



Audit Year: 2010

GTBS Award: GOLD

Business Name: Atlantic Villa

Business Type: B&B/Self-Catering

Location: County Kerry, EIRE

Website: www.anirishexperience.com

Atlantic Villa offers B&B and self catering accommodation on the picturesque Valentia Island in South West Ireland. The house was once home to the Cable Master overseeing the first transatlantic cable in the 1800s. The owners Brian and Jackie are keen natural gardeners offering the guests more than a typical Irish welcome. Guests can experience the best in homegrown produce as part of their meal while the owners also offer local tours of the Island enriching the visitors' enjoyment with natural and cultural elements. Green activities have resulted in the business achieving a Green Tourism GOLD award.

Environmental Benefits

No pesticides are used in the gardens at Atlantic Villa. The owners utilise several natural techniques to create fertilisers from home produced willow tree water and nettles. Cardboard is reused quite innovatively as a bed for the compost made from seaweed collected from the nearby beach.

Compost is used for growing a year round selection of herbs, fruit and vegetables including rhubarb, apples, onions, blueberries, cranberries and more. As a result food miles for the business are significantly reduced, eliminating the need for several trips around the busy Ring of Kerry.

Social & Community Benefits

The World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms (WWOOF) encourages young adults from all over the world to learn new skills. As a member, Atlantic Villa offers accommodation and meals for 12-15 people per year, in return for maintaining the extensive organic garden while teaching valuable horticultural skills.

'Wwoofers' may stay for several weeks at a time often making themselves a part of the community – this has enabled more social integration amongst the youngsters, some learning English as a second language, experiencing the culture of the area while others may stay for longer and gain other work in the area.

Cost Savings

Growing your own fruit and vegetables, and having hens on-site has had a positive impacts on the bank balance. All the produce is grown from seed onsite meaning the business can be self sufficient for much of the breakfast and evening meal menu.

The organic methods of production (utilising homemade fertilisers and companion planting) also means that there is no expenditure on expensive pesticides and because they are sold locally the businesses can receive much fresher goods than the supermarkets can provide. 'Wwoofers' receive no cost towards accommodation for their efforts and their stay in the village benefits the local economy.

Web Links

WWOOF: www.woof.org
Organic Gardening: www.gardenorganic.org.uk, www.soilassociation.org