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TOURISMOS

An International Multidisciplinary Journal of Tourism

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Special Issue on
Special Interest Tourism

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Ioannis P. Spilanis & Olga P. Karayiannis

The present constitutes part of a wider research attempt to examine the impacts of tourism on the host areas using a transformed version of the explanatory tool 'DPSR' (Driving Forces, Pressures, State, Response). The Cycladic islands are selected as a case study, and the basic environmental pressure factor examined is tourism related construction activity. Concluding from the data presented, the tourism development paradigms in the study area (3S-tourism hosted in 'conventional' accommodation and second homes), seem new construction intensive. The working hypotheses and limitations of the present research application, reflect weaknesses of the Greek institutional framework, towards understanding and managing tourism impacts, let alone sustainability goals.

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Marios D. Soteriades, Evangelia D. Tyrogala & Stelios I. Varvaressos

The tourism industry is characterised by a highly competitive global market. Research suggests networks and clusters are efficient tools providing a framework for small and medium-sized tourism enterprises with opportunities to operate in this competitive environment. The purpose of this paper is to explore the potential contribution of clusters and networks in the field of rural tourism business. A review of the

literature on the contribution of clusters to tourism destination and tourism business management and marketing is followed by three case studies of rural tourism-related projects in Greece. These case studies focus on the main management and marketing issues. Various management and marketing issues are investigated; the achievements and problems are stressed, and the factors crucial to the success of these rural tourism business clusters are identified. The paper provides recommendations for local planners and destination managers to enable them to successfully operate such alliances.

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Alex Deffner, Theodore Metaxas, Kleantith Syrakoulis & Theodora Papatheocharis

In the contemporary era there exists an interest in the ability and know-how of experts to use culture and tourism as tools for management and marketing. Museums and historical attractions invent various strategies in order to create sources of income, encouraging economic activity and inducing particular benefits for cities. The main objective of this paper is the pinpointing of the role and importance of the Tobacco Museum of Kavala and the way that this can contribute to the enforcement of the image and development of the city in the context of a Strategic Pilot (Place) Marketing Plan, having the Museum as its core.

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Tanja Lešnik Štuhec, Damijan Mumel & Aleksandra Pisnik Korda

Authorities who manage protected areas (places with unique natural assets) are responsible for nature conservation, sustainable development and the local population's quality of life. Accordingly, they should present innovative ideas for relaxation and recreation with an eye toward protecting nature. This has not yet been accomplished in Slovenia. The qualitative research in this paper is performed to develop a model for authorities who manage protected areas, particularly with regard to the management of stakeholder impacts. Results from two of the four groups of experts interviewed are presented in this paper.

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Marinela Dropulić & Pavlo Ružić

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Eleni Didascalou, Dimitrios Lagos & Panagiotis Nastos

The purpose of the present study is to identify the various factors that decision makers must take into account when ranking destinations for placing a spa resort/hotel in the thriving health and wellness industry. The study will suggest a decision support system (DSS) based on key factors as climate, tourism development and attractions. The DSS, using a computer based information system, will evaluate the aforementioned factors and will propose a hierarchical structure for rating destinations, useful for private or public planners in the wellness market. The research categorized the prefectures of Ahaia, Arkadia, Ilia, Korinthia, Messinia in the region of Peloponnese

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Vasileiou Magdalini & Tsartas Paris

Wellness tourism market world wide is experiencing rapid development in terms of size but also in terms of quality of the wellness tourism product. It is a form of tourism which can enhance the competitive advantage of a destination. This paper (which was originally presented at the 4th International Conference of the University of Aegean- "Planning for the Future - Learning from the Past: Contemporary Developments in Tourism, Travel & Hospitality"-2009) presents an interdisciplinary methodological approach in studying the Greek wellness tourism market, as well as a part of the research's findings in an attempt to define the special characteristics of the demand and supply side of this relatively new market, but also the typologies of the wellness tourists.

