BRIDGE *of* MINDS

Zgharta-Ehden Tourism Destination Branding

Ajuntament de Barcelona

MedCités MedCities

MUNICIPALITY OF ZGHARTA-EHDEN
بلدية زغرتا-اهدن

Focus Groups Workshops

&

Visitors' Tourism Practices and Perception Survey

Submitted to

Zgharta-Ehden Municipality & MedCities

Content

Summary

This report combines the results of the mind mapping exercise conducted during the two focus group workshops with Zgharta-Ehden local community stakeholders done in July and August 2019, and the results of the field survey targeting the area visitors that was done between July and September 2019. The survey aimed to understand Zgharta-Ehden visitors' practices and their perception of the area image. The results of the workshops are presented under the form of word cloud showing the different assets, resources, and images that could be used in the territorial branding process. As for the survey, the results are presented in statistical figures and analyzed to be used as market information for the branding process. The local community workshops as well as the survey results showed a common perception about the territorial identity of Zgharta-Ehden and its tourism image that could be summarized in two main dimensions cultural and natural. These two dimensions are common for all tourism destinations in rural areas of Lebanon. In addition to these two generic images, the workshops and survey showed that Zgharta-Ehden territorial branding can be differentiated based on the unique history of two geographically distant units Zgharta and Ehden, but who have one community, one history, and diverse stories to tell and experiences to provide.

I. <u>Introduction</u>

This report presents the results of the mind mapping exercise conducted during the training workshop on Wednesday 10 July 2019 and the Focus Groups organized for Zgharta-Ehden local community members on Monday 12 August and Monday 19 Augsut 2019 in Ehden. It also presents the results of the survey conducted in the framework of a tourism development project implemented by the Municipality of Zgharta-Ehden and funded by the Municipality of Barcelona and MedCities. The survey aims to understand the rural tourism practices and perceptions of Zagharta-Ehden visitors.

The market information collected through this survey will be used in the process of building a tourism destination brand for the area. Moreover, it will help decision makers and relevant stakeholders to understand the market demand and trends and to develop and manage the tourism infrastructure, services and activities in a more sustainable way.

The results of the five main questions used to identify the different perceptions of Zgharta-Ehden touristic image are presented in the form of word clouds showing the importance of the most repeated answers by the local community members who participated in the training and focus group sessions. These word clouds will help in the identification of a territorial brand and its different visual elements.

II. <u>Focus group results</u>

The focus group were conducted using the mind mapping technique in order to create a visual image "Word Cloud" that shows the main characteristics, assets, images and perceptions, identified by Zgharta-Ehden stakeholders. To do so, five questions were asked to the focus groups and yielded the following results:

Question 1: Name Three Reasons to visit Zgharta–Ehden

Question 2: Identify 3 Colors you can relate to Zgharta-Ehden?

Blue Sky
Stone/rock
Red tiles roofs
Spring flowers
Violet iris Blue Yellow
Rainbow
Green olive
Green nature
White snow
Sunset colors Orange Purple
Autumn colors

Question 3: List three Words Associated to Zgharta - Ehden

Transhumance
Kebbeh
History Moon
Midane Heritage
Church
Local cuisine
Mountain Festivals
Hospitality Climate Forest/horsh
Welcome
Saydet El Hosn
Nature

Question 4: Tell us about three Scenes you relate to Zgharta Ehden?

Nabaa Mar Sarkis
Clouds/Mist
Zgharta-Ehden road   Saydet Zgharta
Water flow   Midane
Old houses

Saydet El Hosn

Ehden moon   Merdashiyeh
Old town Zgharta
Coast/sea view
Sunset   Youssef Karam statue
Jorn el Kebbeh
Bakoufa region

Horsh Ehden
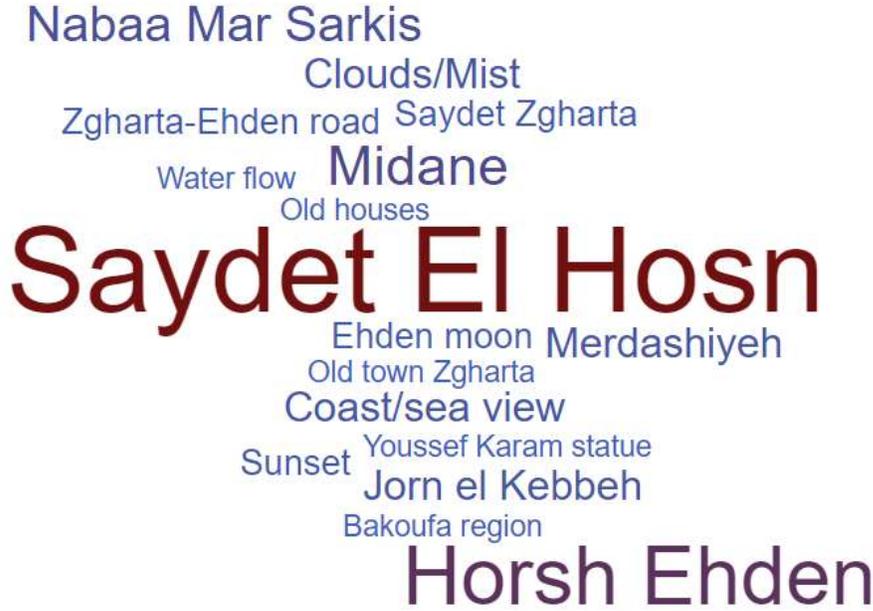
Question 5: List one Song it connects you to Zgharta–Ehden?

نحن و القمر جيران	6
سهار بعد سهار	1
يا قمر إهدن لا تنام	1
ليل وغربية وأيلول	1
حبيتك بالصيف	1
غابت الشمس	1
نسم علينا الهوا	1
لحن سيرني قديم	1
ليل ورعد وبرد وريح	1
لبنان يا قطعة سما	1
بحبك يا لبنان	1

III. Survey methodology

The survey questionnaire was elaborated based on the review of different social sciences and tourism market research methodologies. It included 34 main questions distributed as follow:

1. Socio-economic profile of the sample (8 questions)

2. Visit patterns (11 questions)

3. Tourism services (4 questions)

4. Visitors' interests and activities (4 questions)

5. Visitor' evaluation (4 questions)

6. Perceived image (3 questions)

Data collection was done during the period of July-August-September 2019 using:

- An administered questionnaire filled by local volunteers targeting 200 visitors in different locations in Zgharta-Ehden (attractions, restaurants, hotels, resorts). Respondents were selected randomly in different locations and at different days in order to ensure a high representativeness of the sample. Among the 200 administered questionnaires, 138 were valid.

