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**HOW TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF PORTUGUESE CLIENTS IN THE
MARTINHAL LUXURY FAMILY HOTELS & RESORTS?**

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ABSTRACT

Martinhal Family Hotels and Resort's main focus is to provide an experience of luxury family vacations. Although all hotels are located in Portugal, Portuguese guests account only for 5% of the occupancy. The aim of this project is to understand why the percentage of Portuguese clients is so low and which strategy should Martinhal develop in order to attract more Portuguese families. The following methodology was used: analysis of reviews from TripAdvisor generated by Portuguese parents; Martinhal's collaborators semi-structured interviews; semi-structured interviews and questionnaires to Portuguese parents with children up to 16 years; and a two-weeks field observation period. We found that the current value proposition is not in accordance with the Portuguese parent's behavior during vacations. Most Portuguese parents work several hours a week, tend to be protective and to feel guilty for leaving their children at the care of others. Such behaviors and feelings ultimately influence their usage of hotel services: they tend not to use babysitting and Kids Club, which is one of the central offers of Martinhal. Considering this gap between Martinhal's offer and Portuguese parents' behavior, we propose the creation of a distinctive value proposition as a main recommendation.

KEY WORDS

Martinhal Family Hotels & Resorts, Luxury hospitality, Portuguese Families, Value Proposition

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1. INTRODUCTION

Despite the forecasted growth of luxury experiences, to which hospitality's industry is expected to highly contribute, research devoted to this area is still scant. Family tourism is also lacking investigation, albeit being the segment that is expected to propel tourism the most in the future (Schänzel, 2013). Furthermore, with the ongoing changes in the traditional family structure, holidays will be increasingly used to reinforce family bonds (Schänzel and Yeoman, 2014).

Martinhal is a luxury hotel and resort concept designed with families in mind. The hotel features restaurants with meals for toddlers, bars, family and baby concierge, Kids Club (KC), outdoor playgrounds and activities for parents and children (Martinhal Family Hotels & Resorts, 2018). Founded in Sagres, in 2010, it has expanded in Portugal through the launch of three other units: Quinta do Lago, Cascais and Chiado. Currently, Martinhal receives approximately 5% (weighted average) of Portuguese guests, and it is interested in raising this number. It is important to note that the brand's goal is not to become a hotel exclusively oriented for Portuguese families. This would not be realistic nor Martinhal intends to waive its culturally diverse guests. Bearing this in mind, this project explores the following questions:

- *Why is the percentage of local Portuguese clients so low?*
- *Which strategy should Martinhal Family Hotels & Resorts develop in order to attract more Portuguese families?*

2. CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Luxury & Hospitality

Luxury has been characterized by a general lack of consensus on its definition (Kapferer and Bastien, 2013). Despite the absence of unanimity, there is an agreement regarding its subjectivity and multidimensionality (Kapferer and Bastien 2013; Wiedmann, Hennigs, and Siebels 2009). From the several factors contributing to the transformation of the nature of luxury, the shift from material to experiential luxury is extremely relevant (Harkison, 2018). Accordingly, the Boston Consulting Group (BCG), identifies this shift as the “Owning to being” trend, stating that by 2022, the experiential segment will account for approximately two-thirds of the total luxury market. In particular, hotels and exclusive vacations will command growth (BCG, 2017). Nevertheless, research focusing on luxury experiences, compared to luxury goods, is scant. And even more so regarding consumer behaviors in the hospitality industry (Yang and Mattilam, 2013).

In terms of hotel rating, there is no worldwide agreement upon the classification systems and its definitions. Many systems have become outdated due its excessive focus on tangible elements, not capturing the intangible components that elevate an experience to the “luxury level”. Literature suggests that price is one of the most important indicators to define luxury (Aldehayyat, Khattab, and Anchor, 2011), with high prices separating luxury hotels from non-luxury hotels (Lu et al. 2015). However, there is no standard definition of how much is a “high price”.

Looking at current figures of the luxury market, sources are also conflicting. Differences arise from the use of different luxury definitions. Taking BCG (2017) as the main source for this thesis, the global market for luxury goods and services grew 6% in 2017, to an estimated 1.6 trillion euros. In the same period, the experiential luxury category accounted for 585 billion euros, approximately 35% of the luxury market.

2.2 Family tourism

Tourism is the major contributor to several world economies. In 2018, this industry generated 10.4% of the world's gross domestic product (GDP) (World Travel & Tourism Council, 2018), and 8.2% of the Portuguese GDP (Turismo de Portugal, 2019b). There is an overall tendency to privilege foreign tourists and relegate domestic tourism to second plan (Backer, Schänzel, and Yeoman, 2012). Bearing this is in mind, it is worth noting that in 2019, the majority of Portuguese planned to spend summer vacations in Portugal (72%), with Algarve and Alentejo being the regions chosen by 59% (Cetelem, 2019). "Leisure and vacations" motivated 46% of the total number of trips (10,3 million), followed by "Visits to relatives and friends" (41%) (Turismo de Portugal, 2019a). Alongside, 30% of the tourism market is generated by families, as stated by Roman Stern, co-founder of Martinhal Family Hotel and Resorts (Exame, 2019). Indeed, family travel is one of the largest markets in tourism (Schänzel and Yeoman, 2015) and is also "predicted to grow globally at a faster rate than all other forms of leisure travel" (Schänzel, 2013, p. 2). Despite these evidences, research in tourism has not considered families thoroughly, rather focusing on a single individual, without family, children or friends (Obrador, 2012). Additionally, academic research has not yet captured the intimate relation between the desires, motivations and views of each family member, as well as the internal group dynamics (Schänzel and Smith, 2014). Authors highlight that research in families is based solely on the mother's perspective, with fathers and children rarely interviewed (Schanzel and Smith, 2011; Schänzel and Yeoman, 2014). Nonetheless, authors state that decisions taken within the family have become more democratic, with children exerting more influence on parent's decisions (Schänzel and Yeoman, 2014; Li et al. 2017). It has been also identified that families are looking to be active together (Schänzel and Yeoman, 2015). Current and future families will encompass

more heterogeneity, fluidity and mobility, which will ultimately affect the way they spend holidays (Schänzel and Yeoman, 2014). Increased life expectancy and lower birth rates contribute to the verticalization of families (Backer, Schänzel, and Yeoman, 2012), and to the growth of multi-generational vacations and “grandtravel”, as grandparents are more involved (Schänzel and Yeoman, 2014). As daily family moments are becoming scarcer, tourism appears as a facilitator of quality time spent in family (Backer, Schänzel, and Yeoman, 2012). In the foreword of the book “*Family tourism: Multidisciplinary Perspectives*”, Professor Melanie Howard sheds light on the importance of family tourism in a very pragmatic fashion. She states that family is, on one side, the “most universal, enduring and adaptable social institution through which the vast majority of the world’s 7 billion inhabitants will derive their principal source of identification, support and meaning in life”, and that tourism is the largest industry in the world (Backer, Schänzel, & Yeoman, 2012, p. 17). From crossing these two spheres – family and tourism – results a noticeable potential.

2.3 Martinhal Family Hotels & Resorts

In 2010, Chitra and Roman Stern founded, in Sagres, the first luxury hotel in Portugal specifically designed for families. Martinhal Sagres is located in the Natural Park of the Sudoeste Alentejano and Costa Vicentina, facing Martinhal beach. Families are at heart of the group’s vision, with every detail being selected to provide parents and their children a memorable experience. The hotel structures and services mirror this philosophy, featuring restaurants with meals for toddlers, family and baby concierge, KC, outdoor playgrounds, swimming lessons for children and spa for parents and children, to name a few. Martinhal’s price tier, considering the most frequent type of families accommodated

(2 parents and 2 children) in a 2-bedroom house in Sagres, ranges, approximately, from 217€/night (low season) to 660€/night (high season), excluding meals.

In 2015, the hotel was expanded to Quinta do Lago in Algarve. One year later, two new locations opened in Chiado and Cascais. More recently, the group expanded its portfolio and invested in real estate development, with the family luxury apartments “Martinhal Residences”, and the “United Lisbon International School”. As a result of the expansion and diversification, the founders created the “Elegant Group”, an umbrella for the different businesses (Elegant Family Hotels and Resorts, 2019; Martinhal Family Hotels & Resorts, 2018). This entrepreneur spirit and projects have contributed to strengthen the group’s image.

2.3.1 Current positioning statement

According to the Public Relations and Communication Manager, Martinhal is positioned to offer families luxury holidays. Their value proposition lies on providing an excellent experience to all family members. It’s about offering appropriate physical and human infrastructures for children, whilst allowing parents to have time to relax. All of these, without compromising the sophistication and design of the hotel.

The resulting positioning statement, can be presented as follows:

For ***Families***, ***Martinhal*** is a ***luxury family hotel and resort***, that provides ***memorable experiences to all family members through sophisticated infrastructures for children, and collaborators whose priority is the happiness of families***, because it is the ***first family hotel and resort in Portugal***, being ***recognized as the best resort for families*** several times in the last decade. (Based on Kapferer, 2012)

2.3.2 Portuguese families in Martinhal

Approximately 5% of Martinhal’s occupancy is generated by Portuguese clients (see Table 1). Quinta do Lago and Cascais are responsible for the highest occupancy rates, accounting for 10% and 7%, respectively. It is important to mention that in Cascais most of Portuguese clients are from the “Meetings, Incentives, Conferencing, Exhibitions” (MICE) segment. Moreover, in Sagres and Chiado, Portuguese clients account for 4% each.

