

How to use interesting stories with traditional elements (e.g. stories about sacred places, supernatural experiences) to create a memorable tourism experience?



How do I use old tales & beliefs to market my business?

What is most important in this type of work?

How did this work for my business?

### Tales of the Hidden People

Perhaps the fantastic and the strange seem ordinary in a country where people still believe in "hidden people," the little fairies and elves that reside in the countryside, just out of sight. Locals are fond of saying that if you open your mind and suspend your disbelief, you may feel the hidden people around you when you go for a walk.

At the Glymur Hotel next to Hvalfjordur (the Whale Fjord), Hansina the owner says her business was struggling for a while after she started the hotel there, just as the businesses on that plot of land had failed over and over before she came. A neighbor insisted that she needed to make things right with the hidden people and explain what she was doing there. Without their cooperation, the hotel would continue to be plagued by strange noises in the night and a guest register that was never filled.

So Hansina began to hike the surrounding hills each day, babbling into the wind to anyone who may be listening. To the casual observer she would appear to be talking to herself, but she was sharing her plans with those that could not be seen. After a couple of months later things started to change. The nocturnal noises stopped. More guests came and they told others. Within a couple of years, Glymur built a reputation as one of the best hotels in the country.

She still walks the hills regularly, talking to the hidden people about the new villas she is building. A pragmatic businessperson she may be, but like most residents of Iceland, she is willing to believe what the ancestors held as a given fact. In this

unusual landscape of glacial fjords, geysers, and boiling mud, who's to say they were wrong?

### Some of Hansina's stories from the Hidden people

#### Crossroads of the Hidden People

Hôtel Glymur's road to success was not an easy one - some claim that the beginning stages were plagued by supernatural events. It turned out that the hotel was built on the crossroads between lands of elves and the hidden people and to make things worse it was done without consulting them.



A cloud of bad luck seemed to hover over the building for many years until the current proprietors took over the business. They soon found out the cause for the long run of bad luck and through psychic assistance, negotiated with their unseen neighbors. Today the hotel business is blooming and everything is done in cooperation with the hidden people - although the proprietors have never disclosed the details of the negotiations.

Close by the hotel you'll find the Elven trail, where rumor has it you can even contact the elves through a certain ceremony which the hotel staff will undoubtedly help you with.

- **Leaflets in each rooms.** I wrote some info about the elves and the faires for the guests to read when they got to the hotel
- **Elves walk.** I created „The Elves Trail“ and invited guests for that walk
- **Video on-line.** I made a video were the elves areas were shown - see on Youtube.com under hotel Glymur
- **New Logo** – put some curvie and mystic lines into the logo



### “Hotel På hellig grunn“



**Hotel Glymur ble bygget for 10 år siden. Flere har forsøkt å gjøre business i bygget, men ingen har lykkes – før hotellet ble startet høsten 2000.** Heller ikke for eierne Hansina og Jon var alt like enkelt. Etter en periode som ve hadde vært her fikk vi noen tilbakemeldinger fra vore gjester at de ikke hadde sovet så godt. Vi visste ikke helt hvordan vi skulle gripe det an, for vi visste at vi har behagelige senger her, forteller Hansina.

Årsaken til søvnproblemene, skulle i følge enkelte gjester, være at det var så mye støy blant de øvrige gjestene på hotellet. Det er så mange folk her, hevdet gjestene søvnig. Vi har bare tyve rom og ikke noe støy. Vi forstod det bare ikke, fastslår hotelldirektøren. De rev seg i håret og forstod aldeles ingen ting.

Av eldre fastboende i området rundt hotellet, ble hun fortalt at stedet der hotellet ligger i dag, tidligere var et hellig sted for småfolket. Eller vetter som vi kanskje heller sier i Norge. Kanskje var de blitt sinte fordi området deres var invadert?

Hansina var ikke sikker på hvordan hun skulle gripe situasjonen an, men valgte å kontakte en dame som er kjent for å ha kontakt med småfolket.

Etter en liten rusletur i hotellet, kunne damen bekrefte at, jo da, her var det godt med liv. Den synske kvinnen rådet Hansina til å ta en prat med småfolket.

- Ikke helt overbevist gikk jeg ut i naturen og fortalte dem om hotellet. Om konseptet og om oss. De kunne være helt trygge på at vi ikke skulle ha et fyllested med mye bråk, smiler Hansina. Hun er godt vant med naturen, og bruker den ofte.

Samtalene hjalp, og problemene forsvant.

Småfolket har derimot ikke forsvunnet.