- The same questionnaire was sent by email to a mailing list of 200 persons from different backgrounds. 23 questionnaires were filled using google forms.

Data obtained from 161 valid questionnaires were analyzed using descriptive statistics and presented in the following sections of the report with recommendations related to tourism development and planning in Zgharta-Ehden and tourism branding directions.

IV.<u>Socio-economic characteristics of the sample</u>

The survey sample is almost equally distributed between females (53%) and males (47%). In terms of nationality 84% are Lebanese and 16% foreigner, which reflects the national tourism figures where more than 80% of the rural tourism market is based on domestic tourism and around 20% only is for international tourists' market. The majority (90%) of the respondents have a high educational level (50% master degree and 40% bachelor degree degree). In terms of age categories, three-quarter of the respondent are aged between 18 and 30 years (42% aged between 18 and 25 years and 34% between 26 and 30 years), 21% are aged between 31 and 50 years, and only 2% are above 51 years old (**Figure.1**). The age distribution explains the marital status with 66% single, 33% married, and 1% divorced.
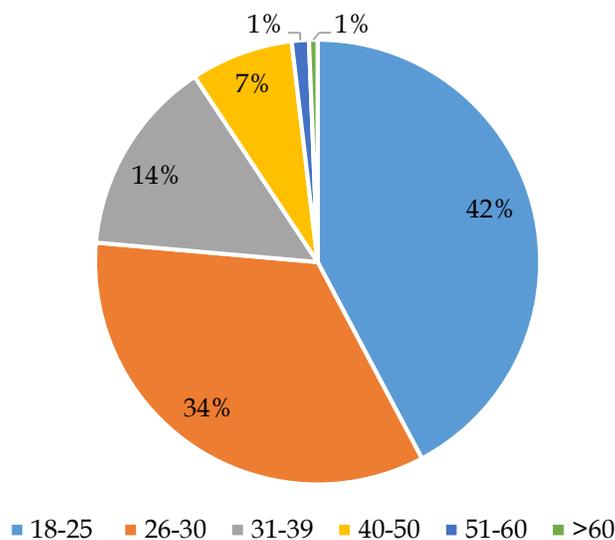

■ 18-25 ■ 26-30 ■ 31-39 ■ 40-50 ■ 51-60 ■ >60

Figure.1. Age distribution

The social characteristics results show that the majority of Zgharta-Ehden visitors is "young" which explain the survey results in relation to tourism interests and preferences. The existing of this young market segment is very important for tourism development in rural areas, especially in terms of their high purchasing power, however, this dominance of this segment is an indicator of the high seasonality of tourism.

Thus, in parallel to maintaining this market segment, it is important to target other age categories (between 40 and 60) and to diversify the tourism offer that might interest them, especially in the low-season.

Regarding the economic profile of the sample, the occupation distribution of the sample is very diverse, with mainly 27% students, 27% private sector employee, 15% unemployed, 12% public sector employees, 9% engineers, and 10 % (lawyers, physicians, teachers, self-employed) (**Figure.2**). As for the income level, 35% have a high income level (more than 3,000 $ per month), 12% medium (between 2,000 and 3,000 $), 29% average (1,500 to 2,000 $) and 25% low income (1,000 to 1,500 $). (**Figure.3**)
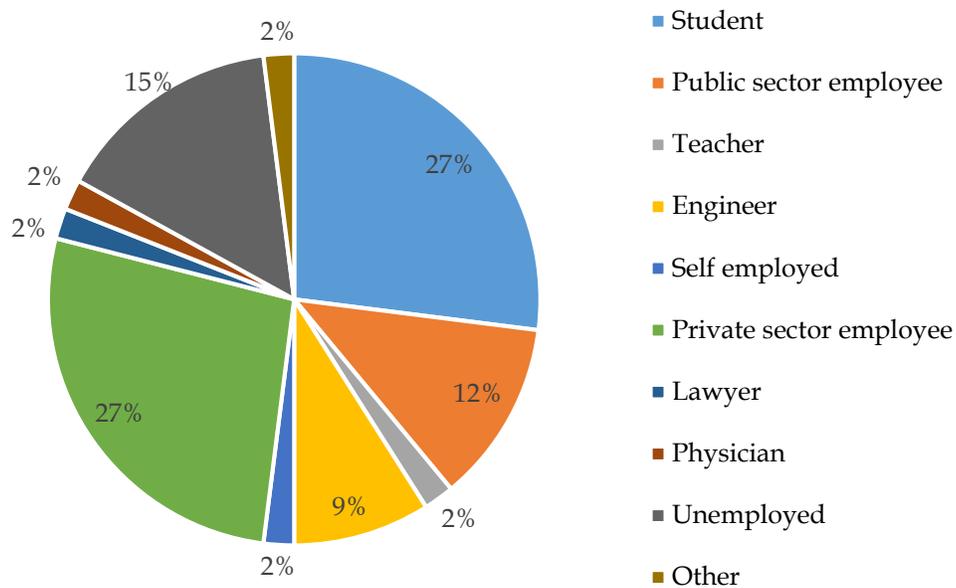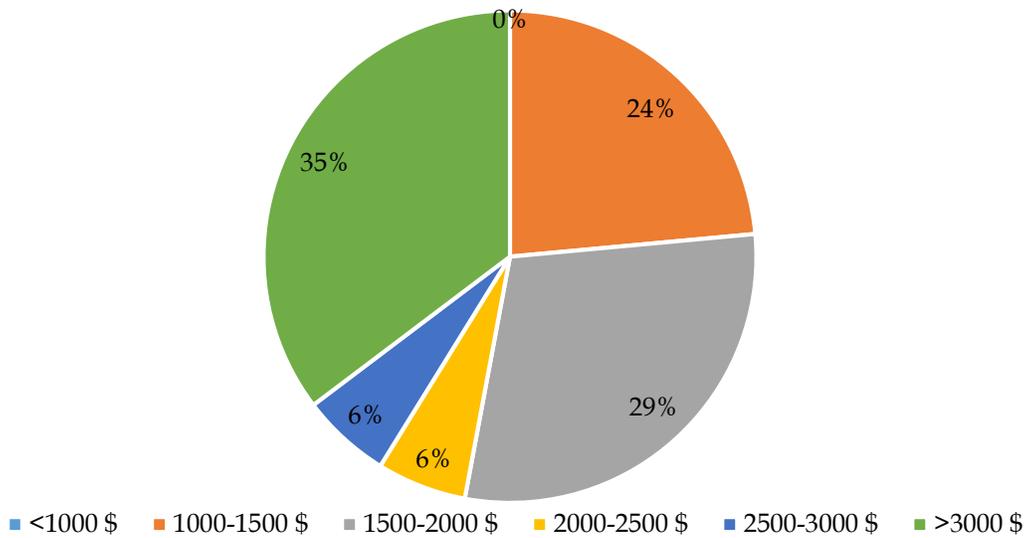
Figure.2. Occupation distribution

Figure.3. Income level distribution

Legend: ■ <1000 $ ■ 1000-1500 $ ■ 1500-2000 $ ■ 2000-2500 $ ■ 2500-3000 $ ■ >3000 $

The results of the economic profile show that one-third of the sample have relatively a high income level which would result in a high purchase power and can be targeted by a niche and/or high end tourism market. As for the remaining two-third of the sample, they an affordable tourism offer, which is reflected in the following results related to the willingness to pay for tourism services and activities.