	Total revenue(%)	PT occupancy (%)	Weighted average of occupancy (%)
Sagres	57	4	2,3
Cascais	24	7	1,7
Quinta do Lago	11	10	1,1
Chiado	8	4	0,3
Total	100		5,4

Table 1. Total revenue and Portuguese (PT) occupancies according to each Martinhal’s hotel.

According to Kapferer & Bastien (2013), a group of loyal customers is the first step to achieve success in luxury. Furthermore, customer loyalty is widely recognized as a key factor to create a sustainable competitive advantage in organizations that provide services (El-Adly, 2019). For luxury brands, the development of a group of loyal customers should, ideally, be established upon the local market. It should be noted, however, that the goal of Martinhal is not to attain a customer base exclusively Portuguese, but rather to increase the relevance of this segment in the overall picture.

When Martinhal Sagres was founded in 2010, Portugal was going through an economic recession, which led the company to direct the majority of its marketing efforts abroad.

After opening a hotel in Cascais (2015), Martinhal expanded its communication to include “The Martinhal Circle”. This offer provides a space where parents can work (“M Bar”), relax or exercise, whilst their children are playing in the KC. They also promote birthday parties and Sunday brunches. In Cascais, this service was created to attract non-resident families.

3. ADDRESSING THE WORK PROJECT TOPIC

3.1 Methodology

3.1.1 Social listening

In order to understand the drivers of satisfaction of Martinhal's Portuguese clients, user-generated reviews were collected from TripAdvisor. More specifically, all the reviews posted by Portuguese clients travelling with family, between January of 2017 and August of 2019. Although Booking reaches a wider audience in Portugal (Marktest, 2019), the sample that TripAdvisor provided was more than fivefold higher (n = 116). In addition, the reviews in this platform were also more comprehensive. All the Martinhal Hotels were included: Cascais (n=54); Sagres (n=51); Quinta do Lago (n=6); and Chiado (n=5). From each review, the title, written content, publication date and the ratings of overall satisfaction (*overall rating*) and six attributes (*rooms, value, location, cleanliness, service and sleeping quality*) were obtained. Ratings varied from a 1 to 5 scale, where 5 is the best score. Subsequently, a qualitative analysis was performed, in which opinions were assembled in groups of associations, and its frequencies registered (see Appendix 1).

3.1.2 Semi-structured in-depth interviews with Martinhal's collaborators

Semi-structured in-depth interviews (n=13), in person, with Martinhal's collaborators were conducted to explore their perception of Portuguese families (see Appendix 2). The median years of work experience in hospitality and Martinhal was 10 and 5 years, respectively. Interviews were reviewed using topic analysis.

3.1.3 Semi-structured in-depth interviews with Portuguese parents

Qualitative semi-structured in-depth interviews, in person, were conducted with medium/high-class and high-class Portuguese parents that had children up to 16 years old

and whose type of family vacations corresponded to Martinhal's price tier (see Appendix 3). Parents' occupations, education and vacations served as a proxy for social status. In order to ensure that the individual was qualified for the qualitative research, a pre-recruiting questionnaire was applied (see Appendix 3). To recruit interviewees, the snowball nonprobability sampling technique was used. Qualitative analysis was also applied. A total of 20 interviews were conducted to 11 female (F) and 9 male (M) parents, with a median age of 39 years (minimum 34; maximum 54). The majority of parents (n=16) had two children. Out of the 20 families, 15 had at least one child younger than 7 years old.

3.1.4 Questionnaires with Portuguese parents

To assess the consistency of the insights that stemmed from the qualitative research a questionnaire was applied (see Appendix 4). The questionnaire was divided in the following sections: type of accommodation; frequency, location and reservation's date; reservation's details; decision factors when choosing a hotel/resort; and children related hotel services. The questionnaire was divulged through WhatsApp and Facebook groups. Frequencies, percentages and proportions were used for data analysis (see Appendix 4). Of the 160 responses, 77 individuals were included in the study. Occupation, as defined by Marktest (2019), education and the type of vacations served as a proxy for economic and social status. Hence, 83 responses were excluded based on the following: pre-recruiting criteria (n=41); occupations were not in Top and/or Middle tier positions (n=33); did not conclude at least a bachelor's degree (n=9). The majority of respondents were female (n=61; 79%). In terms of age's distribution, most respondents (n=48; 62%) were between 35 and 44 years, followed by 25 and 34 years (n=20; 26%). Approximately 43% (n=33) and 44% (n=34) of the respondents had 1 and 2 children, respectively. The

remaining 13% (n=10) had 3 children. Most respondents had at least one child with 5 years or younger (n=56; 73%), and in 35 families (45%) at least one of the children was between 6 and 10 years old.

3.1.5 Participant observation in Martinhal

To further develop and expand the interviews findings, a participation observation period was arranged, during 10 days in Cascais and 4 days in Sagres. In Cascais, I accompanied the reception staff and actively collaborated in the KC scheduled activities with children between 5 and 9 years old. In Sagres, I participated in the “Luxury, Art & Design Weekend”, by accompanying the Martinhal’s event coordinator. Therefore, my role was Participant-as-observer (KC) and Observer-as-participant (Reception and Luxury Weekend), given that my identity and purpose was revealed. This observation period was key, since it was the method that allowed an immersion in Martinhal’s culture and day to day operations and challenges (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2016). Still, one must have in mind that the mere presence of the researcher “may affect the behavior of those being observed”, and consequently impair the reliability and validity of the data collected (Saunders et al., 2016, p. 364).

3.2 Main insights from the research

3.2.1 Behavior of wealthy Portuguese families towards vacations

He also books

In 11 out of the 20 interviewee’s households, women were responsible for choosing and booking the family vacations. In the questionnaires, women also booked vacations more often (n=46; 60%). In any case, it is interesting to note that the number of men that booked

the family vacations was also relevant (n=31; 40%). Moreover, when the stay was abroad, men booked more frequently than women (29 men; 53% versus 26 women; 47%).

Booking.com

Unsurprisingly, *Booking* was the most frequently used platform to make reservations in Portugal (38 out of 77 questionnaires; 49%) and abroad (29 out of 62 questionnaires; 47%). Research indicates that it is the most used platform in Portugal (Marktest 2019).

Resort/hotel with breakfast only

According to the questionnaire results, when spending their vacation in Portugal, most respondents chose a resort/hotel accommodation with breakfast only, especially for short stays (n=32) (see Table 2).

Portugal	Days				Total
	1 - 3	4 - 7	8 - 10	>10	
Own vacation house	9	17	4	5	35
Vacation house of a friend	6	5	1	1	13
Vacation house of a family member	5	6	6	11	28
Independent rented vacation house	4	10	2	4	20
Resort vacation house	15	8	4	2	29
Resort/hotel with all-inclusive	9	14	11	-	34
Resort/hotel with half board	2	5	-	-	7
Resort/hotel with breakfast only	32	11	-	-	43
Total	82	76	28	23	209

Table 2. Questionnaire results on accommodation type and duration of stay in Portugal (absolute frequencies).

Personal and relative's vacation house

In the interview phase, 6 parents stated using a personal vacation house frequently, throughout the year. This was supported by the questionnaires, where personal holiday house was the second most chosen accommodation (see Table 2). A family member's

house (n=28) was also a frequent choice (see Table 2). Spending a few days with the extended family was a yearly tradition for some interviewees (I1, I9, I10, I12, I16, I18, I20).

“We had just finished a cruise to the Greek islands with my parents, so we knew that we wanted to spend some days in Portugal as well. My parents have a house in Algarve, and we always like to use the summer holidays to be with the whole family (...)” (I10, F, Consultant Manager, Children’s age: 6 and 9 years old)

Resort/hotel with all-inclusive

The third most common type of accommodation and board was resort/hotel with all-inclusive (n=34). During the interviews, this type of plan was in fact mentioned as an important decision factor to parents with babies and toddlers. Some respondents (I1, I4, I8, I11, I13 and I14) highlighted that having all the meals included meant having more time to rest (besides looking after their children). It is worth mentioning that all these parents had children between 3 months and 5 years old.

“We went to a hotel with “all inclusive” (...). We chose it due to the possibility of having all the meals included without cooking them, and not having that extra concern besides the baby” (I13, M, Medical Doctor, Child’s age: 1,5 years old)

Nevertheless, this pattern was not clear in the questionnaires. When parents that had at least one child, between 0 and 5 years old (n=56; 73%), were asked to rate the importance of having all-included in one package, the answers were evenly distributed: 19 rated as “Not important at all” or “Not very important”, 16 as “Important” and 20 as “Very important” or “Extremely important”.

Proximity to the beach

It was mentioned by some respondents (I5, I6, I8, I11, I12) that having the beach within walking distance was an important decision factor. Accordingly, when asked to rate the importance of “being located from a short walking distance relative to the beach”, 75

respondents (97%), rated this decision factor as “Important” (n=25), “Very important” (n=24) and “Extremely important” (n=21).

