

SUSTAINABILITY REPORT OF DESTINATION JERUZALEM SLOVENIA 2023-2025





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1. Executive Summary

Destination Jeruzalem Slovenia has made a visible transition over the last three years from a promotion-oriented destination towards a more systematic, data-driven model of sustainable tourism management. The key highlights of the 2023-2025 period include growth in tourism visitation, strengthened international recognition, development of the Dispersed Hotel Jeruzalem Slovenia, use of the Territorial Collective Brand Jeruzalem Slovenia as a tool for quality and local added value, and the beginning of a new management period for Ormož Castle as the central cultural and tourism point of the destination.

At destination level, 2025 brought 9,360 tourist arrivals and 17,358 overnight stays. Compared with 2024, this represents approximately 4% growth in both arrivals and overnight stays. The visitor structure shows a clear international orientation: foreign guests accounted for 60.29% of arrivals and 65.89% of overnight stays. These data confirm that the destination is no longer positioned merely as a local-regional excursion point, but is gradually establishing itself as a recognisable rural, wine and cultural destination for foreign markets.

An important indicator of management quality is also the visitation of TIC Ormož. In 2025, TIC Ormož welcomed 7,338 visitors, which is 8.9% more than in 2024 and 12.5% more than in 2023. The increase in visitation at the end of the year was particularly pronounced and was linked to the opening of Ormož Castle and the Severolandija event. TIC is therefore not only an information point, but an important measuring and interpretation centre of the destination: it records visitors daily by country of origin, directs them to local providers, sells certified products and strengthens the marketing of local stories.

Indicator	2023	2024	2025
Tourist arrivals - Municipality of Ormož	8,842	8,861	9,201
Overnight stays - Municipality of Ormož	15,658	16,459	16,775
Tourist arrivals - Destination JS	/	8,980	9,360
Overnight stays - Destination JS	/	16,741	17,358
Visits to TIC Ormož	6,524	6,739	7,338
Average length of stay - DJS	1.78 days	1.86 days	1.85 days
Visits to Ormož Castle (Nov.-Dec.)	/	/	2,424

Table 1: Selected sustainability and economic indicators of Destination Jeruzalem Slovenia, 2023-2025

2. Methodology and Data Sources

The report has been prepared on the basis of three groups of sources. The first group consists of internal and publicly prepared documents of the destination management organisation, particularly the Annual Business Report of the Public Institute for Tourism, Culture and Sport of the Municipality of Ormož for 2025. The second group consists of dedicated reviews of the visitation of TIC Ormož and the statistics of arrivals and overnight stays in the years 2023-2025. The third group consists of publicly available data and

announcements on international awards, especially the Green Destinations Top 100 Story Awards at ITB Berlin 2025.

Official SURS data on arrivals and overnight stays are used in the interpretation of economic indicators, together with internal TIC Ormož data on the daily recording of visitors. The report distinguishes between data for the Municipality of Ormož and data for the wider Destination Jeruzalem Slovenia. For destination-level data, the methodological note should be taken into account that the destination statistics in the attached report are based on the municipalities of Ormož and Sveti Tomaž, while the Municipality of Središče ob Dravi did not yet have accommodation capacities during the observed period.

Sustainability achievements are not treated only as environmental measures, but as an interconnection of three pillars: the environment, the local economy and socio-cultural resilience. Therefore, the report also addresses the development of local supply chains, the role of the Territorial Collective Brand Jeruzalem Slovenia, training, events, revitalisation of cultural heritage, accessibility of public information and cooperation with local providers. This approach is aligned with the logic of Green Destinations and the Green Scheme of Slovenian Tourism, which understand sustainability as an integrated destination management system.