V. <u>Visit patterns</u>

The visit patterns show the practices of Zgharta-Ehden visitors related to the organization and structure of their visits to the area. In order to understand the interest of the sample in rural tourism, the first question was about their yearly visits to rural areas in general. The results showed that the majority of the respondents visit rural areas less than 10 times per year, 7% between 10 and 20 times, 6% more than 40 times, and 4% between 20 and 40 times (**Figure.4**). These results are normal due to the high seasonality of rural tourism in Lebanon, with the peak visitation to rural areas in summer, followed by spring, and a limited number of people who visit rural areas for tourism purpose all around the year.
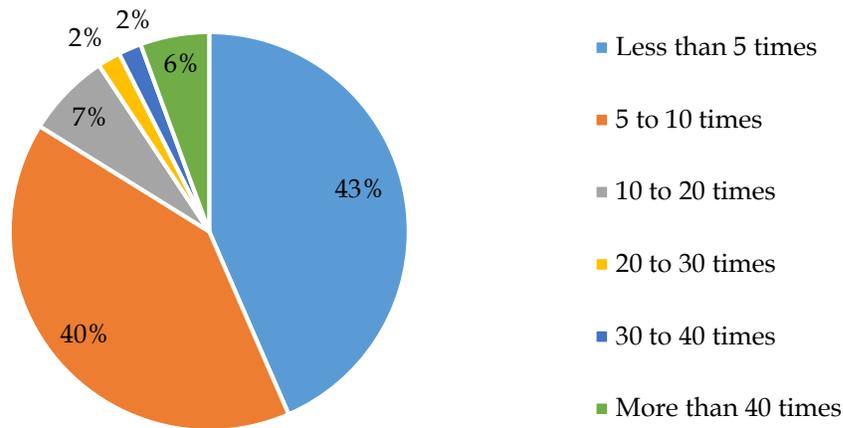

Figure.4. Number of yearly visits to rural areas for tourism purpose

When asked to name the top three rural destinations they visit in Lebanon, the respondents named Ehden in the first place with 46 responses, followed by Bcharreh Cedars 29 responses (**Table.1**). These results are normal since the majority of the questionnaires were filled in Ehden. The remaining results show the geographical diversity of destination as well as the different types of tourism practices in the mentioned destinations with a main focus on cultural, religious, nature, and culinary tourism. It worth noticing that Zgharta was mentioned only by 4% of the respondents, which shows the geographical separation between Zgharta-Ehden and the predominance of Ehden as a tourism destination.

Table.1. Top rural destinations visited in Lebanon

Destination/Village	Number of responses	Percentage
Ehden	46	29%
Bcharreh cedars	29	18%
Jezzine	12	8%
Zahle	11	7%
Qobayat	9	6%
Tannourine	9	6%
Baalbeck	8	5%
Annaya	8	5%
Beit El Dine	8	5%
Byblos	6	4%
Zgharta	4	3%
Amioun	3	2%
Douma	3	2%
Akoura	3	2%
Laklouk	3	2%
Deir El Qamar	3	2%

64% of the respondents have already visited Zgharta-Ehden previously and 36% claimed that this was their first visit to the area. This result shows a relatively high number of repeaters and loyal visitors to Zgharta-Ehden. Among the 64% who visited the area in the last three years for tourism purpose, 27% did 2 to 5 visits, 41% did 5 to 10 visits, and 32% visited Zgharta-Ehden between 10 and 20 times. (**Figure.5**)

■ 2 to 5 visits   ■ 5 to 10 visits   ■ 10 to 15 visits   ■ 15 to 20 visits
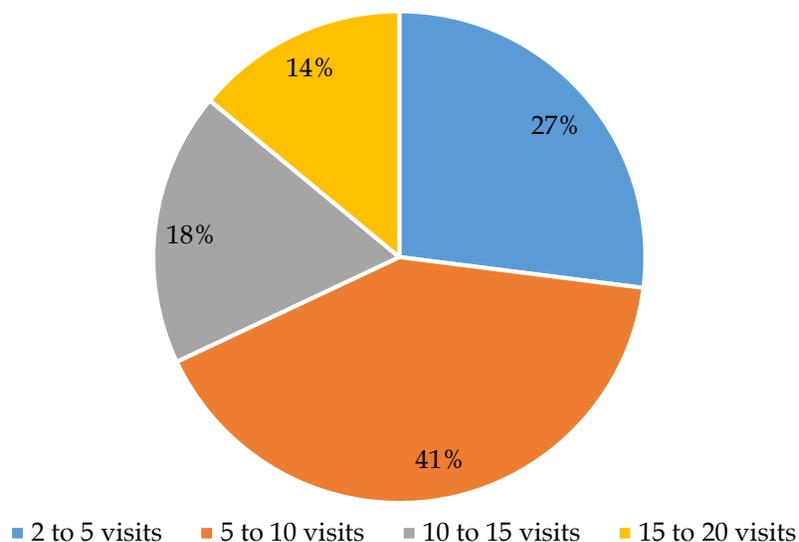
Figure.5. Number of visits to Zgharta-Ehden in the last three years

Regarding their visit duration, 51% stay usually for a weekend, 32% are one day visitors, 12% stay for one week, and only 5 % stay between one and four weeks. The high percentage of weekend visitors to Zgharta-Ehden is relatively high when compared to the general pattern of visit duration to rural areas in Lebanon that is limited to one day-visit. The percentage of respondents who claimed that they usually visit the areas for a week is also high, hence it is most probably limited to the summer season. (**Figure.6**)

Almost half of the respondents have a preference to visit Zgharta-Ehden during Summer season only (49%), followed by 28% who prefer to visit during Summer and Winter, 7% have no seasonal preference, 5% during autumn only, and 4% during spring only (**Figure.7**).
These results confirm the high seasonality of rural tourism in Lebanon and the predominance of summer as the peak season, and winter for a good percentage of visitors, especially in mountain areas that offer winter and snow activities. Hence, the existence of 23% of visitors who do not have a seasonal preference or who prefer spring and/or autumn, reflects the existence of great potential to develop off-season tourism in rural areas such as Zgharta-Ehden.

