible. They often book directly with the airline or other transportation provider and may use a flight finder website like [Expedia](#), [Kayak](#) or [Skyscanner](#) to find the cheapest options.
- Accommodation – FITs often choose accommodation by budget, usually seeking the convenience of one of the large OTAs, such as [Booking.com](#) and [Airbnb](#), but sometimes directly with a provider. If you are an accommodation provider, it is important that you have your own website and that you price your product competitively.

- Trips, tours and experiences – FITs to research and book their travel experiences in many ways:
Direct sales via local operators – Your website is your window to the world. Use [SEO \(search engine optimisation\)](#) and make your website look professional and functional to increase traffic from your target market.

OTAs – OTAs (online travel agents) are the fastest growing sales channel for tours, activities, experiences and attractions. There are many OTAs that specialise in trips/tours. Have a look at these two listings of OTAs that sell trips, tours and experiences, so you get a feel for the market: [95 Places To List Your Tours](#) and this list newly published in June 2021, [45 OTAs for Multi-Day Tours and Custom Trips](#).

European tour operators – Some European tour operators also offer short breaks in separate packages or as an add-on to a tour, to compete with OTAs. [Intrepid Travel](#) is one of them, emphasising the independence factor of their short tours. The operator also offers [Urban Adventures Day Tours](#) which are immersive, authentic experiences with local guides.

Tip:

- Make sure your website is appealing to FITs. They are resourceful travellers and spend many hours researching trips on the internet to make sure they will have the travel experience they seek. Download the CBI study [How to be a successful tourism company online](#) for information on building and/or improving your website.

What is the most interesting channel for you?

Your own website, OTAs and European tour operators are all important channels for you to consider.

Tips:

- Make sure that you can take direct enquiries on your website and, if you are able, direct bookings.
- To find out more about working with OTAs, see the CBI's [tips for organising your tourism services export to Europe](#), particularly the tip on [how to drive bookings with OTAs](#).
- See the CBI's [doing business with European tourism buyers](#) for tips on working with European tour operators and specialist operators, as well as the CBI's report on [finding buyers in the European tourism market](#).

4. What is the competition like in the FIT market?

Which countries are you competing with?

The COVID-19 pandemic has prevented travel from Europe to much of the rest of the world in the short term. When long-haul travel resumes, favoured destinations for FITs are likely to be to more remote and less populated destinations, with a focus on outdoor activities.

Local tour operators targeting FITs must work towards devising strategies to attract them. Authenticity and unique experiences continue to be important to this market. It is also important to state clearly what health and safety precautions are in place to keep them safe and reassure them about cleanliness and hygiene protocols.

Destinations that appeal to FITs can be found in many countries, and developing countries are home to some of the best. Therefore, it is a competitive sector. For many FITs, hard-to-reach and remote destinations makes them even more appealing. FITs do much of their research online, consulting detailed blogs like [Where to Go](#), which helps inform their choice.

Destinations in any of the following countries can be considered as competing destinations for FITs, depending on their motivation to travel and budget:

- Argentina
- Costa Rica
- India
- South Africa
- Thailand
- Vietnam

Argentina

Argentina has become a popular destination with European FIT travellers. Argentina is a large country, so most visitors follow a pattern of visiting Iguazu Falls in the north or going south to Patagonia. Cross-border travel to Bolivia and Chile is also common for European FITs travelling to Argentina. Although Argentina is a good value destination, transportation costs can be expensive because of the long distances.

Costa Rica

Costa Rica has an impressive reputation as an easy country to travel independently. It is also one of the world's best-known destinations for operating under sustainable tourism principles and has developed its own [Certification for Sustainable Tourism \(CST\)](#) scheme for tourism providers.

FITs can take part in many different adventures and activities, from visiting active volcanoes, jungles and forests, to experiencing wildlife, birding and other activities, all between two major coastlines. You can read more about independent travel in Costa Rica in travel magazine [Wanderlust's selection of itineraries](#) for exploring the country. Buses are the best way of travelling around Costa Rica, where they are plentiful and cheap, while air travel is less reliable due to weather affecting flying conditions.

India

India is a classic destination for young FIT backpackers, who take extended trips or volunteer with local projects or local communities. It is a good value destination for young travellers that has an exceptionally broad range of tourism products, as described [in this Tripsavvy guide to the 15 best destinations for backpacking in India](#). Domestic air travel in India is widespread, competitive and growing. Long-distance motorcycling has become a popular mode of transport for FITs. Train travel is an extremely common form of travel in India, particularly for long, overnight journeys.

