

1 Introduction

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Culture is the entangling web of symbols, sounds, rituals, rites and practices by which we become persons and by which we can grow. Culture is often the reason for travel, and both bargain and barrier in its consumption. Underpinned by globalization, tourism is both enabling and threatening culture and its practices, as business commodifies authentic differences. Sharing culture is the ultimate form of a touristic experience that should be unique, extraordinary, and memorable (Aho, 2001; Arnould & Price, 1993; Oh, Fiore & Jeoung, 2007; Pine & Gilmore, 1998, 1999) and worthy of being shared. Accordingly, MacCannell (1973) states that tourists are questing for the extraordinary in a novel space and time to which stimulation and emotional engagement are needed with the different elements of a context created by a service provider (Grupta & Vajic, 1999). Considering that experiences are composed of four different axes, namely education, escape, entertainment and aesthetics (Pine & Gilmore, 1998), experiential marketing is assumed as a critical tool to enact these experiences within the triad of place-host-guests interactions. These, in turn, end with the emotional attachment of the tourists with the destination and the willingness to share their experiences.

This book includes contributions that analyze and critique initiations to education, escape, entertainment and aesthetics experiences that ultimately reports on the facilitation, celebration and sharing of culture through tourism and how each is manifested in tourism marketing theory, policy and practice. The book contains case examples of the opportunities, best practices, aims, pitfalls and mistakes of those tourism businesses which have culture as their core experience as well as cases of where different tourists are engaged in exploring and learning about other cultures. In addition, the book contains chapters on the below themes of interest where culture has contributed strongly to their outcomes: the roles of tourists, locals and communities, events, business practices in facilitating and sharing cultural experiences, relationship