■ Daytrip (one day)   ■ Weekend (2 days)   ■ 3 to 7 days   ■ One to four weeks
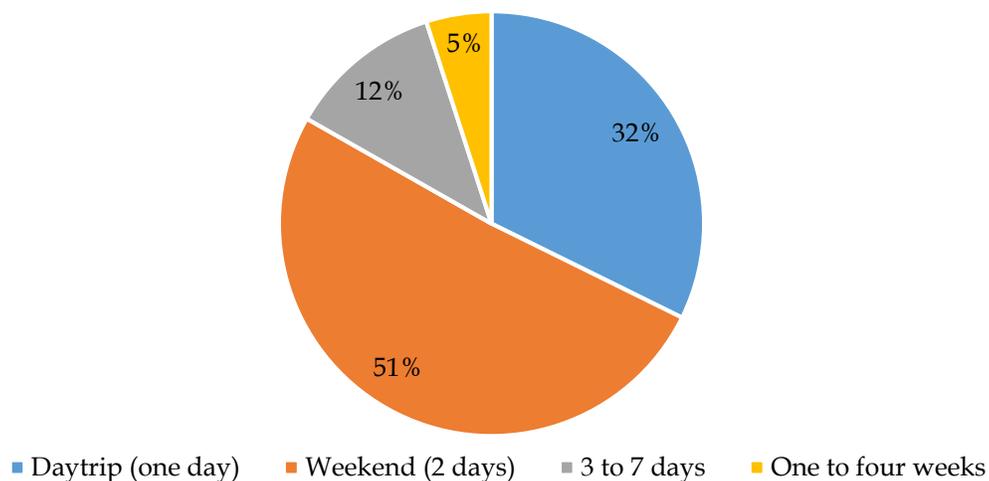
Figure.6. Number of visits to Zgharta-Ehden in the last three years

Figure.7. Number of visits to Zgharta-Ehden in the last three years

The majority of the respondents (84%) organize their visit to Zgharta-Ehden by themselves, 13% join organized tours, and 3% do both. These figures show the lack of tourism value chain consolidation and the inexistence of packaged tours to rural areas, in addition to the preference of the domestic tourism market for non-organized tours.

When asked with who do they prefer to visit Zgharta-Ehden (rating from 1 most usual to 4 least usual), the results were (**Table.2**):

Table.2. Visitors' preference for group type

Rank	Group type	Score
1	Family	1.9
2	Friends	2.0
3	Partner	2.4
4	Colleagues	3.6

As for the reservation method, 63% of the respondents tend to reserve for tourism services and activities in Zgharta-Ehden by phone call, 29% do not like to reserve ahead of time, 7% do the reservation once on site, and only 1% reserve online (**Figure.8**). These results could be explained by the majority of Lebanese visitors to the area, who are still not used to online booking, especially when they visit rural areas, as well as the inexistence on online platforms specialized in rural tourism.
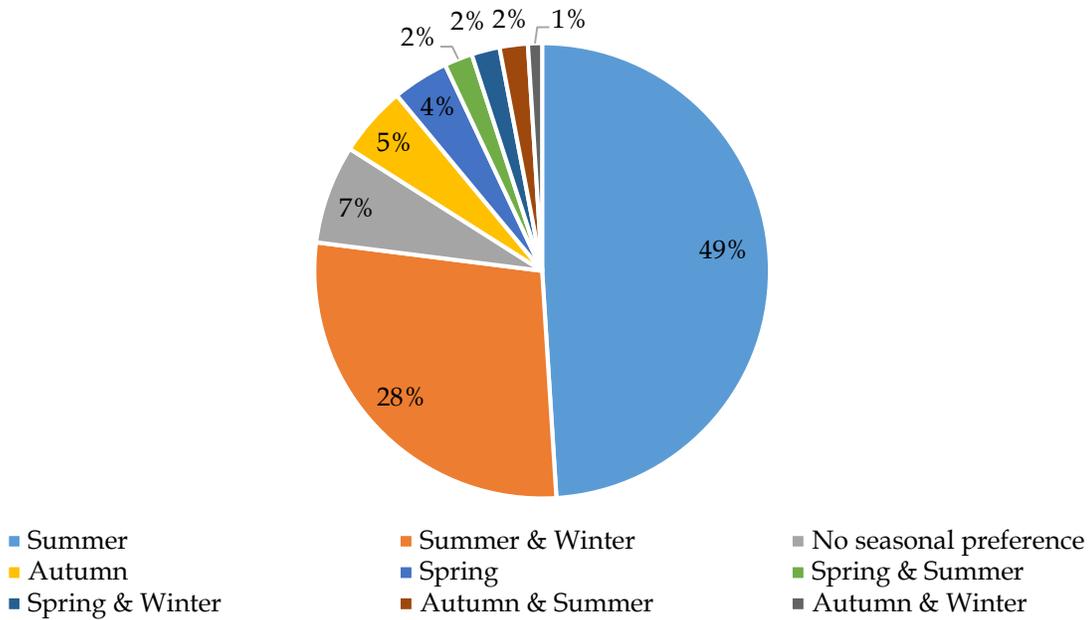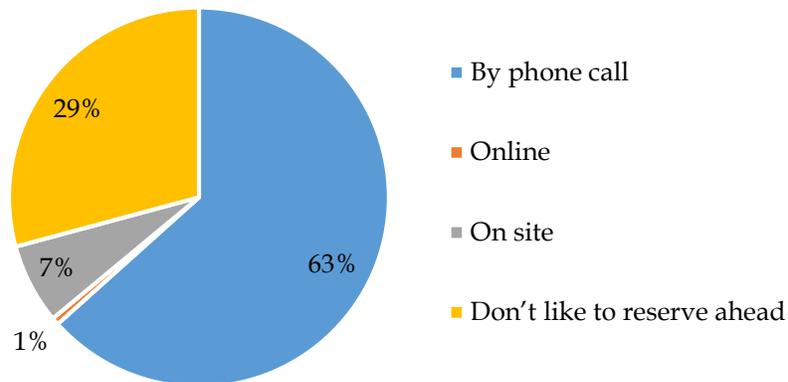

Figure.8. Number of visits to Zgharta-Ehden in the last three year

Regarding the assessment of the accessibility to Zgharta-Ehden in terms of roads and infrastructure, the average rate is 2.7 (on a scale from 1 very bad to 5 very good). Almost half of the respondents gave an average rating (47%), 28% rated the accessibility bad, and 8% very bad. (**Table.3**)

