

# Creating and Managing Experiences in Cultural Tourism

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The book *Creating and Managing Experiences in Cultural Tourism* is a part of *Managing Cultural Tourism: A Sustainability Approach* book series that deals with broader spectrum of issues related to the management of tourism, culture, development and sustainability. The aim of the book series is to discuss changes cultural tourism brings and to facilitate its more sustainable development for the benefit of tourism, tourists and host communities. Book editors gathered experienced authors, experts in their field, who analysed culture and tourism from different point of view. The main contribution of this book is that it reveals both scientifically grounded theories as well as practical advices to be inspired by when creating and managing experiences.

As the editors explained, tourism is not only a way to gain money; it is actually about experience. On the other hand, experiences are driven by emotions, and culture stirs emotions. Therefore, culture and tourism are a winning team in creating experiences. Besides emotions culture stirs, it also offers a personal fulfilment and gives meaning to our lives. Therefore, this book assigns culture a greater role due to its transcending features.

This book is divided into seven thematic sessions. *Part 1* deals with the theoretical approaches to experience creation. It offers a neuroscientific, psychological and business approach to the explanation of emotions triggered by cultural tourism sites and attractions. Moreover, it gives the theoretical perspective of an exceptional holiday experience and gives the overview of the tourism sector reorientation towards experience. The theoretical framework serves as a basis for chapter where

authors analyse some of the main approaches to experience creation and co-creation and transfer them to cultural tourism.

*Part 2* offers possible tools to be applied in the actual design of cultural tourism experiences. It puts a design-thinking approach in the context of developing cultural tourism experiences that should include introducing new thinking, new design tools and new design attitude, using new processes, new phases and new milestones. Moreover, experiences are seen as educational and communicational tools that have power to draw attention of youth to learn about heritage. This part also gives an educational model for experience design based on practical project in Zadar, Croatia. Since cultural and natural space in which cultural tourism takes places has an important role in shaping experiences, it is possible to enhance tourist experiences based on study program that make use of the design of hosting spaces in a sustainable way.

*Part 3* deals with planning cultural tourism experiences, which is first step in experience design. The authors try to answer the question whether it is possible to measure the quality of experience itself since it is rather subjective. The main conclusion of this part is related to changes that have to be done in order to create better tourism experiences. First, tourism planning models should be integrated into local and regional tourism strategies. Moreover, the case study of Par Hotel Ptuj in Slovenia shows that transformation of historical buildings into heritage hotels provides tourists a holistic and meaningful heritage experiences. Another case study, the Nikola Tesla Ways shows the development of cultural project step by step. Generally, cultural heritage provides an opportunity to create unforgettable tourism experiences, but also for socio-economic development and cross-border cooperation.

*Part 4* is dedicated to the role of interpretation in experience creation and management. Theoretical knowledge and plan for cultural tourism does not create success on their own, cultural product needs a story behind it, storytelling can be a crucial factor when choosing destination. This part also gives an integrated strategy called The S Plan (Sector convergence, Storytelling, Strategic planning, Sustainability, SME development, and the Surprise and Shine elements). The strategy explains how to promote regional cultural values to tourists and gives practical steps that should be taken in order

to attract more cultural tourists and develop and operate cultural tourism. This part is also an introduction to the following one since it deals with marketing of cultural tourism and emotional experiences.

Cultural branding and emotional experiences are factors that draw visitors to a tourism destination, which is elaborated in *Part 5*. The use of emotional appeal is becoming one of the leading marketing strategies. Emotions are a part of tourism experiences so the authors analysed responses to advertisements in different cultures. The analysis shows that emotional responses differed between countries so it is important to understand how different cultures react to emotional marketing.

*Part 6* links cultural sustainability to cultural experiences. When planning cultural experiences, one must be aware of capacities of local community. Authors emphasise that international organisations related to tourism are aware of sustainability problem, but they are trying to solve it in a wrong way. Authors suggest that bottom-up approach in planning cultural experiences should be adjusted to each communities' limits to achieve much more balanced cultural tourism development. Gastro-tourism and industrial heritage tourism can play vital roles in the sustainable development of peripheral destinations. Advantage of gastro-tourism is that it can be used without endangering host community while commercialising tourism experience. Moreover, it can encourage local residents to renew interest in their local food culture. To achieve sustainability, it requires cooperation among locals, entrepreneurs and researchers. Industrial heritage tourism can also generate strong emotional experiences, especially among locals visiting industrial heritage sites where their ancestors used to work. Development of local and regional tourism can not only generate strong emotional experiences but also enhance local and regional patriotism and lead to more sustainable management of these sites.

Even though the whole book contains different case studies in order to present practical approaches to experience creation, *Part 7* is a separate section focusing on case studies related to specific projects. First case study analyses Portuguese creative tourism research-and-application project CREATOUR, Creative Tourism Destination Development in Small Cities and Rural

Areas. The project put strong emphasis on place itself and creative tourism was based on local traditions and artistic expression in relation with nature. It presents the good practice example since it lead to development of creative tourism in less visited areas. Second case study presented in this part is the Spanish case of RCR, an architecture studio based in Catalonia, Spain. Besides designing buildings, they run creative courses for public to enhance understanding and appreciation of contemporary architecture. These workshops enhance the tourist experience and the contemporary architecture plays an important role in the perception of destination.

In the last chapter, *Concluding Thoughts*, editors sum up the main insights stemming from the wide-spectrum discussions on cultural tourism as unique tourist mobility driven by different factors and motivations. Moreover, editors give recommendations for the future in order to improve and strengthen both, the role of tourism in culture and the role of culture in tourism.

Lastly, *Creating and Managing Experiences in Cultural Tourism* is an excellent resource for researchers, professionals and students interested in the cultural and tourism sector. As the book draws from fields of culture, tourism, psychology, marketing, business and management, education and neuroscience, it can also be appreciated by readers interested in other fields, not only tourism and culture. Moreover, it can inspire the reader to inner individual development since it provides a basic understanding of senses and emotions.

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