Weekends

During interviews several parents (I4, I5, I10, I12, I14, I16, I19, I20), stated using weekends to get to know Portugal.

“This weekend I went to Douro (...). For us parents it was the discovery of a region that we did not know, and for the kids a different experience. Something that would please everyone, regardless of age” (I20, F, Journalist, Children’s age: 6 and 10 years old)

3.2.2 Behavior of wealthy Portuguese parents towards parenthood

“Intensive” parenthood

A number of parents (I2, I8, I9, I18) explicitly (or implicitly) mentioned being super-protective and constantly worried about their children’s well-being. This is illustrated by the usage of expressions such as “helicopter parent”, “neurotic”, “fear”, “guilt” and “regret”.

“I only leave my kids with their grandparents (laughs). It is not that other people are not competent, but I am very pessimistic. (...) Nowadays, if we leave them at home while we go out, we don't feel guilty anymore. I remember one time that we went just the two of us, and I was constantly calling to check on them” (I18, F, Nurse, Children’s age: 10, 12 and 15 years old)

“We are a bit protective, especially with this being our first kid, our instinct is to be super-protective. I think that parents that have to leave their children very soon, probably struggle less. She always stayed with her grandparents and never stayed with strangers, so it's difficult for us” (I8, M, Dentist, Child’s age: 3 years old)

The above mentioned behaviors are in line with what was found in a doctoral thesis on maternity models in Portugal, specifically that the prevailing model is “intensive” (César 2019). This model states that “mothers should be the central caregivers of children and the ideal child rearing is time intensive, guided by experts, and emotionally engrossing”

(Christopher, 2012, p. 75). Mothers might renounce their own wills and necessities, with children's wishes and needs being the most important. It is also interesting to note that male parents are increasingly participating in the child's care. However, their behavior is also "intensive", and rather than easing the mother's job, both parents engage in intensive parenting (César 2019).

More challenging, seems the balance between parenting and professional careers. During interviews, the expression "long working hours" arose quite frequently, and this was supported by data gathered from the questionnaire. When asked how many hours per week respondents spent in their jobs, 40 out of 77 (52%) stated spending between 40 and 50 hours (n=26) and more than 50 hours (n=14). It is also worth noting that amongst the 40 respondents, 10 additionally worked at home between 10 to 20 hours, and 16 up to 10 hours. From these 40 respondents, 28 were women. It is not surprising that employed mothers are several times confronted with feelings of guilt, inadequacy and not having enough time (Hays, 1996). Possibly, improving the economic conditions of their families and/or investing in a career, comes with the cost of working several hours and sacrificing potential quality-time with their families.

"The fact that I was away from work was rest. My work is really intense. So, if I am only with my family, I feel mentally rested. Regardless of the physical fatigue" (I10, F, Consultant Manager, Children's age: 6 and 9 years old)

"The vacations are a bit tiring. In the other hand, during the year we work, and we don't have much time to be with her. So, it's a "nice fatigue" (I8, M, Dentist, Child's age: 3 years old)

"Intensive" parenting coupled with long working hours (job and/or home), seems to have an impact on the way parents make use of services oriented for their children and choose their holidays.

Kids Club versus family activities

From the 20 interviewed parents, 11 were not very keen to use the KC. For some interviewees, it was difficult to spend quality time with their kids, due to their jobs. In this sense, several parents (I2, I4, I6, I8, I10, I20) mentioned that holidays “are to be spent with their children” or “in family”.

“We don't value the Kids Club. I don't feel like spending my vacations at a club for kids. I like to spend the holidays with them. During the year we work a lot, and this is an opportunity to be with them” (I6, F, Doctor, Children's age: 7 months and 4 years old)

“We don't use KC because we always have optional programs that they can do with us. We already stayed in hotels with KC and I would say, that overall, my kids don't like very much to be on that type of activities, they enjoy more being with us” (I20, F, Journalist, Children's age: 6 and 10 years old)

For a few, leaving their kids at the KC appeared to be a source of guilt or it was not even considered. Secondly, for some families, children were considered too young to be left in the KC.

“We don't explore the Kids Club much. We don't like to leave the kids there (embarrassed/laughing). We are in family, and my daughter was 5 years old. She was still very small. I am very protective (...)” (I2, F, Medical Doctor, Children's age: 16 months, 8 years old)

When considering the 6 interviewees that reported using the KC (I7, I9, I10, I11, I12, I14), there were differences in their behavior. On one hand, there were parents that mentioned only using the KC under their supervision, either due to the children's age (I7, I11) or to the fact that the kids did not want to stay without them (I14).

“(...) my kids are very small. They are not in that "feeling" yet. He (the eldest, 3 years old) never stayed alone in the Kids Club. I was there with him a couple of times. He would not stay without me” (I7, M, Dentist, Children's age: 7 months and 3 years old)

“We used the Kids Club around 2 to 3 hours. But we never left the kids alone there. We did not leave them there because they wanted to be with us all the time” (I14, M, Doctor, Children's age: 1, 5 and 5 years old)

On the other hand, one of the parents mentioned using the KC frequently, but not without checking on their children every couple of hours.

The aforementioned insights are in line with the questionnaire's results. From the 70 respondents that stayed in a resort, 42 (55%) used the KC, but solely as a facility to play with their children, rather than dropping them in. It is worth noting that 36 of these 42 respondents (86%), also played with their children outdoor, an additional 2 to 6 hours a day. Finally, 15 respondents (36%) reported using the KC only up to 2 hours.

It seems that Portuguese parents prefer activities in which they can participate with their children, outdoors. Furthermore, when asked to rate the impact of several factors in the choice of a hotel, the great majority, considered the existence of activities designed for the entire family, as "important" (n=25; 32%) and "very important" (n=34; 44%).

When looking at the 28 respondents that did not use the KC at all (neither to drop their children, nor to play with them), 21 of them (75%), rated as "important" (n=11) or "very important" (n=10), "the existence of infrastructures where my children can play and be part of activities supervised by monitors". This indicates a disparity between the intention to use and actual use of the KC.

Babysitting

In the questionnaires, when asked about babysitting, all the respondents with at least one child up to 12 years old (n=65) stated that they did not use it. This is something that might be intimately related with the parental model previously mentioned.

Preference to stay in Portugal

A few interviewees (n=6) preferred to stay in Portugal during vacations while children are still "young". "Young", according to their perspective, ranged between 0 and 8 years. One parent (I3) reported that the first time she went abroad with her children, her youngest was 8 years. She stated that before that age, she feared that the trip would be excessively

demanding, both for parents and children. Another parent (I5) also stated that the first time he went abroad with his children, the youngest was 7 years. Four interviewees took their children abroad for the first time, when they were 4 years old or younger (I9, I11, I14, I15).

“From the moment they were born, we started doing shorter vacations, and in Portugal. The concern was always the logistics with the meals, diapers, the chance of getting sick. I know that there are couples that do long trips, even adventurous ones, but we were never that kind of family. From the moment they were born, we started getting more defensive and lazier” (I9, F, Medical Doctor, Children’s age: 10 and 12 years old)

3.2.3 Perception of wealthy Portuguese parents of Martinhal’s value proposition

Martinhal Family Hotels & Resorts

Only 1 (I5) out of 20 interviewees stayed in Martinhal. At first, when asked about Martinhal, the interviewee stated that even though he knew Martinhal Cascais, we could not recall how. The interviewee associated it to a “beautiful, high-end hotel with superior quality, that it is not cheap”. Regarding price, he also referred that in the low season there are attractive deals. Interestingly, only when referring that he also knew Martinhal Sagres, he was able to understand how exactly he knew Martinhal Cascais so well:

“Ah! I was there with my family. I was confusing. We were there 3 or 4 years ago, in September. I remember being with my kids in the pool. I remember they had a Kids Club in the middle of the trees. We went 2 days. We arrived Friday and left Sunday”

When asked to further develop how his family used Martinhal’s services, he stated he could not recall exactly:

“I don’t remember. I know we used the KC and the pool”

Martinhal was a known hotel group for 13 out of the 20 interviewees. Eight of them knew Martinhal well, 5 of whom considered it overpriced (I1, I10, I11, I12, I19). They felt that the price was not in line with the perceived added value. Importantly, 3 of the latter 5 interviewees seemed used to stay at luxury hotels, both in Portugal and abroad.

“We don't mind paying more when we think that the added value justifies it. But when I look at other options, (...) that we will probably enjoy, with the opportunity to pay less ... ” (I10, F, Advisory Consultant, Children’s age: 6 and 9 years old)

“It's expensive. I searched it and compared it with other hotels. It looked very interesting (...) Recently, we stayed at Sheraton in Cascais and our final choice was between Sheraton and Martinhal. We stayed at Sheraton due to the price difference” (I12, M, Bank Administrator, Children’s age: 3 and 7 years old)

For the remaining 5 interviewees that had heard about Martinhal, the key association was “Family hotel”, an image with different meanings (see Table 3).