Table.3. Visitors' preference for group type

Evaluation	Very bad	Bad	Average	Good	Very good
Scale	1	2	3	4	5
% of respondents	8%	28%	46%	17%	1%
Average rate: 2.7					

When asked about the transportation mean they prefer to get to Zgharta-Ehden (rating from 1 most usual to 4 least usual), the results were (**Table.4**). As for the budget allocated for transportation to get to Zgharta-Ehden, 66% of the respondents are willing to spend less than 10$ per person and 27% would spend 10 to 20$ per person. (**Figure.9**)

Table.4. Visitors' preference for group type

Rank	Group type	Score
1	Personal car	1.2
2	Organized tour	2.3
3	Public transportation	2.7
4	Cycling	3.7
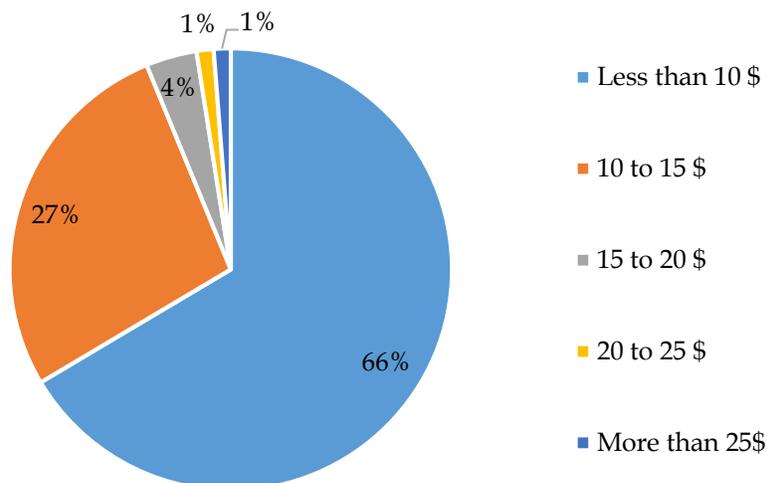
Figure.9. Budget allocated for transportation ($/person)

The budgets allocated for meals (lunch and dinner), accommodation, and touristic site visit for visitors self-organized tours are presented in the following figures. (**Figure.10, Figure.11, Figure.12**)

Less than 15 $
15 to 20 $
20 to 25 $
25 to 30 $
More than 30 $

Figure.10. Budget allocated for meals: lunch & dinner ($/person)

Less than 30 $
30 to 40 $
40 to 50 $
50 to 60 $
More than 60 $

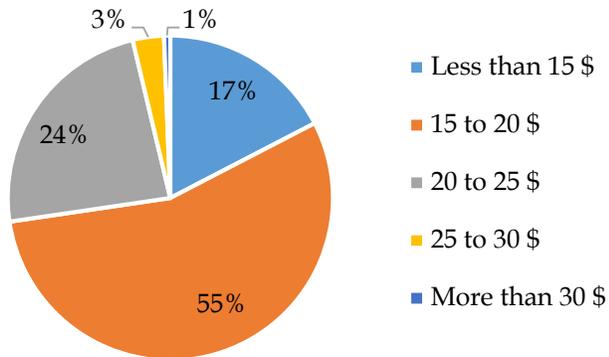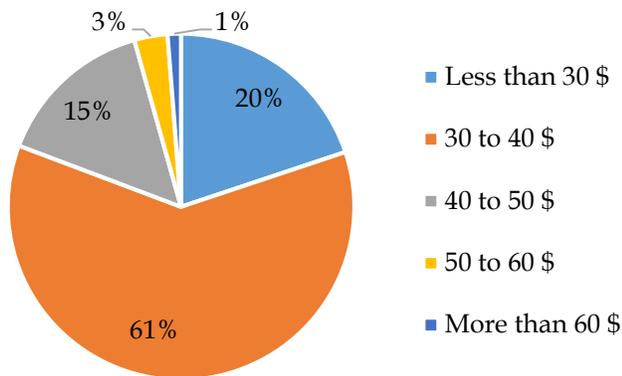**Figure.11. Budget allocated for accommodation ($/person)**
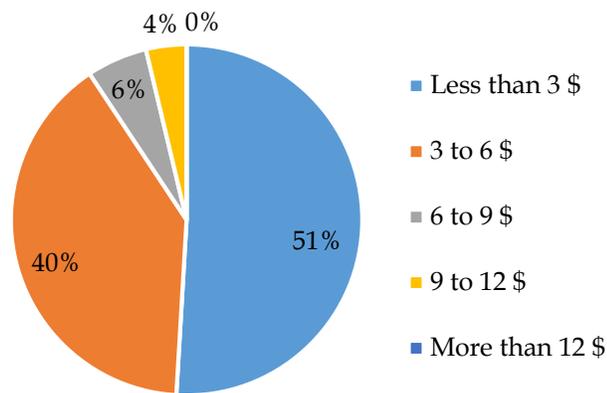
Figure.12. Budget allocated for touristic site visit ($/person)

The results of the budgets allocated for meals, accommodation, and touristic sites visit, show that the majority of the respondents are willing to pay average to low amount of money for these three services, reflecting a medium purchasing power and a perception that rural tourism services should not be as expensive as conventional tourism:

- Meals: 17% of the respondents would pay less than 15$ per person for 2 meals, and 55% between 15 and 20$;

- Accommodation: 20% of the respondents would pay less than 30$ for one overnight per person, and 61% between 30 and 40$;

- Touristic site visit: 51% of the respondents would pay less than 3$ per person for a touristic site visit, and 40% between 3 and 6$

These results are generally below the existing offer in Zgharta-Ehden, especially for accommodation. Therefore, tourism planners and managers should revisit the existing offer of the main tourism services and their market positioning and pricing in order to align it with the general market demand. Services with higher prices should target a specific niche market.