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*Chryssoula Chatzigeorgiou, Evangelos Christou, Panagiotis
Kassianidis & Marianna Sigala*

Marketers have been working tirelessly to determine the factors that lead to customer satisfaction presuming that customer satisfaction automatically leads to repeated customers. Service quality, customer satisfaction, customer loyalty and repeat business are issues well recognized and investigated by researchers. Recent theory however suggests that service quality alone doesn't necessarily encourage customers to repeat their choices, but rather, "complete" customer satisfaction does. Thus, the main research question addressed in this paper is how to complete the relationship between "complete" customer satisfaction and repeat business. The customer's emotions have been proved to be a key determinant to turn a satisfied customer into a repeated one. The research was conducted in 2009, addressed to customers of agrotourism businesses on Lesbos Island and Florina – Greece.

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*Anna Thompson, Brent Lovelock, A. Reis, M. Kjelsberg, G. Sides, R.
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This article discusses the findings of research conducted in protected natural areas in the South Island of New Zealand over three consecutive summers between December 2005 and May 2008. The primary purpose of the research was to gather perspectives and data about local community members' and visitors' recreational experiences and aspirations for future management of the conservation parks. Since 2005, 'high country' conservation parks have been designated by the country's protected natural area manager, the Department of Conservation (DOC). The three South Island parks involved in this study - the Ahuriri, Ruataniwha and Hakatere Conservation Parks - were, prior to designation, leased and managed since the nineteenth century by multiple generations of farming families for agricultural purposes, primarily farming merino sheep and beef cattle. Thus the landscape has undergone transition from a farmed environment coexisting with natural features that have high conservation values to one where tourism and recreation activities dominate.

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*Vassilis Gerovassileiou, Drosos Koutsoubas, Maria Sini & Katerina
Paikou*

The adoption of a new legal framework concerning recreational diving activities in Greece has generated an increased demand for the development of diving tourism in the country. The present report draws upon previous experience regarding the promotion of sub-aquatic activities found elsewhere, analyses the potential of establishing diving tourism in the Greek Marine Protected Areas, and describes what an adequate management plan should ideally encompass, in order to ensure the conservation of the marine environment and subsequently the long term viability of this highly profitable form of ecotourism.

CONVICT HERITAGE TOURISM: A CASE STUDY OF FREMANTLE
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Kapil Kumar

History and Heritage have traditionally been strong pull factors in tourism. There are countries and destinations with strong tradition in these areas with practically no efforts needed for product designing, promotion or marketing. Destinations like Rome, Vienna or Paris, etc. can be cited in this regard. It is interesting to find that a country like Australia with a history of approximately 200 years (excluding the aborigines' history) has made extensive use of its history and heritage by converting them into tourism products and convict heritage tourism has emerged as a vital interest area for both domestic as well as international tourism. As a visiting fellow of the Australia India Council (2007) I worked on a project – "How Australia has converted its history and heritage into tourism products?" and further as a visiting Professor under the Australia Endeavour Award 2008 I worked on Convict Heritage in Australia. For this I carried out extensive fieldwork in different parts of Australia. This paper analyses the decision-making and planning for converting convict history and sites into convict heritage sites and further developing them as tourism products. It examines the attractions created in this area and the way they are marketed and promoted. After discussing the broad areas the paper discusses the Fremantle prison as a case study whereby it takes into account its conversion into a convict heritage site and its enrichment into a tourism product by introducing prison tours, theme parties and a live experience of prison life to the visitors. How do the visitors feel about this experience is another aspect dealt with in the paper along with the perceptions and attitudes of the host population, former prison officers and members of the Town Council in Fremantle. The paper also makes certain suggestions for further enrichment and rejuvenation of such tourism products in Australia. The paper, by dealing such themes, provides an insight into this emerging area of new tourism products that provide a successful tourism product case study for others to learn from and follow.

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Maria B. Lekakou, Athanasios A. Pallis & George K. Vaggelas

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Prokopis Christou, Conrad Lashley & Alexis Saveriades

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Elena Petrovska, Risto Reckoski & Gordana Reckoska

Ecotourism is a concept that evolved in the past 20 years as the conservation community, people living in and around protected areas, and the travel industry witnessed a boom in nature tourism and realized their mutual interests in directing its growth. It provides opportunities for visitors to experience powerful manifestations of nature and culture and to learn about the importance of biodiversity conservation and local cultures. At the same time, ecotourism generates income for conservation and

economic benefits for communities living in rural or remote areas. The attributes of ecotourism make it a valuable tool for conservation. Also, ecotourism process embraces a huge range of participants doing different parts of the whole development stages. Of all the participants in the ecotourism activity, the tourism industry is perhaps the most important and the least appreciated by conservationists.