Interviewee	Children's age	Association	Quote
3	16 and 20 y	Family hotel	<i>"At this stage of their life [referring to 16 and 20 years old daughters], I don't think they would appreciate a hotel like that "</i>
6	7 m and 4 y		<i>"I don't want to go to a hotel with a lot of kids . We don't need to have a lot of things that are specific for them. (...) I don't look for hotels based on being children-friendly "</i>
8	3 y		<i>"When we go with our daughter, we want to spend time with her. We don't value much other services. (...) I would not look for "family" or kids" when searching for a hotel. I would pay because I liked it, but not because they payed special attention to children "</i>
9	10 and 12 y		<i>"Actually, I learned about it 2 days ago. I follow a brazilian writer and comedian, called Tati Bernardi, that I absolutely love (...) She stayed at Martinhal. From what I understood, they had services for children "</i>
14	1,5 and 5 y		<i>"It's one that opened in Cascais that has a big Kids Club?! That even has trampolines?! I have heard of it"</i>

Table 3. Meaning of “Family Hotel” according to each interviewee that knew Martinhal.

Of note, from the positive associations retrieved from TripAdvisor, following the “*Excellency of Staff*” (n=53), the second most frequent association was “*Family as the focus*” (n=40). Portuguese clients seem to appreciate the fact that Martinhal’s human and physical infrastructures are developed with families in mind. Concurrently, 94% (n=72) of the respondents evaluated the decision factor “the fact that the hotel is oriented for families” as “Important” (n=27), “Very important” (n=27) and “Extremely important” (n=18). In similar fashion, 74 parents (96%) rated as “Important” (n=15), “Very

Important” (n=29) and “Extremely Important” (n=29) “the fact that children are not seen as a disturbing element of other guest’s experience”.

When interviewees (n=7) that were not aware of Martinhal, were shown the hotel’s website and asked if they would pay for a stay, 3 of them stated “Yes”. Of these 3, interviewees 2 and 4 seemed used to stay at hotels of the same price-level, in Portugal and abroad. Interviewee 13 would stay, but only for a couple of days.

“I would if they had a well-defined advantage (...). I would have to do my own search first, but it seems to be interesting. Probably, for a week the invoice would be high, but maybe for a couple of days it could be interesting” (I13, M, Medical Doctor, Child’s age: 1,5 years old)

The interviewees (I15, I16, I17, I18) that were unlikely to stay at Martinhal mentioned the following reasons: preference for rural accommodations; do not specifically search for family hotels; do not value children-oriented hotels; and high price.

Portuguese-speaking staff

According to the collaborator’s interviews, overall, Portuguese clients prefer Portuguese-speaking employees.

“(...) we always have Portuguese-speaking elements in all shifts. (...) and we try that Portuguese clients are served by Portuguese-speaking staff. (...) I think that the clients are very sensitive to that” (Food & Beverage Director, Sagres)

When analyzing TripAdvisor’s reviews, the lack of Portuguese-speaking staff was a negative association mentioned by the Portuguese clients (n=5) that stayed in Sagres.

“Martinhal is oriented for the foreign market, and that is why there are employees that do not speak a word of Portuguese. Some of our orders had to be placed in English” (F, Sagres, Overall rating 4)

Collaborator's experience with Portuguese clients

During the observation period, in the hotel receptions of Cascais and Sagres, it became clear that the overall experience of collaborators with Portuguese clients is not always a positive one, with several clients conveying a sense of superiority. Noteworthy, this piece of information was obtained in an informal environment, where collaborators were more open to express freely and honestly. Concurrently, in the interview with the Food & Beverage Director in Cascais, Portuguese might be, unwittingly, sensing a differential treatment:

“What is evident is a small resentment, that has existed since ever. If something goes wrong, it is because you are Portuguese, and it never happens with foreigners. This feeling firstly appeared (...) when Algarve blossomed for British and German operators... Portuguese clients were not filling the region's hotels, so it is natural that Algarve adapted to receive other markets. Nowadays, this feeling has faded.”

4. DISCUSSION

Martinhal's value proposition is to provide parents an opportunity to relax and enjoy, whilst their children are constructively entertained and taken care of. However, for wealthy Portuguese families, spending time without their children during the holiday seems less attractive. A demanding job with several working hours may justify this finding. This fact was also identified by Martinhal's collaborators:

“(...) I try to pass on to my team that sometimes when people come here, it is the only week that they have to be together during the year. Nowadays, people work a lot. It's not only a matter of financial availability, but of available time, as well” (Food & Beverage Director, Sagres)

Besides long working hours, an “intensive” parental model may also justify the findings. Compared to other countries, it seems that for Portuguese parents, vacations equal spending as much time as possible with the whole family. In this line, a number of Martinhal's collaborators (n=5) also mentioned that Portuguese parents tend to spend more time with their children and to be more protective.

“In contrast to the British, Portuguese parents like to be closer to their children all the time. I think it is cultural. Portuguese parents do not leave their children alone for long periods” (Family Concierge Manager, Cascais)

This is in accordance with what was referred by the Kids & Leisure Supervisor in Cascais:

“(...) only rarely they ask for babysitting, whereas parents from other countries easily leave their kids with us (...)”

Martinhal’s value proposition does not seem to match the way wealthy Portuguese parents want to spend their vacations with their children. It is interesting to note that considering the use of the KC, parents were very defensive. It appeared that given that Martinhal’s offer did not match the way these families want to spend vacations in family, parents felt the need to provide justifications, such as “my children are too young”; “my children don’t stay without me”; “I want to be with my family”. There is in fact a gap between Martinhal’s value proposition, in which KC is a vital piece, and what Portuguese families attribute value to. While other cultures perceive the idea of leaving their children in the KC as something natural and even positive for the children’s development, Portuguese parents seem to feel guilty or don’t value that option.

Visiting cities around Portugal with children during weekends appears to be an attractive choice for Portuguese families. In addition, staying in resorts/hotel with breakfast only for 1 to 3 days is an appealing vacation program. This might be related to the fact that getting to know a new location usually involves experimenting its gastronomy. During collaborator’s interviews it was often mentioned that Portuguese clients go to Martinhal Cascais mainly during the weekend. These short stays are to visit the surrounding points of interest. Also, Portuguese clients tend to arrive early and leave as late as possible, with late checkout being a common request.

“Normally they come on the weekend. For instance, tomorrow we have 20 rooms entering. 11 of them are Portuguese” (Family Concierge Manager, Cascais)

Parents with young children tend to look for all-inclusive hotels. Not having to worry with meal preparation seems important in the decision making. Martinhal does not possess an “All-inclusive” service. Instead, proposes a “Full board” system, in which drinks are not included. When comparing offers, this boarding option probably excludes Martinhal from the initial consideration set.

5. MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS TO MARTINHAL

Martinhal’s focus on families and children is appreciated by Portuguese families. However, to be perceived as valuable, the focus must lie on activities that include the whole family, in addition to the current offer. In other words, provide experiences for all the family members, besides the ones provided for parents and children, separately.

First and foremost, in order to attract Portuguese families to Martinhal, we recommend the creation of a distinctive value proposition with a different message: a brand that provides memorable experiences for the whole family. It is important to stress that we do not recommend Martinhal to change its current value proposition to other targets, but rather to add one solely intended to attract Portuguese families.

Hence, we suggest the following positioning statement:

For *Portuguese Families*, Martinhal is a luxury family hotel and resort, that provides memorable experiences to all family members through sophisticated infrastructures for children and *activities that parents can enjoy with their children*, and collaborators whose priority is the happiness of families, because it is the first family hotel and resort in Portugal, being recognized as the best resort for families several times in the last decade.

In line with the suggested positioning statement, we also recommend:

- Outdoor activities that can be played by the whole family and independently from any staff (for example, human size checkers or four in a line).
- Low-season all-inclusive packages for families with children up to 5 years old.
- Create an optional “First baby vacation’s package” that excludes the romantic dinner with babysitting hours and includes 2 individual massages, that can be used separately.
- Develop a specific weekend package that includes accommodation, breakfast as the only meal in the hotel, lunch in a regional restaurant, visits to the main points of interest and optional activities for the whole family.
- In the Portuguese version of the website, activities for families should have greater emphasis and possess a tab of its own.

Bearing in mind the aforementioned recommendations, it is important to understand if it is sustainable for Martinhal to stretch their offer and operate under 2 distinctive value propositions, in order to attract wealthy Portuguese families. If yes, it is also worth studying in which hotels should the strategy be introduced.

6. PROJECT LIMITATIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

6.1 Limitations

Firstly, a few interviews were conducted during working time. In-depth interviews are meant to encourage respondents to talk and comprehensively explain their answers (Veal 2018). In this sense, time pressure might have limited access to other thoughts.

Secondly, it should be noted that the associations retrieved from Trip Advisor mainly represent Sagres and Cascais hotels, given the extremely reduced number of reviews concerning Chiado e Quinta do Lago.

Finally, the samples of the parent's interviews and questionnaire were restricted to the Lisbon district. There might be differences in the family's behavior according to each Portuguese region, not captured in the present study.

6.2 Further research

Extending this research to other Portuguese districts would be important to assess the consistency of the data obtained. Also, interviews with Portuguese clients of Martinhal could provide additional insights. A cost-effective analysis is necessary to understand if the effort of implementing our recommendations is financially sustainable. It could also be interesting to replicate this study with clients of other nationalities and compare it with our research.