The budgets allocated for one day organized tour or a weekend organized tour are presented in the following figures. (**Figure.13 and Figure.14)**
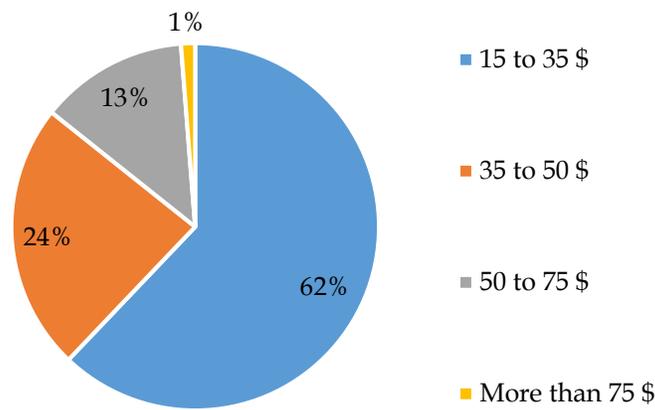
Figure.13. Budget allocated for one day organized tour ($/person)

Legend:
- 15 to 35 $
- 35 to 50 $
- 50 to 75 $
- More than 75 $
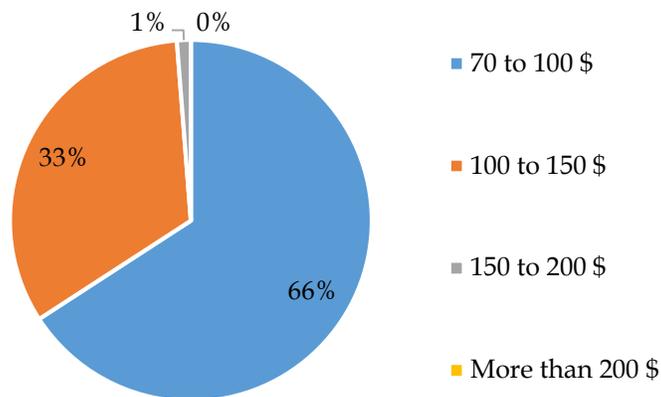
Figure.14. Budget allocated for weekend organized tour ($/person)

Legend:
- 70 to 100 $
- 100 to 150 $
- 150 to 200 $
- More than 200 $

The survey results for the budgets allocated for a one-day tour is aligned with the existing market, whereas 62% of the respondents are willing to pay 15 to 35$ per person and 24% would pay 35 to 50$. Regarding the budgets allocated for a weekend organized tour, tow-third of the respondents (66%) are willing to pay between 70 and 100$ per person, a budget that is lower than the existing market offer, which is 120$ on average.

When it comes to the willingness to purchase local products, 24% showed an interest in local souvenirs and 29% said that they would buy local food specialties. 66% of the respondents are willing to pay between 5 and 10$ per local souvenir and 16% would pay between 10 and 15$. As for the food specialties, 64% are willing to pay between 10 and 15$ per item, and 22% between 15 and 20$. (**Figure.15 and Figure.16**)
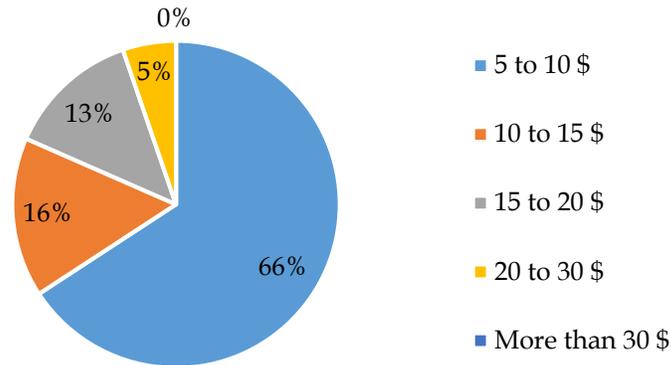
Figure.15. Budget allocated for local souvenir product in $

Legend:
- 5 to 10 $
- 10 to 15 $
- 15 to 20 $
- 20 to 30 $
- More than 30 $

Values: 0%, 5%, 13%, 16%, 66%
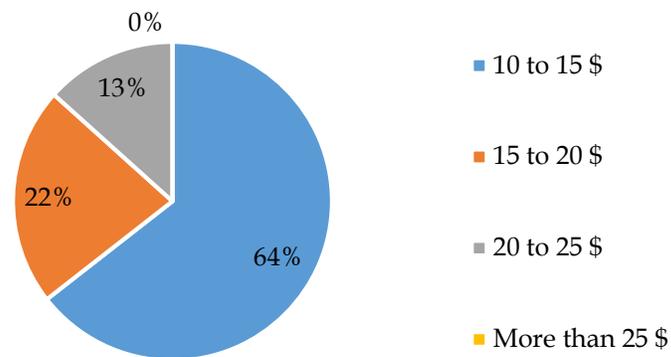
Figure.16. Budget allocated for local food specialties in $

Legend:
- 10 to 15 $
- 15 to 20 $
- 20 to 25 $
- More than 25 $

Values: 0%, 13%, 22%, 64%

The main souvenir products mentioned by the respondents are: religious souvenirs, magnets, mugs, bracelets, woodwork, stitching, and postcards. The territorial branding visuals can be applied to one or many of these souvenir types.

The main food specialty products mentioned by the respondents are: jams, fruits, syrup, stuffed eggplant, olive oil, dairy products, kibbeh, desserts, honey, apples.

The last question related to the visit pattern and organization is about the source of information used to plan a visit to Zgharta-Ehden. The "word of mouth" in the first rank, followed by social media and internet/website. (**Table.5**)

Table.5. Visitors' preference for group type

Rank	Source of information	Number of responses	Percentage
1	Word of mouth	110	68%
2	Social media	92	57%
3	Internet/website	33	20%
4	TV	11	7%
5	Brochures	9	6%
6	Magazine	5	3%
7	Local tourist info center	5	3%
8	Fair/exhibition	2	1%
9	Radio	0	0%

These results confirm the importance of ICT in tourism promotion in addition to the classical word of mouth as a main source of information for visit planning.

VI. Tourism services

This section presents the results of the survey related to the tourism services: accommodation, food services, and guiding. Small hotels and resorts are the most preferred accommodation types (which exist in Zgharta-Ehden), followed by eco-lodges (which they don't exist in Eco-lodge), furnished apartments and chalets (existing in the area), guesthouses and camping sites (which started to emerge in the last two years in Zgharta-Ehden. (**Table.6**)

Table.6. Visitors' preference for accommodation type

Rank	Source of information	Number of responses	Percentage
1	Small hotel	131	81%
2	Resort	128	80%
3	Eco-lodge	63	39%
4	Furnished apartment	54	33%
5	Chalet	44	27%
6	Guesthouse	26	16%
7	Camping site	21	13%
8	Religious institution	8	5%
9	Luxury hotel	5	3%
10	Family/friends' house	3	2%

When visiting Zgharta-Ehden for more than a day, more than two-third (68%) of the respondents would book B&B (bed and breakfast), 9% half board (overnight + one meal), 7% full board (overnight + two meals), and 16% only overnight. (**Figure.17**)
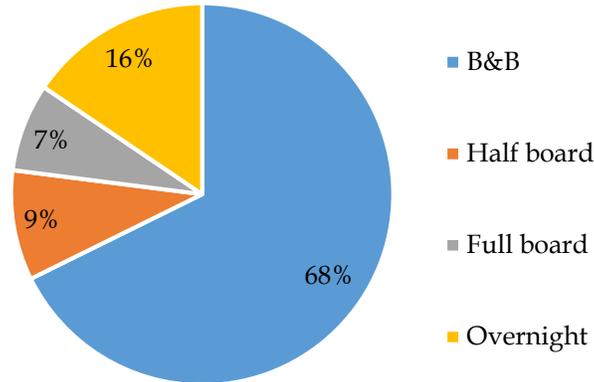
Figure.17. Type of accommodation reservation

Regarding the food services preferences in Zgharta-Ehden (rating from 1 most preferred to 4 least preferred), the results showed that conventional Lebanese cuisine is the most preferred, and self-catering is the least preferred. (**Table. 7**)

Table.7. Visitors' preference for food services

Rank	Group type	Score
1	Conventional Lebanese cuisine	1.5
2	Fusion restaurant	1.9
3	Snacks and bakeries	3.0
4	Self-catering and picnicking	3.4

As for touring in the destination, 77% of the respondents prefer to do it on their own, 14% would like to have a guided tour, and 9% would do both. This shows the need for training local guides to conduct village-based tours.