Destination management organisation	Public Institute for Tourism, Culture and Sport of the Municipality of Ormož
Destination area	Municipalities of Ormož, Središče ob Dravi and Sveti Tomaž
Primary statistical sources	SURS, TIC Ormož records, business reports of JZ TKŠ Ormož
Reporting period	2023, 2024 and 2025
Purpose of the report	Monitoring of sustainability achievements, preparation for Slovenia Green/Green Destinations, support for decision-making

Table 2: Methodological framework of the report

3. Governance and Strategic Framework

Destination management is based on the connection of three municipalities, the public institute, tourism providers, associations and other local development stakeholders. In the Annual Report of JZ TKŠ Ormož, the institute's tasks include visitor information, data collection for information purposes, identifying visitor opinions, development of tourism products, marketing of the offer, maintenance of tourism infrastructure, implementation of events, awareness-raising among the local population, professional assistance to programme providers and training of tourism professionals. This shows that the institute has a formal basis for the development of destination management, not only for promotion.



In 2025, management was strongly focused on the operational integration of the tourism offer of the three municipalities, development of receptive tourism activities, further implementation of destination brands, improvement of information infrastructure and expansion of regional cooperation. Particularly important is the development of online and booking support for the Dispersed Hotel Jerusalem Slovenia, as it connects small accommodation providers into a joint, more competitive and sustainable operating model.

The monitoring system is based on the regular collection of data: arrivals and overnight stays, TIC visitation, visitor structure by country, average length of stay, visitation of facilities, effects of events and implementation of projects. These data are used to prepare annual work programmes, guide promotion, assess the effectiveness of events and make decisions on product development. From a sustainability perspective, it is important that data are not collected merely for reporting, but are used to adapt the offer to seasonality, select target markets and design new experiences.

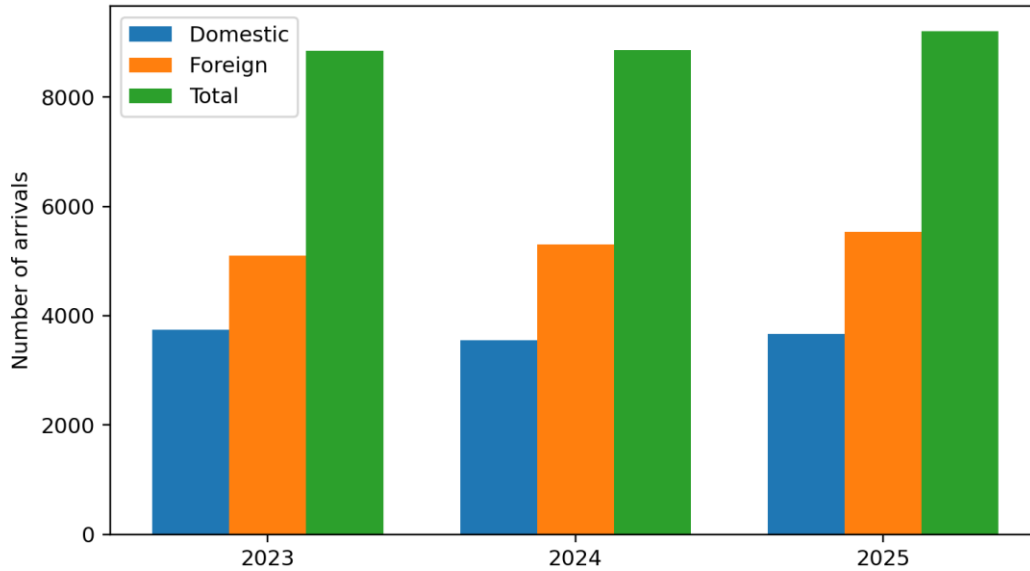
4. Economic Impacts of Tourism

The economic impacts of tourism in the period 2023-2025 are visible primarily in stable growth in arrivals, an increase in overnight stays and a strengthening share of foreign guests. In the Municipality of Ormož, 8,842 arrivals were recorded in 2023, 8,861 in 2024 and 9,201 in 2025. Growth between 2024 and 2025 amounted to 3.8%. Particularly important is the growth in foreign arrivals: from 5,093 in 2023 to 5,532 in 2025. This means that the destination is increasingly opening up to international markets and reducing dependence on domestic demand.