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8. APPENDICES

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Appendix 1 – Map of Associations (TripAdvisor)

Table 1 - Negative Associations

	RESTAURANT	BREAKFAST	PRICE	PORTUGUESE	POOL	KIDS CLUB	ACTIVITIES	CLEANLINESS	ROOMS	STAFF										
CA	Improve gastronomy	CH	Lack of variety	CA	SA	The great majority of the staff does not speak portuguese	CA	Cold interior pool	CA	Waiting list to drop children	CA	Absence of non paid activities for the family	QL	The cleanliness was horrible	SA	The rooms could be more modern, namely considering decoration	CA	Table service was poor. It was always missing something		
CA	Include drinks on the meal	CH	Slow service	SA	SA	Above average considering Algarve	SA	It is a shame that there is a huge percentage of employees that do not speak portuguese. Does not makes any sense: being in Portugal and having to speak english with the employee	CA	Small pool, considering the dimension and level of the hotel	SA	Zone with potential but without the needed support	CA	Absence of animation after dinner	SA	Fell short	SA	The rooms located below Terraço restaurant, on the reception's building, are subject to noise since very early in the morning	SA	Poor reception service. Abandoned hotel with staff below what is needed
CA	We did not enjoy the meals in neither of the restaurants	CA	Confusing and noisy	SA	SA	Excessively expensive considering conditions offered	SA	Their offer is directed for the foreigners and therefore there elements of the staff that do not speak portuguese. Some of our requests had to be in english	CA	Could be 1/2 degrees hotter	SA	Space was lacking at least one more employee	SA	Several activities for children, few for adults	n = 2		n = 2		n = 2	
CA	Must improve	CA	Wait for table	SA	SA	Excessively expensive considering room	SA	Some of the employees not even portuguese spoke	SA	Temperature	n = 3		n = 3							
CA	The dinner is poor considering a restaurant of this level	CA	Wait for table	SA	SA	Hefty for portuguese	SA	In several occasions, our requests were received by people that did not understand or could not express theirselves in portuguese. I think that this is inadmissible	n = 4											
CA	Buffer dinner is poor	CA	Must improve	SA	SA	Absurd price/quality relationship	n = 5													
CA	Waiting time	CA	Poor considering local quality	SA	SA	Excellent, but very expensive														
CA	Price/Quality relationship	CA	Falls short, when considering the rest of the hotel	SA	SA	I gave 4 stars only because the price/quality ratio is tight. It is an excessively expensive option														
CA	Price/Quality relationship	SA	A lot of people. Difficult to move	SA	SA		n = 8													
CA	Decreasing of service quality comparing with previous stay	SA	Food without quality and replacement	SA	SA															
CA	Terraço is excessively gourmet	SA	Lack of variety	SA	SA															
CA	MBAR only had tomato soup	n = 11																		
CA	Size of the meals excessively small																			
CA	Size of the meals excessively small																			
CA	Some disorientation																			
CA	Overall, restaurants leave much to be desired																			
CA	Poor set of options/The service it's not leveled with the rest of the hotel (MBAR)																			
CA	Poor set options (MBAR)																			
SA	Dinner was expensive considering the quality. Lunch was not great																			
SA	Food-wise, I think they lost quality																			
SA	Excessively expensive and reservation has to be made																			
SA	On the pool's bar, the food could have more variety																			
SA	Price/Quality relationship																			

n = 23

Table 2 - Positive Associations – PART 1

STAFF		FAMILIAR		SPACE for CHILDREN		HOTEL		ROOMS	
Q L	Excellent staff	Q L	Fantastic place for families	Q L	Outdoor activities	Q L	Fabulous	C H	Spacious and well decorated
C H	5 stars	Q L	Ideal for families	C H	Great space for children's entertainment	Q L	Interesting infrastructures and well cared area	C A	Great
C H	Excellent, Excellent treatment of the children	Q L	Great environment and excellent place for vacations with the family	C A	Outdoor playground and children have access to both interior and exterior pools	C H	Welcoming	C A	Great
C H	Amazing team, nice and caring	C H	Recommended for any family with children	C A	Fantastic space for children	C A	Nice hotel	C A	Great
C A	Caring workers	C H	The best place to be with the family	C A	Equipments for children, outdoor playground	C A	Very beautiful space	C A	Great
C A	Caring workers	C A	Suited for families with children	C A	Excellent equipments for children	C A	Magnificent space	S A	Very good
C A	Caring workers	C A	Excellent to spend some days in family, especially with children	C A	Great entertainment and activities for children	C A	Luxurious hotel	S A	Spacious and comfortable
C A	Nice and helpful	C A	Excelente hotel for children (all the commodities to spend a day in family)	C A	Several entertainments	C A	All the infrastructures are excellent and especially well cared for an experience with the family	S A	Very good
C A	Professionalism and care of the instructors with the children	C A	Everything in this hotel was thought with children in mind	C A	Children love all the available activities	C A	Excellent infrastructures	S A	Very good
C A	Elements worried with the children's well-being	C A	Perfect space to take the family	C A	Simply fantastic for children's entertainment	C A	Lindo hotel por dentro e por fora	S A	Very good
C A	Incredible available, nice and well-mannered	C A	Unmissable with family. The experience fo the kids is incredible	C A	Activities for children are great	C A	Excellent spaces	S A	Very good
C A	Caution with the smallest	C A	Exceptional for families	C A	Areas for children are great	C A	Beautiful hotel. Very well treated gardens. All the surroundings of the hotel are very beautiful	S A	Extremely spacious, well cleaned and equiped
C A	The human aspect makes the difference	C A	Good for families with children	C A	Great conditions for children	C A	Large and well furnished spaces	S A	Spacious, well furnished and with a spectacular balcony
C A	Nice staff and always ready to help	C A	Excellent hotel to spend one or two days with the family, namely with children	C A	Well treated exterior with several activities	C A	Beautiful hotel areas	S A	Excellent
C A	All the elements of the hotel treat the guests, especially children, in an exemplary manner	C A	We can be with our family in a very relaxed way	C A	The kids loved it. There are several activities for them	C A	Excellent hotel with extraordinary conditions	S A	Excellent bed and mattress. Large and very functional bathroom
C A	Caring and helpful	C A	Excellent hotel to stay with children	C A	Excellent activities available	C A	Excellent hotel with extraordinary conditions	S A	Very comfortable
C A	Special attention paid to the smaller elements of the families, which makes the hotel unique and recommendable	C A	Fantastic hotel for families	C A	There are several activities	C A	Large spaces	S A	Clean and spacious
C A	Caring and nice team	C A	Space crafted with families in mind	C A	Great for children	C A	Excellent conditions for children. Well cared common areas	S A	Excellent room and bathroom
C A	Delighted with the attention and the total availability with the children	C A	Perfect for families with children. Everything is very well thought and works	C A	Espetacular (KC)	C A	Hotel fantástico com um enquadramento lindo	S A	Large, modern and comfortable
C A	Great service	C A	All the spaces are oriented for families and children	C A	Fantastic (KC)	C A	Stylish and warming decoration	S A	Clean, big and comfortable
C A	5 stars organization and friendliness, with details that make the difference (welcoming kit)	C A	Very good experience with solutions for families with children	C A	Fantastic (KC)	C A	A 5 stars hotel, considering all aspects	S A	We stayed on an elegant villa with two rooms with a contemporary and comfortable decoration
C A	Super nice	C A	Excellent familiar experience	C A	Fantastic (KC)	S A	Exceeded expectations	S A	Big
C A	Friendliness of the employees	C A	Fantastic hotel for the family	C A	Excellent (KC)	S A	Very well equiped villa, with everything that is needed	S A	Large, with light and with a fantastic bed
C A	Super friendly, devoted and competent staff	C A	Great hotel for families	C A	Very good (KC)	S A	Good conditions and comfort	S A	Excellent rooms, great bathroom
C A	Very nice people, well-mannered and always ready to help	C A	It is a true luxury hotel, where, nonetheless, everything is perfectly organized and well prepared to receive all the family elements	C A	5* (KC)	S A	Good and well cared infrastructures. The resort is beautiful and suited for children	S A	The room appeared like a camping bungalow and not like a 5 stars hotel rooms, but inside is wonderful
C A	Excellent service	C A	Divine to be with children	S A	Several places created with great detail, with children in mind	S A	Excellent commodities (rooms, pools, restaurants and all the equipments for children)	S A	Big and well furnished
C A	Very nice and professional	C A	Ideal for vacations or weekends with the family	S A	Very interesting places for children	S A	Loved the architecture	S A	n = 26

Table 2 - Positive Associations – PART 1 (cont.)

