

SUSTAINABLE TOP 100 DESTINATION SUCCESS STORY

Águeda - Portugal

Águeda is a city that, like many other cities around the world, had a growing abandonment of its historical center. During the summer months this lack of people in the streets and public spaces, as well as in commerce, was greater, due to several factors such as the high heat that was felt in the streets, the lack of attractiveness / events that kept people in the attract visitors.

In this context the municipality promoted the implementation of an innovative project - an urban art installation - that allowed shading of the streets, but also its embellishment: The colorful umbrella project. Also the city developed a free and surprising animation program that gave life to the whole city - the AgitÁgueda Art Festival.

Today Águeda is recognized internationally as one of the most colorful cities in the world, its streets are visited by thousands of tourist who, from July to September, are amazed by the colorful "sky" of Águeda, the initiatives that take place in every street, at every corner, and the smile of the people that welcomes everyone! Last year the event was considered an eco-event due to the sustainable practices implemented. AgitÁgueda is held annually in July, with free admission, offers both residents and visitors a diverse program. Daily concerts, sports competitions, urban art, street entertainment, crafts, food and many other surprises are the main reasons that have attracted a number of tourists never seen before – an average of 20.000/day – reaching more than 500.000 in just 23 days. There is no other event boosting local and regional economy involving and benefiting the local community the same way as AgitÁgueda, as the invitation to participate and engage, both by residents and visitors, is always present, making it a live and interactive system.

Besides the national and international well known artists, a part of the artistic programme is also dedicated to local values, as we often witness to premières and shows created by local NGO, music schools, new bands, etc. Every year, Águeda offers a summer full of light, colour, creativity and imagination, combining environmental practices. The city streets are filled with thousands of colourful umbrellas and countless urban art installations transforming the streets into authentic open-air art galleries, with access for all. The Umbrella Sky began in 2011 as a part of AgitÁgueda. Since during summer the city streets are festooned with a canopy of colourful umbrellas, providing shade for both the people of the city and festival-goers, fighting climate change. The installation has developed a cult following around the world and been replicated in other cities, e.g. Lisbon to Hiroshima.

Alongside the artistic element, AgitÁgueda is also the moment for several sports and competitions to occur, as well as social activities, making Águeda the epicentre of the region.
- <https://www.agitagueda.com/>

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