Overnight stays in the Municipality of Ormož increased from 15,658 in 2023 to 16,775 in 2025. The growth in overnight stays is important because it shows that visitation is not strengthening only in the form of day trips, but also in the form of longer stays. Nevertheless, the average length of stay remains relatively short: at destination level, it reached 1.85 days in 2025. This is an opportunity for the development of multi-day products that would connect wine, gastronomy, castles, cycling, nature and local events.

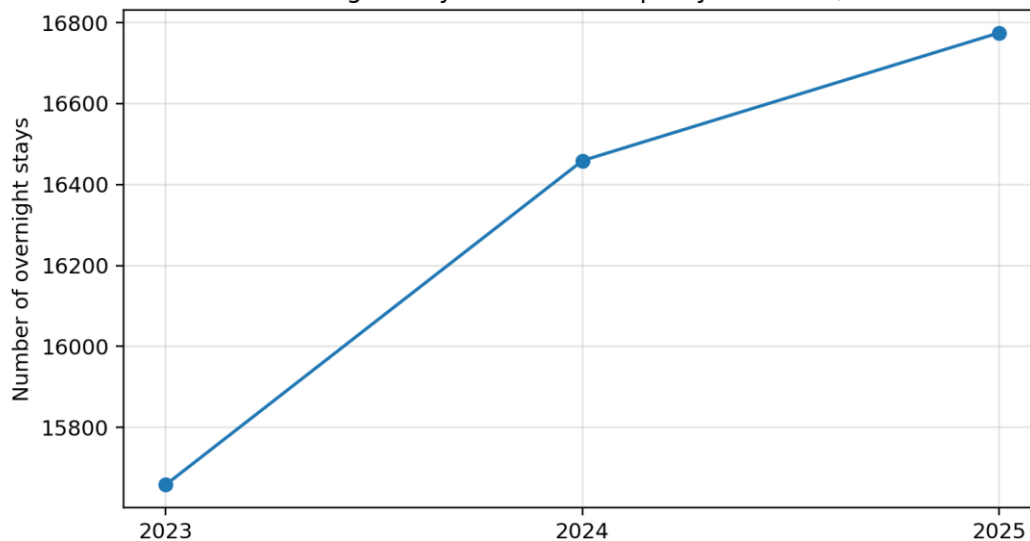


Tourist Arrivals in the Municipality of Ormož, 2023-2025



Graph 1: Tourist arrivals in the Municipality of Ormož, 2023-2025

Tourist Overnight Stays in the Municipality of Ormož, 2023-2025



Graph 2: Tourist overnight stays in the Municipality of Ormož, 2023-2025

At the level of the entire destination, 9,360 arrivals and 17,358 overnight stays were recorded in 2025. The data confirm that the Municipality of Ormož is the main tourism centre of the destination, while Sveti



Tomaž provides an important quality complement, especially in terms of longer stays. In the Municipality of Sveti Tomaž, the average length of stay in 2025 was 3.67 days, which is higher than in the Municipality of Ormož and above the destination average. This indicates potential for the development of calmer, slower and more boutique forms of accommodation.