South Africa

South Africa is the second top African destination in tourist arrivals, after Morocco. Many daily direct flights link European cities, including London and Frankfurt, to Johannesburg, Durban and Cape Town, and several low-cost airlines fly between domestic locations. South Africa has a very strong reputation as a good adventure destination for mid-budget and wealthy FITs. An outstanding range of tourism options including safaris and wine tourism in the country, as well as spectacular coastlines for wildlife watching and self-drive adventures.

Thailand

Thailand has long been a popular destination among FITs, one of the world's leading destinations in tourist arrivals. The north and south of the country offer completely different immersive experiences, which is very appealing to FITs. Jungles, mountains and small communities in the north characterise a more challenging and authentic travelling environment. In the south, tropical beaches and islands dominate tourism.

It is relatively easy to get around Thailand on affordable domestic flights mostly originating in Bangkok. The local bus network is also extensive and reliable, but train travel is also an option for scenic travel.

Vietnam

Vietnam is one of Asia's emerging tourist destinations, rapidly growing in popularity. It has a less developed tourist infrastructure than neighbouring Thailand, which is appealing to FIT that prefer a more challenging destination. Vietnam has three distinct regions — north, central and south — each with distinct attractions and varying climates. Buses are a common way of travelling long distances, but several domestic low-cost airlines offer options too.

It is important that you consider other competing destinations for FITs. Lonely Planet, one of the world's best-

selling guidebooks and regularly used by FITs, publishes an annual Best in Travel list based on opinions from travel writers, editors and social media influencers. For 2021, as a result of the pandemic and changing travel priorities, the publisher has recognised places demonstrating commitment to sustainability, community and diversity.

Table 3: Lonely Planet’s Best in Travel 2021

Top in Sustainability	Top in Community Tourism	Top in Diversity
Wildlife in Rwanda	Community Accommodation in Kazakhstan	Most Accessible Destination, Costa Rica
Islands in Palau	Community Revitalization in Medellin, Colombia	Most Welcoming Destination, Jordan
Sustainable Accommodation in Namibia	Community Trekking in Ethiopia	Under-Explored History, Gullah Islands, USA
Sustainable Emerging Destination, Antigua and Barbuda	Community Cafes in Cambodia	Indigenous Food, Hiakai, New Zealand

Source: Lonely Planet

Which companies are you competing with?

Europe has been badly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and although Europeans are keen to travel again, they will need strong and encouraging reassurance. To stay ahead of the competition, you must advise them of the measures you are taking to keep them safe when they use your services. To do this, it is essential that you include a prominent link and/or message on the homepage of your website and you should list all the measures you are taking to keep them safe.

European tour operators already feature very detailed information about how they will keep their customers safe and you should research how they are communicating with their customers. For instance:

- [Explore](#) (UK) includes links to its COVID-19 policies online under the heading ‘Your wellbeing comes first’.
- [TUI](#) (global) uses the website’s top navigation for its ‘COVID hub’, which provides all the information customers need to make their holiday decisions.
- OTAs are also very strong on their messages to keep customers safe. . [Airbnb](#) provides a direct link to detailed safety procedures under its homepage message ‘Get the latest on our COVID-19 response’.

FITs looking for authentic experiences will also be looking for local operators. See below a list of examples of local businesses providing services for FITs in sought-after destinations.

Companies in Argentina

[Say Hueque](#) has been offering sustainable and immersive tours in Argentina and Chile for independent travellers

for 20 years. A member of ATTA (Adventure Travel Trade Association) and Sustainable Travel International, Say Hueque offers tours in English and Spanish to Buenos Aires, Iguazu Falls, Perito Moreno Glacier, Patagonia, wine tasting and horseback riding. International guidebooks, like Lonely Planet and Routard, highly recommend them.

Say Hueque operates under sustainable principles and works closely with local communities. Its trips are 'plastic-free' and it aims to provide a more sustainable, responsible and meaningful way of exploring Argentina and Chile. It provides its COVID-19 advice in a prominent banner at the top of the homepage.

[Argentina On The Go](#) organises tailor-made trips throughout Argentina for independent travellers. It provides a wide range of helpful information on its website in its blog section, including [How to budget for travelling around Argentina](#). COVID-19 updates can be accessed on the homepage. It is a member of ATTA and features partners and customer recommendations prominently. The website is well designed and easy to use, which makes it very appealing to FITs.

Companies in Costa Rica

[Native's Way](#) specialises in tailor-made packages, day tours and transportation in Costa Rica. It targets a wide range of independent travellers who are adventurers, romantics, wildlife watchers or wellness tourists. It includes several destinations and trips on its website, which makes good use of inspirational images. It displays its COVID-19 link on the homepage, along with entry requirements and its cancellation policy. This is a good way to reassure inbound FITs.