S A	I want to thank all the team	C A	Fantastic familiar experience	S A	Hotel with excellent infrastructures, both physic and human, to cater to the ambitious needs of the kids	S A	Both the apartments and the common areas are totally equipped to receive children with security, comfort and fun
S A	Super nice	C A	Perfect hotel to go with children	S A	With everything that is needed for children. Leisure offer is 5 stars	S A	Exemplary infrastructure
S A	The swimming lesson given to our son. For the first time, our little boy swam without help. We will never forget. Thank you for the friendliness of all the team	C A	Everything was prepared to receive families, with activities for all the ages	S A	There are no flaws when the subject is "children"	S A	Excellent taste regarding decoration. Contemporary style
S A	Very nice and helpful	C A	Fabulous hotel to those who have children	S A	Overall, good infrastructures, and great infrastructures for children	S A	Architecture, decoration and comfort
S A	Very nice employees, especially in the Kids Club	S A	Excellent place to spend family vacations	S A	Both spaces and staff are totally prepared to attend families and their children	S A	Ample spaces, full of light, with extremely beautiful landscapes
S A	Very nice and helpful	S A	Excellent to those who have children. Our kids are very well treated and have a lot activities to chose from	S A	Perfect infrastructures for children, with a lot of entertainment	S A	Fantastic infrastructures
S A	Very nice and helpful	S A	Hotel that is clearly oriented for families	S A	Maravilhoso para crianças! Inúmeros parques, divertimentos, piscinas e as mais diversas infraestruturas para os mais pequenos	n = 33	
S A	Very nice	S A	Everything that is needed to enjoy a relaxed and fun family vacations	S A	Resort crafted with families in mind, with several equipments for children		
S A	Excellent employees, considering both kindness and efficiency. The quality of the service was amazing. For those who have small children, the staff is incredibly ready to receive and understand them	S A	Excellent hotel for active vacations with the family	S A	Totalmente virado para o bem-estar e divertimento das crianças	n = 38	
S A	Very good service	S A	great for families with children. Special attention to kids during the check in	S A	Great offer of activities, both ashore and onshore		
S A	5 stars service	S A	Wonderful resort for families, especially with children	S A	Kids clubs has well thought and organized activities	n = 40	
S A	5 stars service	S A	Perfect resort for families with children	n = 53			
S A	The staff's performance is invisible, but deserves all the merit	S A	Ideal hotel for vacations with children				
S A	Exceptional collaborators. Always ready to help	S A	A very pleasant weekend in the ideal resort to spend quality time with your family				
S A	Very nice and helpful	S A	Excellent resort for family vacations				
S A	Excellent service	n = 40					
S A	Workers, especially Salvador, very devoted and helpful	n = 53					
S A	A very special "thank you" to all the workers						
S A	Friendly and professional. Quality of the service, overall						
S A	Very good service, nice and familiar environment. Very caring with children						
S A	The staff is very professional and helpful with everybody						
S A	Always alert, available and very nice						
S A	Amazing people, always ready to help and delight						
S A	The best is the quality and the friendliness of the staff						
S A	All the staff, without exception, extraordinarily friendly						
S A	Nice and helpful service						
S A	This hotel only gains its true glare if we mention the service oriented to the well-being of the family						
S A	Nice staff, with both children and adults						

Table 2 - Positive Associations – PART 2

	PEACE		INTENTION TO RETURN		LOCATION		RESTAURANT		BREAKFAST		CLEANLINESS		VIEW
QL	Rest and quietness	CA	Space to revisit	CH	1	CA	Excellent quality	CA	Great	CH	1	SA	1
QL	Peace and comfort	CA	We will certainly come back	CA	1	CA	Impeccable service and amazing food (Terraço)	CA	We liked it very much	CA	1	SA	1
CH	Ideal for family rest	CA	We will certainly come back	CA	1	CA	Kid's corner	CA	Pleasant and always with children in mind	CA	1	SA	1
CH	Quality rest	CA	Hotel to come back, again and again	CA	1	CA	Very good food	CA	Delicious for everyone	CA	1	SA	1
CA	Excellent to relax	CA	I will certainly come back	CA	1	CA	Super complete menu for babies and children	CA	Diversified and with truly natural juices	CA	1	SA	1
CA	To rest with children	CA	We will certainly repeat the experience	CA	1	CA	Delicious food	CA	Very good	CA	Clean and comfortable accommodations	SA	1
CA	The comfort is great and the environment is relaxing	CA	Experience to repeat	CA	1	CA	Great meals, very well presented. Parents can peacefully chat while kids play on a zone prepared to receive them	CA	Very good	CA	The place, the space, everything was impeccably clean and organized	SA	1
CA	Calm and comfortable place	CA	Experience to repeat	SA	1	SA	Well prepared food (Terraço)	CA	Wonderful	SA	Exceeded expectations	SA	1
CA	Peaceful	CA	Experience to repeat	SA	1	SA	Space for kids in the restaurant are truly a salvation. We can have a rested meal	CA	Good quality	SA	Everything was well cleaned	SA	1
CA	Tranquility oasis	CA	We will come back and recommend	SA	1	SA	Good restaurants with original and well served plates	CA	Delicious, with great variety	SA	They clean the rooms twice a day	SA	1
CA	Martinhal Cascais has all the characteristics of a 5 stars hotel with a peaceful, relaxing and welcome environment. It is a perfect retreat, away from the confusion of the city	CA	We will certainly repeat and also try other Martinhal's spaces	SA	1	SA	The restaurant had a menu with meals adapted to babies from 4 months old	CA	Excellent	SA	Great cleanliness and maintenance of the infrastructures	SA	1
SA	Um silêncio e calma que nos conseguem trazer uma paz	CA	Experience to repeat	SA	1	SA	Good	SA	Good	SA	Everything was so clean and well treated	SA	1
SA	Recomendo a todos os que procuram uma estadia sossegada com crianças	SA	We will certainly come back	SA	1	SA	Good	SA	Good	SA	Flawless	SA	1
SA	Calma e sossego, apesar de muitas crianças. Há sempre algo para fazer ou lugares para descontrair	SA	Overall, we loved the stay and intend to come back	SA	1	SA	Great gastronomy	SA	Very good	SA	Impeccable cleaning service	SA	1
SA	Everything was calm. You can breathe peace	SA	Experience to repeat	SA	1	SA	Great variety, that cater to several types of diets and that distinguishes itself for the innovations, freshness and excellent quality	SA	Excellent with products with high quality	SA	Excellent and very clean infrastructures	n = 14	
SA	A paradise to rest	SA	Experience to repeat	SA	1	SA	The dinners were great	SA	Full english breakfast of quality	SA	Clean, spacious and beautiful		
SA	Very well thought place to rest. Adequate for families	SA	We will certainly come back	SA	1	SA	Comfortable restaurant and excellent food	n = 16		n = 16			
SA	A week in this resort it is almost therapeutic. Two moments a day of pure rest. I could not remember the last time that I read two straight hours without being interrupted	SA	We will certainly come back		n = 17		n = 17						
SA	It is worth for the peace		n = 18										
			n = 19										

Table 2 - Positive Associations – PART 3

ACCOMMODATION		POOL	COUPLE MOMENTS		GREEN AREAS	BEACH	WELCOMING KIT (number of mentions)		FOOD, overall	SPA					
Q L	Great	Q L	Excellent individual pools	C A	The couple can have a great experience, even with their children	Q L	Common and green areas	S A	Fantastic	C A	1	C A	Great food	C A	Quality
Q L	Great and spacious accommodations	C A	Excellent	C A	We had the deserved rest, with incredible moments shared with the children	Q L	Spaces surrounding the hotel was extremely well treated	S A	Fantastic	C A	1	SA	I recommend the food	SA	I was well attended and spoiled
C H	Huge space, equipped with everything that is needed	S A	Impeccable	C A	Parents can rest, which is normally difficult with children	Q L	Wonderful gardens	S A	Easy access	C A	1	SA	Great quality		n = 2
C A	Quality	S A	Impeccable	C A	Possibility of having peace and enjoying	C A	Decorations, gardens and the nature surrounding	S A	Easy access to the beach. Beautiful	SA	1	SA	Very good food		
C A	Amplios, situados numa localização privilegiada	S A	Heated pools are a great advantage	C A	Offers the opportunity of having couple time	C A	Very nice green areas	S A	Incredible landscapes and an extremely beautiful beach	SA	1				n = 4
C A	Wonderful house, totally equiped and extremely welcoming with all the imaginable commodities, taken to an extreme comfort and well-being	S A	Fantastic pool	S A	Parents also end up having quality time, which is very nice	C A	Impeccable garden		n = 5		n = 5				
S A	House with a lot of light, comfortable	S A	Great interior pool	S A	Hotel offers several services that benefit parents	C A	Very well treated gardens								
S A	House with modern design	S A	Interior and exterior pool were both heated		n = 7		n = 7								
S A	Beautiful houses		n = 8												
S A	Houses are well equiped, specifically the kitchen														
	n = 10														

Appendix 2 - Martinhal's collaborator's Interview Guide

1. Warm-up

Good morning/afternoon/evening. My name is Joana Ramos and I'm currently developing my work project at NOVA School of Business and Economics, in collaboration with Martinhal Family Hotels & Resorts. As part of this work, I am conducting a research regarding the Portuguese market. For this purpose, I would like to interview you for approximately 45 to 60 minutes. I will use a non-directive method, which means that I will not ask you specific questions, as I would do in a standard questionnaire. After each question, you are free to tell me whatever comes to your mind about the topic. There are no right or wrong answers. In the end, I will ask you a couple of questions about your profile. In order to analyze our interviews later, I would like to record our conversation. Do you mind? It will remain anonymous and confidential and you will not be contacted further after this interview.