5. TIC, Wine Shop and Visitor Information Support

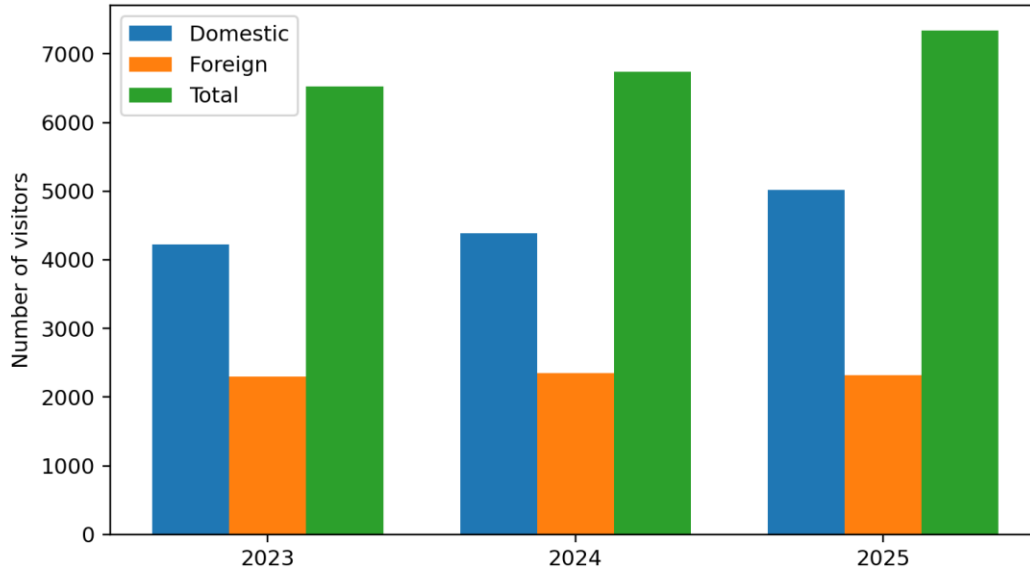
TIC Ormož is one of the key operational points of sustainable destination management. Its role is broader than providing information: it operates as an entry point to the destination, as a sales and promotional space for local products, as the check-in point for Hostel Ormož and as a daily system for monitoring visitation by number of visitors and country of origin. In 2025, TIC operated in the premises of Ormož Castle, which gave it greater visibility and a stronger connection with the central cultural attraction.

In 2025, TIC Ormož welcomed 7,338 persons. Of these, 5,015 were domestic visitors, or 68.34%, and 2,323 were foreign visitors, or 31.66%. The highest visitation was recorded in May (1,042), August (935) and November (765). The rise in November and December visitation is directly connected with the opening of Ormož Castle and Severolandija, showing that well-designed events and the activation of heritage can strongly influence the distribution of visits outside the traditional summer season.

Among foreign visitors to TIC, guests from Germany and Austria predominate, together representing 40.59% of all foreign visitors. At the same time, it is important to note that the structure of foreign visitors is diversifying: in 2025, TIC welcomed guests from 32 countries, including from North America, Asia and Australia. This confirms that digital promotion, media exposure, events and the international recognition of the destination influence the expansion of market reach.



Visits to TIC Ormož, 2023-2025



Graph 3: Visits to TIC Ormož, 2023-2025

6. Cultural Heritage and Ormož Castle

The greatest content-related shift in 2025 is connected with the opening and the beginning of the new management of Ormož Castle. The castle is not only a new tourist point, but a central instrument for the revitalisation of cultural heritage. With this, part of the tourist flow shifted from excursion and seasonal activities towards a year-round cultural offer. In the first two months of operation, November and December 2025, the castle was visited by 2,424 persons, of whom 2,007 visited in November. At the opening on 7 November, 1,450 persons were recorded.

Such visitation in the initial phase indicates strong local and regional interest in the reopened heritage infrastructure. The castle enables the development of guided tours, interpretation programmes, exhibitions, cultural events and school content. From a sustainability perspective, it is especially important that this is the use of existing cultural infrastructure and therefore the development of tourism that is not based on new spatial construction, but on the activation of existing cultural capital.

Visits to Ormož Castle in November 2025	2,007 persons
Visits at the opening on 7 November 2025	1,450 persons
Visits in December 2025	417 persons
Total November-December 2025	2,424 visitors



Most frequent visitors

Slovenia, Netherlands, Austria, Croatia,
Czech Republic

Table 3: First visitation results of Ormož Castle after its opening in 2025

Ormož Castle also has a social function. It enables new working and cooperation environments for local guides, cultural performers, associations, craftspeople and providers of local products. In combination with TIC, the wine shop and events, it can become the destination’s management centre, directing visitors onwards to the wine-growing hills, farms, Središče ob Dravi, Sveti Tomaž and other parts of the destination.