The operator was awarded the 2020 Travelers' Choice Award by Tripadvisor and its website is available in French, English and Spanish.

[Playa Nicuesa Rainforest Lodge](#) offers accommodation, guided and self-guided hikes and birding outings in the coastal rainforest. The lodge also offers packages of 3-7 nights in cabins or guest houses, including guided activities and self-guided hiking, kayaking, paddle boarding, snorkelling and fishing. The operator has been awarded the 2021 Travelers' Choice Award by Tripadvisor and is also a platinum member of the OTA sustainable certification scheme, [GreenLeaders](#).

It also has a 5-leaf rating certification for sustainable tourism from the Costa Rican Tourist Board, a highly regarded countrywide scheme.

Companies in India

Many local tour companies in India specialise in independent travel. [Pioneer Holidays](#) offers best price guarantees, professional guides and customer support 24/7, including multiple tours focused on northern India, Delhi, Agra and Goa — all top destinations for FITs. Their website is professional with several customer videos and testimonials and a Tripadvisor banner displaying its five-star rating and recent positive reviews.

[Reality Tours & Travel](#) is an award-winning responsible local operator that offers authentic experiences around Delhi, Mumbai, Kerala and Rajasthan. An 80% share of its profits are fed back into the local communities through its NGO, Reality Gives. They also use guides from local communities and support community educational programmes. Established in 2006, the operator has received many awards for socially responsible tourism and clearly displays its commitment to sustainable tourism.

Figure 2: Our Ethics

Our Ethics



See the real India! Our tours take you on authentic experiences around Delhi, Mumbai, Kerala, Rajasthan and more



Our profits go back to the community through our NGO [Reality Gives](#)



Our expert guides come from the communities we work in based in Dharavi (Mumbai) and Sanjay Colony (New Delhi)



Our work supports Reality Gives' educational programs to help community members reach their potential.

Source: Reality Tours & Travel

The operator has introduced a detailed list of frequently asked questions (FAQs) about its response to COVID-19, which is easy to find.

Companies in South Africa

Based in Cape Town, [African Story](#) offers a daily wine tour of South Africa's leading wine estates in Stellenbosch, Franschhoek and Paarl. It also offers customised, bespoke wine tours, corporate tours and team building tours, including wine and cheese tastings and tours accompanied by professional guides. Its website is simple: one page with easy links to each section. It features its Tripadvisor awards and membership as a Cape Town Tourism Member prominently, which generates trust.

[MoAfrika Tours](#) offers tours including safaris, township tours and tours outside of South Africa. Tourists can use online booking, including by WhatsApp. It also sells accommodation to individual travellers. Its COVID-19 information can be accessed through a link at the top of the homepage and contains detailed information for visitors. The website features good images and an inspirational video.

A recipient of the Tripadvisor Travelers' Choice Award in 2020, MoAfrika Tours features a link to testimonials on the homepage along with prominent endorsements from leading travel publications.

Companies in Thailand

[Chiang Mai Street Food Tours](#) offers guided tours of Chiang Mai, giving tourists a chance to learn about street food at markets, food stalls and local restaurants. FITs can sample the local cuisine and learn basic Thai along the way. Tours are either group tours or can be arranged privately.

[Untouched Thailand](#) offers several tours including day tours and multiday trips. The website is arranged so there are many ways to find tours, such as Popular Tours, Recommended Tours and Off the Beaten Path. Its homepage displays Tripadvisor recommendations, a link to its Google reviews, and its TAT (Thailand's tourist board) licence prominently. The operator makes good use of marketing videos.

Companies in Vietnam

[Vietnam Adventure Tours](#) offers tours targeting the FIT market, which can be customised and priced down to match an identical tour from another operator. The operator features its partner links along with Tripadvisor and Viator awards, and its membership of the Vietnam Tourist Board. Some of the icons are rather small, however; you should make sure that icons you use are large enough to read. There is a wide range of tours and flexible payment terms, which help to attract FITs.

[Hanoi Backstreet Tours](#) is a family-operated motorbike tour company. Travellers ride pillion on vintage Minsk