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Panagiota Kokkali, Alex Koutsouris & Polymeros Chrysochou

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Sofoklis G. Skoultzos & Paris Tsartas

This paper focuses on event tourism sector and its affection on the economy and the society of the rural community. The significance of events for rural development is argued by various researchers. In the current paper several cases from the event tourism literature and their results are studied. A general conclusion is that rural events affect host communities mainly by building community commitment. Cash injection is significant but not at a level that can lead to rural development. So, impacts on local population should be at the centre of event management in order to achieve development of destination. Further research is needed to be done in order to support such a statement.

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Velissariou Efstathios, Galagala Anastasia & Karathanos Athanassios

Wine tourism is globally regarded as a traditional, yet at the same time dynamic form of alternative tourism. In this paper, the development of a Network of Wine Routes in the region of Thessaly, Greece is presented. Thessaly is a region where wine tourism could potentially increase the flow of tourists as well as improve their quality. More specifically, four routes are proposed and the conditions needed for the successful functioning of the network are presented. These include the establishment of visitable wineries, collaboration with tourism enterprises and synergy among all parties involved. The plan was based on international and Greek experience in wine tourism as well as on the results of primary research, studying the members of the “Wine Roads of Northern Greece” network, which are briefly summarised.

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Konstantinos Tomazos & Richard Butler

The paper reviews the rapid growth of volunteer tourism, and discusses the changes that have taken place in the ethos and focus of this distinct market, the locations used as destinations and the organisations they represent. It is apparent that over the last two decades the organisations offering volunteer tourist vacations have increasingly focused their attention on conventional commercial tourism markets and their methods and practices perhaps reflect profit driven strategies. The paper concludes that the balance has clearly shifted away from the virtues of early volunteering towards hedonism and profit and that raises question about the long term value and credentials of volunteer tourism. Whether that pattern continues, remains to be seen.

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EDITORIAL

This is the special issue of TOURISMOS, continuing an annual series of special issues. In the previous eight issues, our multidisciplinary journal aimed at justifying the rationale behind introducing yet another journal in tourism academic studies. Capitalising on this effort, we now focus on furthering our scope and consolidating our position in both conceptual developments and practical applications in tourism with special emphasis on Special Interest Tourism.

Mass tourism, the most predominant form of tourism over the last decades, is gradually being brought in question. In spite of becoming a developmental vehicle, it does not always offer travelling experiences that are highly associated with immaterial qualities, ambiance, aesthetics and atmosphere, pure feelings and not products. Moreover, contemporary tourists are no longer considered to be passive participants or just observers of the offered activities. On the contrary, they play an active role in forming the overall tourism experience, seeking to fulfil several needs. The latter emerge from various kinds of motives which are highly related to the search for a deeper meaning during a travel. In an effort to respond to the modern multi-motivated tourists' demands, as well as to meet their particular needs, Special Interest Tourism has been developed.

In the case of Special Interest Tourism (SIT), traveller's motivations as well as decision-making are primarily determined by a particular special interest that is focused either on activity/ies and/or on destinations and settings. Moreover, emphasis is given on the fact that, in contrast with tourism in general, which involves mass participation, SIT suggests non-commercialised individual travel. It provides a "meaningful-trip" with several social, cultural, environmental and communicational dimensions, rather than an "escape-trip".

A wide range of SIT categories exists: regional, rural, urban, cultural, heritage, wine and food, educational, religious, sport, adventure and nature-based, environmental, cruise, sex, health, festival, event tourism and so on. These categories in several cases overlap. The global financial crisis, that hit the world economy in 2008, has affected international tourism more than domestic tourism and business tourism more than leisure tourism; hotels more than other types of accommodation and air transport more than other types of

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transport. According to OECD, specific forms of Special Interest Tourism (such as cruise tourism or winter tourism in the Alpine region) have been only slightly impacted during the crisis, or have even experienced growth.

Within this context, this Special Issue endeavors to add to the literature on SIT, including articles that explore several research agendas. The selected studies are based on various theoretical models and they focus on planning, development, market and impacts of different forms of SIT, such as rural, cultural, wellness, cruise and tourism in protected areas.

Based on the previous analysis, I trust that you will enjoy reading the contributions made in this special issue of TOURISMOS!

Olga Iakovidou
Guest Editor