VII. Visitors' interest and activities

In this section of the survey, people were asked about the attracting and motivational factors that push them to visit Zgharta-Ehden, their interest in practicing a list of rural tourism activities and the budget allocated for each activity.

Climate was the top attracting factor, followed by nature and biodiversity, landscape and scenery, events and festivities, religious heritage, cuisine, culture, and history. This ranking shows that "nature" is a predominant attracting factor, despite the important human/cultural heritage of the destination, that should be more valorized. (**Table.8**)

Table.8. Attraction factors

Rank	Source of information	Number of responses	Percentage
1	Climate	131	81%
2	Nature and biodiversity	106	66%
3	Landscape and scenery	57	35%
4	Events and festivities	22	14%
5	Religious heritage	19	12%
6	Cuisine and local food	19	12%
7	Culture and traditions	18	11%
8	History	15	9%

In terms of motives, relaxation is the top ranked motivational factor, followed by entertainment, nature enjoyment, meeting local people, discovery, and adventure/nature sports. These results are coherent with the attracting factors results, except for the adventure/nature sports motive which is ranked last despite the very high potential for Zgharta-Ehden to offer such activities. (**Table.9**)

Table.9. Motivational factors

Rank	Source of information	Number of responses	Percentage
1	Relaxation	127	79%
2	Entertainment	70	44%
3	Enjoying nature	56	35%
4	Meeting local people	41	26%
5	Discovery	38	24%
6	Adventure/nature sports	29	18%

Regarding the geographical focus, 74% of the respondents are interested in the whole village as a destination, 13% focus on one landmark, 12% are interested in the whole region (North Lebanon), and only 1% are interested in the neighboring villages of the destination (**Figure.18**). These results show that the territorial branding should take into consideration the local and the regional dimension of the destination.
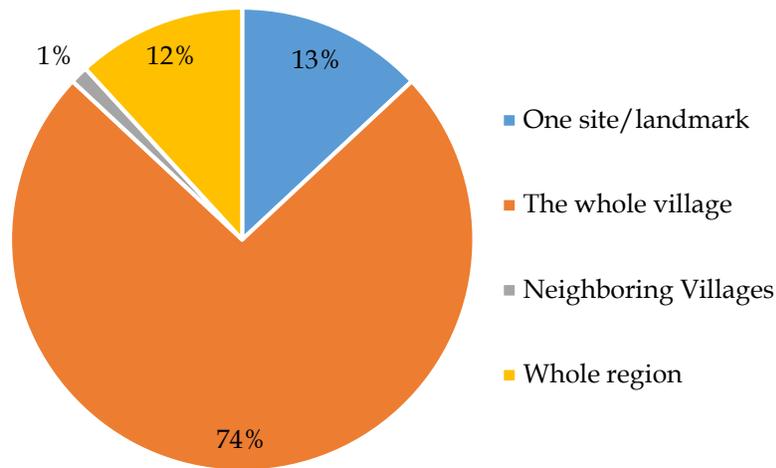
Figure.18. Destination geographical focus level

When asked about their interest in practicing some rural tourism activities, the respondents gave the highest percentage for hiking and cycling, with 92% and 61% who were interested respectively; they average budget allocated for these two activities is the same 10 $ per person. Farming and cooking are the least interesting activities for the respondents despite the great culinary heritage of Zgharta-Ehden. (**Table.10**)

Table.10. Activities interest and average budget

Rank	Activity	Interested	Not interested	Average budget ($/person)
1	Hiking/walking	92%	8%	10 $
2	Cycling/biking	61%	39%	10 $
3	Wild life observation	29%	71%	16 $
4	Site seeing	25%	75%	8 $

5	Skiing/snow activities	24%	76%	26 $
6	Climbing	16%	84%	14 $
7	Camping	14%	86%	15 $
8	Cultural activities	12%	88%	13 $
9	Caving	12%	88%	17 $
10	Wine tasting	11%	89%	9 $
11	Pilgrimage	10%	90%	7 $
12	Cooking/food tasting	8%	92%	14 $
13	Farming	6%	94%	13 $

VIII.   Visitors' evaluation

In this section of the survey, people were asked to evaluate the tourism services and activities they used in Zgharta-Ehden and to state for what reasons they would recommend to others to visit the area or not to visit it. The following table shows the evaluation of the main tourism services in terms of quality using a scale from 1 very bad to 5 very good (**Table.11**). Hospitality and food & beverage had the highest score and were evaluated as "very good". The only service that had a low score compared to the others was "parking", it was evaluated bad to average. The remaining tourism services were all evaluated "good".

Table.11. Tourism services quality evaluation

Rank	Service	Score
1	Hospitality	4.7
2	Food and beverage	4.4
3	Accommodation	4.1
4	Natural attractions and activities	3.9
5	Entertainment	3.9
6	Cultural attractions and activities	3.8
7	Guiding	3.7
8	Tourist information	3.6
9	Tourism infrastructure	3.2
10	Parking	2.5

Regarding the price of the tourism services and activities, the evaluation was done a scale from 1 very affordable to 5 very expensive. Accommodation was rated as a relatively expensive service, and all the others services were affordable. (**Table.12**)

Table.12. Tourism services price evaluation

Rank	Service	Score
1	Accommodation	3.0
2	Parking	2.8
3	Food and beverage	2.5
4	Entertainment activities	2.3
5	Adventure/nature activities	2.2
6	Entrance fees to attractions	2.2
7	Guiding	2.2

When asked why would they recommend someone to visit Zgharta-Ehden, the respondents gave 25 reasons. The top five reasons were 1) climate, followed by 2) nature, 3) scenery and views, 4) hospitality, 5) local people and 5) food (**Table.13**). Among these top 5 reasons three are related to nature and three are related to culture, which shows the balance between nature and culture as main attracting factors to Zgharta-Ehden. In addition to the different key words used by the respondents, there was one answer formulated as follow:

"Ehden is always full of life and the people there are welcoming and they have a special attractive character, food is great, the Midan square is a beautiful place to hang out with family, the reserve is charming... Ehden is one of the nicest villages in Lebanon - you can cycle and hike there".