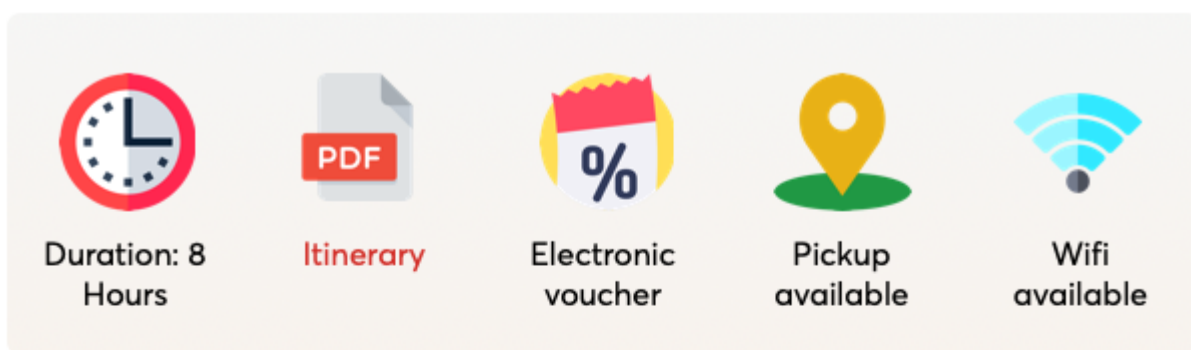
motorcycles through the backstreets and alleys of Hanoi. The website makes good use of inspirational videos to attract customers. The operator donates a portion of profits to the October Foundation, an NGO that supports local communities, children and families in remote villages.

Which products are you competing with?














Trips and experiences on the broader adventure tourism market are your biggest competitors. There is a huge range of possible trips, tours, activities and experiences on the market for FITs. It is important that you conduct a thorough competitor analysis in your destination, so you can learn about what else is available for travellers to choose from and to learn from ideas which you could adapt for your own business.

FITs often travel on a tight budget. To help them choose your tour, make sure you tell them exactly what is included. Some tour operators use graphics to convey a strong message, like the example below:

Figure 3: What's included



What's included

-  **Free Onboard Uncapped WiFi**
-  Transfer in a comfortable, air-conditioned vehicle
-  Pickup in Johannesburg
-  Informal Settlement walk in shanty town
-  Entrance to Hector Peterson Museum and Regina Mundi Church
-  Vilakazi Street
-  View of Mandela house in Soweto
-  View Desmond Tutu House and Winnie Mandela House
-  Visit to an information settlement
-  View the Soweto cooling towers
-  View the Baragwaneth Hospital
-  Lunch at traditional Restaurant in Soweto
-  Entrance into Apartheid museum

Tips:

- Analyse your own business carefully and honestly, examining its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. This is known as a SWOT analysis, which is an important planning tool to develop new ideas and activities for your business. Read [this blog post on what is a SWOT analysis and how to do it right](#), for more tips.
- To learn more about the adventure market, consult the CBI report on entering the European Market for adventure tourism.

5. What are the prices for FIT products on the European market?

The table below shows the wide range of prices for FIT travel products available on the European market. Research was conducted through various local tour operator websites in July 2021. For more information about pricing, read the CBI report on [doing business with European tourism buyers](#), especially the section on [setting a fair price for your services](#).

Table 4: Sample prices of travel products for the FIT market

Tour	Country	Duration	Guide Price Per Person €
<i>Day/Part-day trip</i>			
Dharavi Slum Tour & Cooking Experience	India	3 hours	23
Buenos Aires Bike Tour	Argentina	4 hours	30
Morning Old City Tour of Chiang Mai	Thailand	3.5 hours	33
Old and New Delhi Guide Tour	India	8 hours	34
Cu Chi Tunnels and Mekong Delta	Vietnam	Full Day	44
Bollywood Tour	India	5.5 hours	57
Story of Wine	South Africa	Day	65
Hanoi Food, Culture, Sight and Fun on a Vintage Motorbike	Vietnam	Full Day	72
Sticky Waterfalls and Doi Suthep Temple	Thailand	Full Day	74

Ultimate Johannesburg Tour	South Africa	8 hours	79
Soweto and Johannesburg Apartheid Musuem	South Africa	6-8 hours	80
Chaing Mai Canyon Trails, Bamboo Rafting and Doi Suthep	Thailand	Full Day	92
Taj Mahal and Fatehpur Sikhri by train	India	Full Day	101
Rincon de la Vieja Volcano National Park	Costa Rica	Full Day	101
Guacheipelin Adventure Combo	Costa Rica	Full Day	114
Gaucha Ranch Trip to San Antonio de Areco	Argentina	9 hours	136
<i>Short Trip (2-5 days)</i>			
Mendoza, Mountains and Wine	Argentina	3 days	126
Delhi, Agra, Jaipur and Ranthambore	India	5 days	215
Untouched Countryside Homestay	Thailand	2 days	223
Discovery Vietnam	Vietnam	5 days	295
Kruger Park Treehouse Safari	South Africa	3 days	612
Playa Nicuesa Rainforest Lodge	Costa Rica	3 nights	682

Source: Acorn Tourism Consulting

This study was carried out on behalf of CBI by [Acorn Tourism Consulting Limited](#).

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