

## **TUI Care Foundation: New ways to make traditional winemaking fit for the future**

- Initiative preserves the cultural heritage of the La Geria region and creates jobs for local people with disabilities
- A centuries-old wine technique paves the way for sustainable development on Lanzarote
- Lanzarote guests can taste organic wines in hotels and experience local wine culture on excursions

**Berlin, 25 July 2018:** TUI Care Foundation supports Lanzarote to protect its cultural heritage and helps inhabitants with disabilities to benefit from tourism. In cooperation with Futouris, a German non-profit organisation focused on sustainable tourism, the initiative aims to preserve the traditional grape growing practices of the La Geria region. As part of the “TUI Cares” project, people with disabilities will find job prospects and work together with wine farmers on their lands. Furthermore, a new network will be created, designed to help local farmers and their products to get access to the tourism industry on the island. It will link their products and services to the tourism value chain and, through this, help local vineyards to build a sustainable business model. The initiative was originally started in 2015 as a financial support scheme for traditional vineyards on Lanzarote. In cooperation with local partners, the focus of the project was expanded to safeguard traditional wine production technologies into the future.

Traditional cultivation of grapes in Lanzarote involves planting the vines in pits filled with ‘pícon’ – small lava stones that hold moisture well. To protect the vines from the wind, semicircles of larger lava stones are constructed around the pits. Today, La Geria’s unique landscape boasts over ten thousand pits and circular walls. But these authentic local wine production techniques are very labour-intensive and not cost efficient by modern standards. Farmers have therefore been abandoning the land. La Geria has slowly fallen into neglect and has risked losing its cultural heritage. The project of TUI Care Foundation works to revert this trend.

Thomas Ellerbeck, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the TUI Care Foundation, explained during a visit in July: “This initiative combines environmental, social and cultural aspects of sustainability in a very special way: Highly motivated local people with disabilities find new perspectives to make their living while securing the unique cultivation technique in La Geria. With state of the art practices for organic and sustainable winegrowing, the initiative makes the century-old tradition fit for the future and helps to protect the natural environment of Lanzarote. And, together with the local farmers, an authentic experience for visitors is created.”

TUI Care Foundation builds on the strengths of the traditional wine-making industry and supports the implementation of training and individual guidance in organic farming methods. Farmers are being empowered through the development of new distribution channels to hotels and restaurants, with a view to making traditional wine-growing more attractive and productive. Hotel staff, on the other hand, are being trained in local wine growing history and on how to introduce organic wines to their guests in order to encourage the consumption of local products among visitors. Finally, holidaymakers will be offered opportunities to become familiar with the destination's traditions and locally grown products, through interactive excursions to the vineyards and special events held at the hotels.

Klaus Guttenberger, a pioneer of organic farming in Lanzarote, highlights the fact that: "The craters are unique in the world, but you have to take the wine upmarket to make it financially viable." Organic grapes, which can be sold at a higher price, represent the path that respects the ecosystem of this landscape. Conservation and agriculture both have a part to play in a biosphere reserve. "The goal is to protect the landscape with the people in it", says Guttenberger, "and not to drive people out."

TUI Care Foundation  
Pariser Platz 6a  
10117 Berlin

[www.tuicarefoundation.com](http://www.tuicarefoundation.com)

The 'TUI Cares' programme aims to improve livelihoods through local sourcing, create cultural experiences for holidaymakers and open up opportunities for entrepreneurs in holiday destinations. Through this programme, the TUI Care Foundation aims to enhance 10,000 local livelihoods by 2020. Projects are also currently in place in Jamaica, Greece, Morocco and Turkey.

### **About TUI Care Foundation**

Building on the potential of tourism as a force for good, the TUI Care Foundation supports and initiates partnerships and projects which create new opportunities for the young generation and contribute to thriving destinations all over the world. Connecting holidaymakers to good causes, the TUI Care Foundation fosters education and training initiatives to open up new opportunities and perspectives for young people, the protection of the natural environment in holiday destinations and sustainable livelihoods in thriving destinations where local communities can benefit even more from tourism. TUI Care Foundation works global and acts local - it builds on strong partnerships with local and international organisations to create meaningful and long lasting impact. The charitable foundation values transparency and the efficient use of funds. Therefore; 100% of the donations go to partners and projects with all operating costs of the foundation covered by TUI. TUI Care Foundation was founded by TUI, the world's leading tourism business, and is based in the Netherlands.

### **Contact:**

TUI Care Foundation  
Christian Rapp, Head of Media Relations

+49 511 – 566 6028  
christian.rapp@tui.com

TUI Care Foundation  
Pariser Platz 6a  
10117 Berlin

[www.tuicarefoundation.com](http://www.tuicarefoundation.com)