



LA RIOJA AND DESTINIA LAUNCH

THE ERA OF VIRTUAL TRAVEL

Jointly developing an experience with the Oculus Rift to discover with new eyes the Spanish province La Rioja

La Rioja and the online travel agency recognize the potential new technologies have on the tourism industry

Madrid, April 24th, 2015- Without leaving the house, the realistic immersion takes off on board the Oculus Rift. La Rioja region and Destinia present a technological collaboration to join a new future that is almost here: the era of virtual travel. The project aims to discover different towns of the region, one of which is the ski resort town of Valdezcaray, featured today, to reach tourists who are even more technologically advanced and demanding. **José Abel Bayo Martínez, Minister of Tourism for the province of La Rioja and Amuda Goueli, CEO of Destinia.com**, rallied around the presentation of the project, created to provide a real experience that La Rioja could offer to travelers of the 21st century.

“The province of La Rioja has always been characterized for its emphasis on innovation in its promotional strategy of the region as a touristic destination, utilizing the latest in technology to do so. This virtual journey with Destinia, a company that combines innovation and technology, is a demonstration of our focus. I believe we will be able to surprise the public and hook visitors to the region”, stated Abel Bayo. Likewise, Amuda Goueli made note of the innovative spirit which distinguishes Destinia: “We are making way for a new path in an area which we are confident will offer many possibilities and positive outcomes. Technology is advancing every second and we want to be a part of this journey from the start”.

During the presentation, a *making-of* was shown about the behind-the-scenes development of the project and the complex technical set. The virtual reality videos capture images in 360 degrees -seven GoPro cameras were filming simultaneously – which, thanks to the Oculus Rift, seamlessly submerges users into what they are living in a very real and natural way. At the moment, purchasing the Oculus is not necessary to enjoy the experience, as a cardboard version has been created that works well in combination with a Smartphone. In the future, the new technology will also incorporate body movement, close objects and an environment that heightens the realistic sensation. “Our next step is to work in a three-dimensional virtual reality to magnify the immersion sensation and the tendency is to advance towards a fusion between virtual reality and an augmented reality”, added Amuda.

[Link to the making-of virtual tour to Vadezcaray](#)

[Link to the Oculus videos](#)

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About Destinia

Destinia.com is an international online travel agency with offices in Spain, Egypt and Dubai and 65.7 unique users in 2014. Founded in 2001, the agency has over 100 employees, close to 2 million clients and an offering of 300.000 hotels and 500 airlines, permitting reservations in 32 languages. Destinia was one of the first travel agencies to accept Bitcoin payments for a wide range of products and was the first to launch glassware to make hotel reservations with Google Glass: [Hotel Near Me](#). Destinia aims to be in the Top 3 online travel agencies in the Arabic market by 2017.