2. Questions

1. Could you please tell me how long have you been working at Martinhal, and what does the brand represents to you?
2. Could you please tell me about the last time you established contact with a Portuguese family?
3. Could you please tell me, still regarding Portuguese clients, who do you perceive to be Martinhal's main competitors?
4. In your opinion, why is the percentage of Portuguese clients so low, and what do you think Martinhal should do in order to increase this percentage?

3. Topics to be developed

As seen by the collaborators:

- Image and perception of the brand Martinhal;
- Perceived competitors, regarding the Portuguese client;
- Image and perception of the Portuguese client → collect insights in order to develop consumer profile: price perception; satisfaction; purchase channel; preferable season; purchase occasion; purchase frequency; purchase timing; value perception.

4. Respondent's profile

Gender: Male; Female

Role in Martinhal:

Works in Martinhal since:

Location: Cascais ; Chiado; Quinta do Lago; Sagres

5. Results

Table 3 – Collaborator's characterization

Interview	Gender	Experience (years)		Current Occupation	Hotel
		Industry	Martinhal		
1	M	10	10	Operations Manager	Chiado
2	M	26	4	Family Team Concierge	Cascais
3	F	10	4	Leisure Department	Cascais
4	F	16	4	Guest Relations Manager	Cascais
5	F	4	4	Kids Club & Leisure Supervisor	Cascais
6	F	4	4	Kids Club Monitor	Cascais
7	M	8	8	Front Office Manager	Sagres
8	F	14	7	Kids Club & Leisure and SPA supervisor (4 units)	Sagres
9	F	7	7	Kids Club & Leisure Supervisor	Sagres
10	F	23	5	F&B Director	Sagres
11	F	8	7	Guest Relations Manager	Sagres
12	F	10	10	PR & Communications Manager	Cascais
13	M	18	1	F&B Director	Cascais

Table 4 – Years of working experience in Hospitality and Martinhal

	Experience (years)	
	Industry	Martinhal
Minimum	4	4
Quartil 25	8	4
Median	10	5
Quartil 75	16	7
Maximum	26	10

Appendix 3 – Parent’s Interview Guide

1. Pre-Recruiting Questionnaire

My name is Joana Ramos and I’m currently developing my work project at NOVA School of Business and Economics. I am conducting a research concerning how Portuguese spend their vacations. For this purpose, I would like to ask you some questions:

1. Portuguese nationality?

Yes → advances

No → stop

2. Do you have children under 18?

Yes → advances

No → end interview

3. In the last year (September 2018 to September 2019), have you spent vacations/weekend/couple of days away from home with your family, in Portugal?

Yes → advances

No → end interview

4. Could you please shortly describe, the plan of your last vacations?

2. Warm-up

Good morning/afternoon/evening. My name is Joana Ramos and I'm currently developing my work project at NOVA School of Business and Economics. As part of this work, I am conducting a research regarding the Portuguese market. For this purpose, I would like to interview you for approximately 45 to 60 minutes. I will use a non-directive method, which means that I will not ask you specific questions, as I would do in a standard questionnaire. After the first question, you are free to tell me whatever comes to your mind about the topic. There are no right or wrong answers. In the end, I must ask you a couple of questions to complete your profile. In order to analyze our interviews later, I would like to record our conversation. Do you mind? It will remain anonymous and confidential and you will not be contacted further after this interview.

3. Questions

Initial question: Could you please describe me your family vacations? Where did you go and why?

Final question: Do you know Martinhal Family Hotels & Resorts?

Yes → Could you please describe me how did you learn about it? Considering the following price per night (300€), would spend vacations in Martinhal with your family?

No → I am going to show you the website. Could you please tell me what comes to your mind? Considering the following price per night (300€), would spend vacations in Martinhal with your family?

4. Topics to be developed

Decision-making drivers: Price; Word-of-mouth; Recommendations; Social Media;

Availability; Distance

Consumer behavior: Frequency; Occasion and situation; Motivation

Channel of purchase; Who is responsible for the purchase

Image and perception of holidays: What do Portuguese family's value

Price perception

Perceived competition

Awareness of Martinhal

In case the interviewee knows the brand: Martinhal's image

5. Respondent's profile

Gender: Male; Female

Age

25-34

35-44

45-54

>55

Education

Completed 12th grade

Professional or Arts degree

Undergraduate degree

Post-graduate or master's degree

PhD

Occupation

6. Results

Table 5 – Parent’s characterization

Interviewee	Gender	Age	Place of birth	Child’s age	Child’s age	Child’s age	Education	Occupation
1	F	36	Évora	3 m	2 y	-	Masters	Medical Doctor
2	F	38	Lisbon	1 y	8 y	-	Masters	Medical Doctor
3	F	54	Santarém	16 y	20 y	-	Masters	Medical Doctor
4	M	47	Lisbon	5 y	14 y	16 y	Masters	Medical Doctor
5	M	50	Luanda	12 y	15 y	-	Masters	IT Consultant
6	F	38	Lisbon	7 m	4 y	-	Masters	Medical Doctor
7	M	44	Lisbon	7 m	3 y	-	Masters	Medical Doctor
8	M	38	Santarém	3 y	-	-	Bachelor	Medical Doctor
9	F	39	Lisbon	10 y	12 y	-	PhD	Medical Doctor
10	F	39	Lisbon	6 y	9 y	-	Masters	Consultant Manager
11	F	34	Santarém	4 m	4 y	-	Bachelor	Food Engineer
12	M	40	Porto	3 y	7 y	-	Masters	Bank Administrator
13	M	35	Lisbon	1 y	-	-	Masters	Medical Doctor
14	M	36	Lisbon	1 y	5 y	5 y	Masters	Medical Doctor
15	M	35	Lisbon	4 y	-	-	Masters	Personal Trainer
16	F	37	Faial	1 y	7 y	-	Masters	Medical Doctor
17	F	44	Lisbon	11 y	14 y	-	Masters	Medical Doctor
18	F	47	Corunha*	10 y	12 y	15 y	Bachelor	Nurse
19	M	43	Porto	7 y	9 y	-	Masters	Journalist
20	F	39	Lisbon	6 y	10 y	-	Bachelor	Journalist

*Interviewee has lived in Portugal since 1990

Table 6 – Parent’s age

	Age (years)
Minimum	34
Quartil 25	36,75
Median	39
Quartil 75	44
Maximum	54

Table 7 – Number of children in each family

Children (n)	Interviewees (n)
1	1
2	16
3	3

Appendix 4 – Questionnaire

Good afternoon,

I am developing my master's thesis at NOVA School of Business and Economics. The research focuses in the way Portuguese families spend their vacations, weekends or a couple of days out. With this in mind, I would like to ask your collaboration to answer the following questions. This questionnaire is anonymous and will not take more than 10 minutes to complete. If you wish to receive the results, please write your email address on the box below. If you do not wish to receive the results, please click in the arrow to proceed.

Thank you for your participation,

Joana Ramos

Pre-Recruiting

During the last year (between September of 2018 and September of 2019), did you spend vacations, weekends or a couple of days out, with your family, in Portugal or abroad?

Yes

No → End survey

Do you have at least one child whose age is equal or lower than 16 years old?

Yes

No → End survey

Do you possess Portuguese nationality, or have been living in Portugal at least for the past 10 years?

Yes

No → End survey

Type of accommodation selected for the vacations

1. Regarding your vacations, weekends or a couple of days out, in Portugal or abroad, with your family, between September of 2018 and September of 2019, please select the options that suit your situation best (several answers possible):

Own vacation's house/apartment → proceed to question 2

Vacation's house/apartment of a family member → proceed to question 3

Vacation's house/apartment of a friend → proceed to question 4

Vacation's house in a resort/hotel → proceed to question 5

Independent vacation's house/apartment → proceed to question 6

Resort/hotel with all-inclusive → proceed to question 7

Resort/hotel with half board → proceed to question 8

Resort/hotel without meals/with breakfast only → proceed to question 9

Frequency, location and reservation's date

[The exact following group of questions will appear to all the respondents that proceeded to questions 2,3,4]

2. How many times during the last year were you at your own vacation's house/apartment?

1

2

3 or more

2.1 Please select if it was in Portugal or abroad [This question will appear according to the number of times selected above]

Portugal

Abroad

2.2 Please select the duration of the stay (days) [This question will appear according to the number of times selected above]

1-3

4-7

8-10

>10

3. ... [Same as 2. but concerning vacation's house/apartment of a family member]

4. ... [Same as 2. but concerning vacation's house/apartment of a friend]

[The exact following group of questions will appear to all the respondents that proceeded to questions 5,6,7,8 and 9]

5. How many times during the last year did you rent a house/apartment inside a resort/hotel?

1

2

3 or more

5.1 Please select if it was in Portugal or abroad [This question will appear according to the number of times selected above]

Portugal

Abroad

5.2 Please select the duration of the stay (days) [This question will appear according to the number of times selected above]