Table.13. Reasons to visit Zgharta-Ehden

Rank	Reason	Number of responses	Percentage
1	**Climate**	**67**	**42%**
2	**Nature**	**32**	**20%**
3	**Scenery and view**	**18**	**11%**
4	**Hospitality**	**11**	**7%**
5	**Local people**	**10**	**6%**
5	**Food**	**10**	**6%**
6	View from Saydet el Hosn	7	4%
6	History and heritage	7	4%

7	Special place to discover	5	3%
8	Culture	4	2%
8	Uniqueness	4	2%
8	Nature reserve	4	2%
8	Experience	4	2%
8	Fun	3	2%
8	Night life	3	2%
8	Events	3	2%
8	Hiking trails	3	2%
8	Safe	3	2%
8	Religious tourism	3	2%
9	Relaxation	2	1%
9	Everything is beautiful in Ehden	2	1%
10	Nature hidden gems	1	1%
10	Cycling routes	1	1%
10	Landscape in winter	1	1%
10	Discover the biodiversity	1	1%

As for question on why would you not recommend someone to visit Zgharta-Ehden, the top five reasons were 1) traffic, 2) garbage (this reason is due to a temporary crisis that happened in summer 2019), 3) far, 4) parking availability, 4) bad roads, and 5) fights and security (**Table.14**). Based on these results, it is recommended to include visual and/or textual elements in the territorial branding strategy to change the perception related to distance and remoteness of Zgharta-Ehden, as well as safety and security issues.

Table.14. Reasons not to visit Zgharta-Ehden

Rank	Reason	Number of responses	Percentage
1	**Traffic**	**56**	**35%**
2	**Garbage**	**17**	**11%**
3	**Far**	**8**	**5%**
4	**Parking availability**	**5**	**3%**
4	**Bad roads**	**5**	**3%**
5	**Fights/security**	**4**	**2%**
7	Bad infrastructure	2	1%
7	Noise and traffic in summer time	2	1%
7	Expensive accommodation	2	1%
7	No food experience at local guesthouses	2	1%
8	Not very well organized	1	1%
8	Lack of activities' variety	1	1%
8	Lack of guidance to a full day plan	1	1%
8	Traffic on the way back to Beirut	1	1%
8	Too over developed	1	1%
8	Overpriced	1	1%
8	Crowded	1	1%
8	Pollution	1	1%
8	Not culturally interesting as other places	1	1%

IX. Perceived image

In order to understand the perceived image about Zgharta-Ehden, the respondents were asked to imagine the destination as a person and scale different personality traits on a scale from 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree. The results are presented in **Table. 15**. They can be used as a reference for the development of the branding strategy.

Table.15. Zgharta-Ehden personality trait evaluation

Personality trait	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
	1	2	3	4	5
Down-to-earth				4.2	
Family-oriented				4.2	
Authentic				4.0	
Original				4.0	
Glamorous				4.0	
Peaceful				4.4	
Charming			3.9		
Daring			3.8		
Friendly			3.8		

46% of the respondents consider that Zgharta-Ehden should have a promotional slogan to be included in its territorial branding strategy. The main slogans suggested by the respondents are (**Table.16**):

Table.16. Proposed slogans for Zgharta-Ehden territorial brand

English slogan	Arabic slogan
Escape, connect, unique	اهدن عروسة المصايف
Nature, hospitality & climate	اهدن جنة عدن
Heaven on earth	اهدن ارض القداسة
Majestic, charming, authentic	اهدن ارض الابطال
Cedars, biodiversity, festivals	اهدن منبع الاسود

Vast, charming, and comfortable	اهدن منبع الابطال
Adventure, nature, nightlife	اهدن غير الكل
Faith, kebbe, alive	اهدن لان صار بدا
Nature, relaxing, daring	اهدن بالقلب
Glamorous, natural, historical	اهدن ارض الهّمة
Continuous love	اهدن يا كل الدني
Nature, hospitality & climate	اهلا و سهلا بكل حدا
Heaven on earth	حول عاهدن ما بتندم
Endless love	سحر اهدن
Ehden unbelievable place	ليالي اهدن عالغالي ما بتغلا
True love	اهدن منبع الكرم
Never stop dreaming	اهدن جنة مقدسة
Ehden love story	اهدن عروسة الشمال
Ehden unbelievable place	اهلا و 100 سهلا فيكن باهدن

52% of the respondents consider that Zgharta-Ehden should have a promotional logo to be included in its territorial branding strategy. The respondents suggested 37 different images or visual elements to be used in the territorial brand visuals representing mainly nature, culture, personalities, faith, places/attractions, and seasons/weather features (**Table.17**). The top five are: 1) Horsh Ehden Nature Reserve, 2) Saydet El Hosn, 3) Events, 4) Water source, and 5) Youssef Beik Karam.

Table.17. Proposed images to be used in Zgharta-Ehden territorial brand visuals

Rank	Reason	Number of responses	Percentage
1	**Horsh Ehden Nature Reserve**	**18**	**21%**
2	**Saydet El Hosn**	**14**	**17%**
3	**Events**	**10**	**12%**
4	**Water source**	**8**	**9%**
5	**Youssef Beik Karam**	**7**	**8%**
6	Ehden in snow	5	6%
7	Trees	4	5%
7	Mountain	4	5%
8	View from Saydet El Hosn	3	3%
8	Cross	3	3%
9	Saydet Zgharta	2	2%
9	Lebanese house	2	2%
9	Food	2	2%
9	Forest	2	2%
10	Sun	1	1%
10	Painting of Patriarch Douaihy	1	1%
10	Nature	1	1%
10	Heritage	1	1%
10	Ehdeniyat Festival	1	1%
10	Cedar forest	1	1%
10	Weather conditions	1	1%
10	Wind	1	1%
10	Sunset	1	1%
10	Sky	1	1%
10	Lake	1	1%
10	Faith	1	1%
10	Kebbeh	1	1%
10	Alive	1	1%
10	Sunset	1	1%
10	Zgharta old street	1	1%
10	View of Ehden in winter	1	1%
10	Saydet el Hosn in snow	1	1%
10	Road to Ehden	1	1%
10	Midan in Autumn	1	1%
10	Zgharta old street	1	1%
10	Saydet El Hosn in snow	1	1%
10	Road to Ehden	1	1%