***The Elf tour: (This is offered on Sundays and Thursdays)***

*The hotel is said to be built in a very secret area where the elves and the fairies live. In a small canyon east of the hotel we believe that they live and thrive. The story goes - that if you are a strong believer you will be able to reach through to them. To do so you will have to have walked the elf tour over to the little bridge and there you can place your thoughts and beliefs.*

*We will start by briefing our guests about the elves and the fairies who are said to live around the hotel before we walk the tour. On the tour we talk about the origin and the living of the elves in the area and how important it is in Iceland to make peace and work with them. Coming to the bridges and clearing the mind. Moment of quietness.*



**Picture from the window in Hotel Glymur**

-Hansina forteller fra andre ting som disse: En hotelgjest stod en gang ved vinduet, og så nedover mot sjøen. Gjesten fortalte meg at hun skulle hilse fra ekteparet som bodde nede i steinrøysa, og takke for lånet av utstyret fra hotellet men i denne ugen hadde mye af utstyr forsvunnet...

De hadde visst hatt en sammenkomst tidligere i uken, sier Hansina videre.

Andre gjester har også pratet mye om småfolk og vetter.

- Etter hvert falt brikkene på plass når det gjaldt gjesten Belinda fra Nederland. Hun var her rett etter at vi åpnet og snakket ustanselig om småfolk og vetter. Nå vet jeg hvorfor, sier Hansina.

Når noe blir borte i hotellet, vet Hansina at det dukker opp igjen. Det er nok bare til låns hos smafolkene

Ved en anledning kjøpte Hansina en liten topp, med flotte gylne broderier. „Altfor liten for meg. Jeg skjønte overhodet ikke hvorfor jeg kjøpte den, selv om den var på salg og alt. Det var først når jeg skulle vise toppen til mannen min at jeg innså hvorfor jeg hadde kjøpt den. Den var sporløst borte.

Etter noen dager lå den pent brettet på sengen min. Det var helt sikkert et bryllup, tror Hansina. Hun ler ikke av det. Om hun tror på det eller ikke er egentlig vanskelig å si, sier hun, men hun har alltid trodd på gode krefter i naturen. - De er veldig glad i små, pene smykker, smiler Hansina, og peker på ørepynten til en heller småskeptisk journalist.

*Skrevet af Marianne Mork Olsvik journalist Norge <http://www.hotellmagasinet.no/artikler/farger-og-fred/356731>*

- Unique and authentic – Old Icelandic folkstories
- Very interested and different clients – usually in the higher end
- Media coverage and press interest for free. Journalists from all over the world came and took pictures and even made movies, like Russia and Australia

### Hotel Glymur Iceland

Wer genug hat von Vulkanen, Gletschern und Geysiren aber trotzdem nicht „den harten Schnitt“ in der Stadt Reykjavik machen möchte, für den bietet sich das Hotel Glymur an. Nur eine halbe Stunde von der Hauptstadt entfernt, bildet es den kulinarischen Höhepunkt punkto Übernachtung auf Island-Reisen. Denn die Insel ist nicht allzu reich mit Hotels von hohem Standard gesegnet. Und die Preise sind selbst in einfachen Hütten hoch. Doch im Hotel Glymur rechnet sich das. Im warmen „heitur pottur“ noch einmal die Reise Revue passieren lassen. Den Ausblick auf das spektakuläre Panorama von Hvalfjordur geniessen. Und sich wundern, weshalb auch in der Nacht immer eine Tür des Hotels geöffnet ist. „Die Elfen sollen sich bei uns wärmen können“, erklärt die Besitzerin Hansina B. Einarsdottir. Sie hat das mehrfach ausgezeichnete Hotel vor ein paar Jahren übernommen und sich gewundert, weshalb alle Hausbesitzer zuvor gescheitert waren. Eine Fachfrau für Elfen hatte die Antwort parat. Die Elfen vermissten nicht nur die Wärme sondern auch die Zuneigung. Darum kümmert sich nun Hansina B. Einardottir persönlich. Im täglichen Gespräch. Es hat sich bewährt. Die angenehme Stimmung ist greifbar. Zwischen afrikanischen Statuen, ausgestopften Gänsen und einer reichlich bestückten Bibliothek fühlt man sich eher in einer Stube als in einem Hotel. Denn als Hansina Einarsdóttir mit ihrem Mann Jon Rafn Hognason das Haus übernahmen, mussten sie zuerst den ganzen Hausrat von den früheren Wohnungen unterbringen. Er steht noch heute im ganzen Hotel herum. Auch in den liebevoll eingerichteten Mini-Suiten. Zum Glück hatten die Beiden schon vor ihrer Zeit als Hotel-Besitzer einen guten Geschmack!

<http://www.eppenberger-media.ch/island-durch-die-farbige-vulkanlandschaft-wandern-sonntag-az-9-maerz-2008/>



We collected old things around our stories .....

- This concept brought us guests from all over – they had read the stories and liked to experience something different and memorable
- Great review on Tripadvisor.com