7. Environmental Sustainability and Responsible Management

Environmental sustainability in the destination in the period 2023-2025 is reflected primarily in the transition from individual measures towards a more systematic guidance of providers. The reports emphasise provider education on sustainable practices such as the use of local and organic resources, waste reduction and energy efficiency. This is important because the destination is dispersed and composed of smaller providers, where environmental impacts are reduced mainly through small but recurring measures in everyday operations.

The reduction of single-use plastic in the destination is implemented through several channels: by raising awareness among providers, through event guidelines, by promoting drinking tap water and by using high-quality local products that reduce dependence on standardised, transport-intensive supply. At event level, sustainability is reflected in guidance towards the repeated use of equipment, more rational ordering of materials and better separation of waste. It is important that environmental measures are not presented as a restriction, but as part of a high-quality and responsible tourism experience.

The Territorial Collective Brand Jeruzalem Slovenia plays a special role. The TCB functions as a local quality system that promotes short supply chains, recognition of local products, crafts, local gastronomy and responsible use of resources. In TIC, visitors can access products that have obtained the quality certificate of the Territorial Collective Brand Jeruzalem Slovenia, which means that sustainability criteria are connected with actual sales and promotion of the local economy. In this way, the destination connects environmental objectives with economic effects for local providers.

Examples of environmental measures in the period 2023-2025

- promotion of drinking tap water and reduction of single-use plastic bottles among providers and at events;
- guidance of providers towards separate waste collection, reduction of packaging and rational ordering of materials;



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- connection of local products in TIC and the wine shop, thereby strengthening local purchasing and reducing dependence on distant supply chains;
- education and communication on energy efficiency, waste reduction and sustainable practices;
- transfer of sustainability standards into events, promotional materials and destination interpretation.

8. Sustainable Mobility and Accessibility

Sustainable mobility is important for Destination Jeruzalem Slovenia for two reasons. First, the destination is geographically dispersed, so visitors need to be guided between different points in a way that does not create excessive traffic pressure. Second, the destination has relatively good railway accessibility, which can be better integrated into tourism communication. There are nine railway stations and stops in the destination area, representing an important advantage for the sustainable arrival of visitors.

In the period 2023-2025, strategic orientations and reports highlighted the development and promotion of cycling and walking routes, connection with public transport and introduction of e-mobility. These measures are important for reducing the pressure of private car traffic while at the same time increasing the quality of the experience. Cycling, hiking, visits to local providers and slower exploration of the landscape are aligned with the identity of the destination: vineyards, plains, rivers and local communities.

In 2025, the event Day for Sustainable Mobility - Day for the Future was also implemented, showing that the destination treats mobility as a communication and awareness-raising topic as well. Future reporting could usefully be upgraded by measuring the share of visitors who arrive in the destination by public transport, bicycle or organised transport, and by recording the use of e-bikes and other forms of soft mobility.

9. Socio-cultural Impacts and Local Community

Socio-cultural sustainability of the destination is reflected primarily in the way tourism strengthens local identity and quality of life. The destination does not develop isolated tourism products, but connects wine, gastronomy, cultural heritage, crafts, events, sport and local associations. This approach enables tourism not to be a separate sector, but part of wider local development.

Events are one of the strongest channels for involving the local community. In 2025, events were organised such as Fašenk in Ormož, the Wine Festival of Destination Jeruzalem Slovenia, the Tour of Slovenia cycling race, Ormož Summer, Day for Sustainable Mobility, Martinovanje, Severolandija, New Year's Eve celebration and the Ormož cultural subscription series. These are events that generate visits, but also



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have an important social effect: they involve associations, providers, volunteers, cultural performers, sports organisations and local residents.

