

Excerpt from an article in the magazine Kroký (Steps) www.kroký.cz

Who came up with the idea to found a Christian travel agency and why?

It was my husband Jirka. After the war in former Yugoslavia different friends and Christians in Croatia turned to him, if he could find some Christian tourists from Czech for them. And Jirka saw an opportunity to take Czech and Slovak Christians to the sea for reasonable prices.

Why is your name Mesites?

Mesites is a Greek word and means agent (1Tim 2:5), which expresses exactly what I do.

How big is your agency and what exactly do you offer?

I am the only employee; I sublet 23 apartments in 8 villas in three places - Istria, Marušiči in Makarska and on the Pag island, which is connected with the land by a bridge. 7 villas are less than 100 m from the sea and one is 600 m far. All together I can place 125 people.

How is a Christian agency different from a non-Christian?

- 1) One difference is the attitude - my goal is **to serve** - to provide quality vacation and only then to make money.
- 2) Another is that we are **reliable**. In all these years it never happened, that the tourists would arrive at the villa and find it filled with people, who were ready to pay more than the Czechs. This will not happen to you with the Mesites Agency.
- 3) Another difference is our **prices**, which are a lot lower compared to other agencies. The prices are based on the fact, that I promise the owners of the villas, that I fill them for at least 90 days and our clients bring their own bed-clothes and clean the apartment before they leave. On the other hand we have apartments with bed-clothes included.
- 4) Our clients make the **down payment of 60 %** and pay the rest directly to the owners. With all other agencies (as far as I know), they pay the full price before they leave. Their clients arrive at their destination and if something is wrong, they have nowhere to complain. Our clients, however, if they find something wrong, they have the rest of the money with them and they can negotiate with the owner. In all the years it happened only about 7 times, that there was something wrong.
- 5) Another difference is, that **90 % of our clients are Christians** from different churches of all the different denominations.
- 6) And the last difference is that when somebody uses the Mesites Agency, they support our **mission in Croatia**, where we have been living since 1996, we founded a church there, where my husband serves as a pastor.

How many people use your agency?

Many go with the Mesites Agency every year, some every other year and there is always a percentage of those, who go for the first time. The amount grows year after year.

How do you let people know about your agency?

I have advertisements in Christian periodicals, also in Christian banner exchange system RYBKA (FISH) and last but not least we encourage our clients to recommend our services to their friends, which is the most effective kind of advertising. We also have a few "distributors," they are usually pastors, vicars or other spiritual leaders, to whom we send our posters 2 or 3 times a summer and they place them on the notice boards in their churches or spread them in other ways. They then have a 5% discount at the Mesites Agency.

6 reasons to choose the Mesites Agency

Do you think that your (possible, or any) success is in any way connected to the fact, that you are a Christian Agency and that your work includes supporting mission?

I think that we are successful. I see this in the amount of grateful e-mails I receive, when people return from their vacation. And also, the Croatian owners are glad they can work with us. We are more friends than business partners. We gained their trust and respect in those years. I think that the success is based on the fact that we do not only speak the gospel, but also live it. We try to be a good testimony in business and we run it according to biblical principles.

What is your personal attitude to traveling? Do you like it? Don't you think it is a waste of time?

Not that I would love traveling. With three kids it is no easy task. But it is definitely a good thing. Christians should learn about new cultures, they learn to be sensitive and respectful towards other nations. It broadens their hearts and horizons. And it motivates them to pray.

Our attitude to holiday and rest express "motto" that appear on our website www.mesites.cz

"Rest is the ALPHA and OMEGA of life."

"First work, then rest? Nonsense, first rest, then work!"

"Rest is not a reward for good work, it is its prerequisite."

"Rest is more than doing nothing."

"Rest is derived from the verb to rest from your work."

"If you have little rest, then stress will be your enemy."

"First day of the first man was a day of rest."

"If you postpone your vacation, it leads to compulsory rest."

"Inspiration and effectiveness has its roots in rest, not in increasing the pace."

"Efficiency and effectiveness is based on rest, not on greater effort."

"Quality rest is an art, which everyone can learn."

"Resting is not dawdling."

"The history of the human race started by resting."

Reporter: Míša Švecová