1-3

4-7

8-10

>10

5.3 Please select the number of weeks/months, on average, with which you booked in advance the house/apartment in the resort/hotel, in Portugal [This question will appear only if the answer “Portugal” was given to the question 5.1]

Less than 1 week

Between 1 and 2 weeks

Between 2 weeks and 1 month

Between 1 and 3 months

Between 3 and 6 months

More than 6 months

5.4 Please select the number of weeks/months, on average, with which you booked in advance the house/apartment in the resort/hotel, abroad [This question will appear only if the answer “Abroad” was given to the question 5.1]

Less than 1 week

Between 1 and 2 weeks

Between 2 weeks and 1 month

Between 1 and 3 months

Between 3 and 6 months

More than 6 months

6. ... [Same as 5. but concerning independent vacation's house/apartment]

7. ... [Same as 5. but concerning resort/hotel all-inclusive]

8. ... [Same as 5. but concerning resort/hotel with half board]

9. ... [Same as 5. but concerning resort/hotel without meal/breakfast only]

Reservation's details

10. The person responsible for the reservation of the vacations/weekends/couple of days out, in Portugal, last year...

Was mostly me

Was mostly my husband/wife; boyfriend/girlfriend; partner

Was mostly an agency

Was mostly a family member

Was mostly another person. Please specify who

I did not spend vacations/weekends/couple of days out, in Portugal

11. The person responsible for the reservation of the vacations/weekends/couple of days out, abroad, last year...

Was mostly me

Was mostly my husband/wife; boyfriend/girlfriend; partner

Was mostly an agency

Was mostly a family member

Was mostly another person. Please specify who

I did not spend vacations/weekends/couple of days out, in Portugal

12. Please select the main way through which your vacations/weekends/days out were reserved, in Portugal, last year [This question will appear if the respondent selected if he/she stayed in Portugal]

Hotel/Resort's website

Agency's website

Booking.com

Through Trivago.com

Through TripAdvisor.com

Airbnb

TUI.com

HomeAway.com

Hoteis.com

Other. Please specify

13. Please select the main way through which your vacations/weekends/days out were reserved, abroad, last year [This question will appear if the respondent selected if he/she stayed abroad]

Hotel/Resort's website

Agency's website

Booking.com

Through Trivago.com

Through TripAdvisor.com

Airbnb

TUI.com

HomeAway.com

Hoteis.com

Other. Please specify

Decision factors for the choice of a hotel/resort

14. Consider the following decision factors when considering the reservation of a hotel/resort for your family's vacations. Please select the importance of those factors for you, on a scale from 0 (not important at all) to 5 (extremely important)

The quality of the room

The existence of communicating rooms

The quality of hotel's infrastructures, overall

The hotel possesses 5 stars

The quality of the meals in the restaurants

The fact that the hotel is suited for families

The fact that children are not seen as a disturbing element of another guest's experience

The existence of infrastructures where my children can play and be part of activities supervised by monitors

The existence of infrastructures where I can play with my children

The existence of activities suited for families

The proximity to a place of interest

The temperature of the pool

The fact that it is all included on a package with a unique price

The price per night

Number of children

15. Please select the number of children you have which age is equal or lower to 16 years

old

1

2

3

4

5 or more

16. Please select the age of your first/only child (years)

0

6

12

1

7

13

2

8

14

3

9

15

4

10

16

5

11

16.1 Please select the age of your second child (years)

0

5

10

1

6

11

2

7

12

3

8

13

4

9

14

15

16

16.2 Please select the age of your third child (years)

0	6	12
1	7	13
2	8	14
3	9	15
4	10	16
5	11	

16.3 Please select the age of your fourth child (years)

0	6	12
1	7	13
2	8	14
3	9	15
4	10	16
5	11	

16.4 Please select the age of your fifth child (years)

0	6	12
1	7	13
2	8	14
3	9	15
4	10	16
5	11	

Hotel services related to children

[The following group of questions will appear only to respondents that have at least one child until 12 years old]

17. During your stay in the resort/hotel, did you use a babysitting service? [This question will appear if the respondent selected that he/she stayed in a resort/hotel in question 1]

Yes

No

17.1 On average, how many times during a week did you use the referred service?

1

2

3

4

5 or more

18. During your stay in the resort/hotel, how many hours per day did you leave your child/children in the Kids Club? [This question will appear if the respondent selected that he/she stayed in a resort/hotel in question 1]

Less than 2

Between 2 and 4

Between 4 and 6

More than 6

Normally, I do not use that service

19. During your stay in the resort/hotel, how many hours per day did you play with your child/children inside the Kids Club? [This question will appear if the respondent selected that he/she stayed in a resort/hotel in question 1]

Less than 2

Between 2 and 4

Between 4 and 6

More than 6

Normally, I do not use that service

20. During your stay in the resort/hotel, how many hours per day did you play with your child/children in outdoor playgrounds? [This question will appear if the respondent selected that he/she stayed in a resort/hotel in question 1]

Less than 2

Between 2 and 4

Between 4 and 6

More than 6

Normally, I do not use that service

Demographics

Gender

Feminine

Masculine

Age (years)

<25

25-34

35-44

45-54

55-64

>65

Occupation

GO 1.1 – Top Management

GO 1.2 – Middle Management

GO 2.2 – Specialized Technician

GO 2.3 – Small business owner

GO 3 – Employees of services/commerce/administrative

GO 4 – Skilled/Qualified workers

GO 5 – Unskilled/unqualified workers

GO 7 – Students

GO 9 – Housewife/retired/pensioner

GO 10 - Unemployed

Spouse's occupation

GO 1.1 – Top Management

GO 1.2 – Middle Management

GO 2.2 – Specialized Technician

GO 2.3 – Small business owner

GO 3 – Employees of services/commerce/administrative

GO 4 – Skilled/Qualified workers

GO 5 – Unskilled/unqualified workers

GO 7 – Students

GO 9 – Housewife/retired/pensioner

GO 10 – Unemployed

Not applicable

Education level

Incomplete 4th grade

4th grade (complete)

6th grade (complete)

9th grade (complete)

11th/12th grade (complete)

Professional or Arts degree

Incomplete undergraduate degree

Undergraduate degree (complete)

Post-graduate or master's degree

PhD

Spouse's Education level

Incomplete 4th grade

4th grade (complete)

6th grade (complete)

9th grade (complete)

11th/12th grade (complete)

Professional or Arts degree

Incomplete undergraduate degree

Undergraduate degree (complete)

Post-graduate or master's degree

PhD

Not applicable

Results

Table 8 – Respondent's demographics

Gender	n	%
Male	61	79
Female	16	21
Age	n	%
25-34	20	50
35-44	48	38
45-54	9	50
35-44	F	38
Children's age	n	
0-2	38	
3-5	36	
6-10	35	
11-16	14	

Table 9 – Working hours

Working hours		Job					Total
		0-20	20-30	30-40	40-50	>50	
Home	0-10	2	2	16	15	11	46
	10-20	1	-	4	7	3	15
	20-30	2	1	4	1	-	8
	30-40	1	1	1	-	-	3
	40-50	-	-	1	4	-	5
	>50	-	-	-	-	-	0
	Total	6	4	26	27	14	77

Table 10 – Decision factors (number of respondents)

DECISION FACTORS	LIKERT SCALE				
	Not important at all	Not very important	Important	Very important	Extremely important
Quality of the room	0	0	28	37	12
Existence of communicating rooms	25	15	23	11	3
Quality of the hotel's infrastructures, overall	0	0	28	34	15
The fact that the hotel possesses 5 stars	6	32	27	10	2
Quality of the meals in the restaurants	2	9	26	32	8
The fact that the hotel is oriented for families	2	3	27	27	18
The fact that children are not seen as a disturbing element of the other guest's experience	1	3	15	29	29
The existence of infrastructures where my children can play with other children under the supervision of the staff	4	11	28	22	12
The existence of infrastructures where I can play with my children	1	3	25	29	19
The existence of activities designed for the whole family	0	4	25	34	14
The proximity to a place of interest	0	3	25	37	12
The fact that the hotel is located in a short walking distance from the beach	1	6	25	24	21
The fact that the hotel possesses a pool with heated water	3	33	21	11	9
The fact that is all included in a package with an unique price	7	21	23	18	8
Price per night	0	1	21	39	16

Table 11 – Association between type of accommodation and duration of the stay, for Portugal and abroad

	Location	Days				Total
		1- 3	4 - 7	8 - 10	>10	
Own vacation house	PT	9	17	4	5	35
	Abroad	1	-	1	-	2
Vacation house of a friend	PT	6	5	1	1	13
	Abroad	-	-	-	1	1
Vacation house of a family member	PT	5	6	6	11	28
	Abroad	-	2	1	-	3
Independent rented vacation house	PT	4	10	2	4	20
	Abroad	1	7	-	-	8
Resort vacation house	PT	15	8	4	2	29
	Abroad	1	7	4	1	13
Resort/hotel with all-inclusive	PT	9	14	11	-	34
	Abroad	-	3	4	-	7
Resort/hotel with half board	PT	2	5	-	-	7
	Abroad	2	5	6	5	18
Resort/hotel with breakfast only	PT	32	11	-	-	43
	Abroad	4	8	2	1	15
Total		91	108	46	31	276