Preserving intangible heritage and local stories is especially important. Ormož Castle, the wine shop, TIC, TCB and guided gastronomic experiences together shape the story of the destination, which does not depend on mass tourism but on authenticity. In this sense, it is also a sustainability achievement that the destination builds visibility on local resources and cooperation, not on standardised tourism content.

Key socio-cultural carriers	Ormož Castle, TIC, wine shop, associations, local providers, cultural performers
Events 2025	Fašenk, Wine Festival DJS, Tour of Slovenia, Ormož Summer, Martinovanje, Severolandija, New Year's Eve celebration
Effects	greater visibility, community involvement, dispersion of visits, promotion of local products and heritage

Table 4: Socio-cultural impacts of selected activities

10. Promotion, Certification and International Recognition

In the period 2023-2025, the destination strengthened its visibility through several layers of promotion: digital presence, printed publications, fairs, public relations, events and international recognition. The Annual Report states that in 2025 a sales and promotional catalogue of the tourism offer was printed in 20,000 copies, on 32 pages, in 8 languages. This is an important indicator of the professionalisation of promotion and orientation towards foreign markets.

An international breakthrough is represented by the Green Destinations Top 100 Story Awards at ITB Berlin 2025, where Jeruzalem Slovenia achieved first place in the Destination Management category. The awarded story is connected with the model of the Dispersed Hotel Jeruzalem Slovenia, which brings together local accommodation providers, destination management, local quality and the sustainability logic of dispersed accommodation. This is an important recognition because it confirms that the destination was not assessed only by promotional attractiveness, but by management innovation.

The Dispersed Hotel is particularly relevant for a rural destination, as it enables growth in accommodation capacities without concentrated hotel construction. The model supports local owners, distributes the benefits of tourism, increases the occupancy of existing facilities and offers visitors a more direct experience of the local area. When connected with the Territorial Collective Brand Jeruzalem Slovenia, local breakfast, TIC, the wine shop and guided experiences, it becomes an example of sustainable destination management that can also be transferred to other rural environments.



Promotional achievements and channels

- multilingual sales and promotional catalogue in 20,000 copies;
- presentations at domestic and foreign fairs and regional connection within Styria;
- weekends and open days as a tool for connecting local providers;
- active public relations through local and regional media;
- first place at the Green Destinations Top 100 Story Awards 2025 in the Destination Management category.

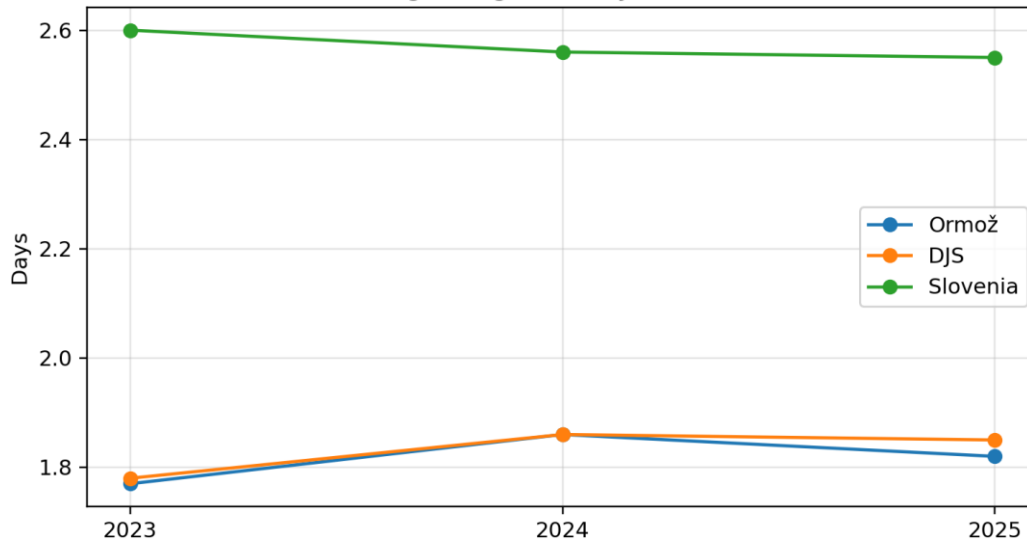
11. Indicators, Challenges and Priority Directions

The destination has established a good basis for monitoring sustainability indicators. The strongest part of the system is economic data, as arrivals and overnight stays are monitored on the basis of official SURS data, while TIC keeps a daily record of visitors by country of origin. The next development stage is the upgrading of environmental and social indicators: water and energy consumption among providers, quantities of waste at events, share of sustainable arrivals, resident satisfaction, accessibility of the offer and effects of certification.

A future challenge is also extending the average length of stay. The data show that in 2025 the destination had an average length of stay of 1.85 days, which is below the Slovenian average. This is not necessarily a weakness, as the destination is distinctly transit-oriented and dispersed, but it represents a development opportunity. Multi-day products that connect Ormož Castle, wine providers, cycling, gastronomy, Sveti Tomaž and Središče ob Dravi can contribute to greater economic benefits with the same or lower spatial burden.

For the period after 2025, four priority directions are proposed: first, upgrading the system for monitoring sustainability indicators into a unified annual report; second, further professionalisation of sustainable events; third, strengthening provider certification and development of the Territorial Collective Brand Jeruzalem Slovenia; fourth, more systematic promotion of arrival by public transport and sustainable forms of mobility within the destination.

Average Length of Stay, 2023-2025



Graph 4: Average length of stay compared with the national average

Suggested key KPIs for annual monitoring

- arrivals and overnight stays by municipality, market and month;
- average length of stay and seasonal distribution of visitation;
- visitation of TIC, Ormož Castle and key attractions;
- number of certified providers and products of the Territorial Collective Brand Jeruzalem Slovenia;
- water and energy consumption in public tourism facilities and among involved providers;
- quantity of waste and share of separately collected fractions at major events;
- share of visitors using train, bicycle, walking routes or organised transport;
- satisfaction of residents, visitors and providers.

12. Conclusion

Destination Jeruzalem Slovenia has proven in the period 2023-2025 that a smaller rural destination with limited resources can achieve a high level of recognition when development is based on local resources, cooperation and quality management. Growth in arrivals and overnight stays, increased TIC visitation, the opening of Ormož Castle, development of the Territorial Collective Brand, the Dispersed Hotel Jeruzalem Slovenia and international recognition at ITB Berlin 2025 together form a clear story of progress.



The greatest added value of the destination is not in mass tourism, but in the fact that tourism development is connected with local identity. Tourism supports the promotion of wines, crafts, gastronomy, cultural heritage, local events and smaller providers. This means that economic benefits are not limited to one facility or one carrier, but are dispersed throughout the area. Such a model is aligned with the principles of fair, green and resilient tourism.

For further development, it is crucial that the destination maintains data-based monitoring, upgrades environmental indicators and connects results even more closely with decision-making processes. The report for the period 2023-2025 is therefore not only a review of achievements, but a starting point for the next development step: an even more measurable, inclusive and sustainable Destination Jeruzalem Slovenia.

13. Sources and Evidence

- Annual Business Report of the Public Institute for Tourism, Culture and Sport of the Municipality of Ormož for 2025.
- Visitation of the Tourist Information Centre Ormož in 2025.
- Statistics of arrivals and overnight stays in 2023-2025 for Destination Jeruzalem Slovenia.
- Green Destinations: Green Destinations Top 100 Story Awards @ ITB Berlin 2025.
- Slovenian Tourist Board: Green Scheme of Slovenian Tourism and public announcements on Slovenia's sustainability achievements.