

CREATIVE TOURISM BETWEEN THEORY AND PRACTICE

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ABSTRACT

This paper focuses on a relatively young sub-type of cultural tourism – creative tourism. The latter is defined and its conceptual evolution, experiences and relationship with cultural tourism are presented in detail. The paper examines, through a collective case study, the way theoretical solutions advanced by creative tourism from a double perspective – supply and demand – can be turned into practical solutions as creative spectacles, creative spaces and creative tourism, while taking into account the different contexts of creativity in tourism – artistic focus, competitive environment, cultural context, development context, engagement on consumption process, geographical scale, heritage, identity, intervention, learning orientation, mode of consumption, reproducibility, spatial context, and timescale.

Keywords: cultural tourism, creative spectacle, creative space, creative tourism

INTRODUCTION

Creative Tourism is still young: the term occurred for the first time in Pearce & Butler's paper (1993, in Richards, 2011). Richards & Raymond (2000) wrote, for the first time, about this subtype of *cultural tourism*, defining it as “tourism which offers visitors the opportunity to develop their creative potential through active participation in courses and learning experiences which are characteristic of the holiday destination where they are undertaken”(Petroman & all, 2013; Petroman I. & all, 2020). UNESCO (2006) defined it as “Creative tourism is travel directed toward an engaged and authentic experience, with

participative learning in the arts, heritage, or special character of a place, and it provides a connection with those who reside in this place and create this living culture.” It is also considered a “subset of cultural tourism” and “a new form of tourism” (Hull & Sassenberg, 2012). In this definition, *creative potential* refers to “the ability to raise expression of individual creative abilities and creative performance through creativity training”; *active participation* refers to “active engagement / involvement in the creative process, which creates the potential for genuine exchange and engagement with local people and local culture” (Văduva Loredana, 2021); *courses and learning* refer to co-creation / co-makemanship (“visitors acquire knowledge about the way in which products, services and experiences are made”, while locals learn how to improve the products and “to provide a closer fits with consumer / visitor needs”) (Jusztin, 2012; Nurgraha & Siddiq, 2022; Petroman I.M. & Văduva Loredana); *characteristic experience* refers to “linking the creative process to the destination by anchoring it in local creativity, culture, and identity” (Richards, 2010a, 2010b).

Creative tourism has evolved conceptually from 2000 to 2005 (Table 1).

Table 1. Phases of development in creative tourism (after Duxbury & Richards, 2019)

Stage	Approximate Start Date	Forms	Focus
“ <i>Creative tourism 1.0</i> ”	2000	“Learning activities and workshops”	“Production-focused”
“ <i>Creative tourism 2.0</i> ”	2005	“(a) Destination-based creative experiences”	“Macro consumption-related perspective”
		“(b) Community-based tourism”	“Community-development thinking”
“ <i>Creative tourism 3.0</i> ”	2010	“Links to the creative economy”	“More passive forms of creative consumption”
“ <i>Creative tourism 4.0</i> ”	2015	“Relational networks and co-creation of experiences”	“Micro consumption-related perspective blending into prosumption”

The *shift from passive leisure / recreation* → *creative / serious leisure* (Dumazedier, 1967, in Richards & Raymond, 2000) in areas such as “*arts and crafts, design, gastronomy, health and healing, languages, nature, spirituality, and sports*”, was a **shift from cultural**

tourism → **creative tourism** which brought about changes along several trajectories (Richards, 2010; Richards & Russo, 2014):

- The “*trajectory of consumption*”: from *basic needs* (food and shelter) → *creative needs* (status and self-fulfilment);
- The “*trajectory of production*”: from *goods* → *experiences*;
- The “*trajectory of tourism*”: from *mass tourism* → *cultural tourism* → *creative tourism*.

The types of **creative tourism** experiences and the way they are delivered are detailed in Table 2.

Table 2. Types of creative tourism experiences and the way they are delivered (after Richards, 2010)

Creative tourism experience	Delivery
<i>Buying</i>	Shop window
<i>Learning</i>	Workshops
<i>Seeing</i>	Itineraries
<i>Tasting</i>	Experiences
	Open ateliers

Creative tourism is superior to *cultural tourism* because: “Creativity can potentially create value more easily because of its scarcity [...]; Creativity allows destinations to innovate new products relatively rapidly [...]; Creativity is a process, and creative resources are therefore more sustainable. [...]; Creativity is mobile. [...]” (Richards & Raymond, 2000; Richards & Marques, 2012) and because “Creativity involves not just value creation (economic wealth) but also the creation of values.” (Richards & Wilson, 2006) The **cultural tourism** – **creative tourism** relationship is represented in Table 3.

Table 3. Cultural tourism – creative tourism relationship (after Richards & Wilson, 2006)

	Primary time focus	Primary cultural focus	Primary consumption focus	Primary learning focus
<i>Cultural tourism</i>	Past and present	High culture, popular culture	Product, process	Passive

<i>Creative spectacles</i>	Present	Arts, performance	Performance	Passive
<i>Creative spaces</i>	Present and future	Arts, architecture, design	Atmosphere	Interactive
<i>Creative tourism</i>	Past, present, future	Creative process	Experience, co-makship	Active skill development

MATERIAL AND METHOD

The material used in this study consists in publications about **creative tourism** being implemented in different countries of the world. The research method used was the (**collective**) **case study** (“a particular instance of something used or analysed in order to illustrate a thesis or principle” – *Lexico*). Shared experiences in the field of **creative tourism** were investigated in an attempt to identify the best solutions for turning theory into practice.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Solutions for implementing creative tourism are both theoretical and practical.

1. Theoretical Solutions

Richards & Raymond’s (2000) was followed by Richards & Wilson’s (2006) and by Richard (2011), “which consider the development of *creative spectacles*, *creative spaces* and *creative tourism* from a double perspective – supply and demand”:

- ***creative spectacles*** designate “passive tourist experiences (i.e., creative experiences for passive consumption by tourists)”;
- ***creative spaces*** designate spatially demarcated creative enclaves that attract visitors due to the vibrant atmosphere of the areas;
- ***creative tourism*** designates active skill development and/or creative challenge-based tourist experiences (including creative spaces and creative spectacles) in which “the tourists themselves participate in the creative activities being undertaken”.

However, **creative tourism** is not only about *creative spectacles* and *creative spaces* – it is also about *creative relationships* and *creative networks* (Richards, 2012).

The theoretical underpinnings of **creative tourism** research have been reviewed by Ferreira Carvalho, Costa & Ferreira (2015).

To better understand creativity in tourism, one needs to understand the evolutive collocations of creativity in tourism along the passage **cultural tourism** → **creative tourism** through *creative spectacles* and *creative spaces* (Table 4).

Table 4. Contexts of creativity in tourism (after Richards & Wilson, 2007a)

	Cultural tourism	Creative spectacles	Creative spaces	Creative tourism
<i>Artistic focus</i>	Aesthetic	IP	IP	IP
<i>Competitive environment</i>	Competition	Collaboration, co-opertition	Collaboration, co-opertition	Collaboration, co-opertition
<i>Cultural context</i>	High culture, popular culture	Arts, performance, festivity	Arts, architecture, design	Creative process
<i>Development context</i>	Hardware	Orgware / software	Orgware / software	Orgware / software
<i>Engagement on consumption process</i>	Abstract	Visual	Multisensory	Flow
<i>Geographical scale</i>	Global or local	Glocal	Glocal	Glocal
<i>Heritage</i>	Historic or contemporary	Transcendent	Transcendent	Transcendent
<i>Identity</i>	Reinforcing	Pluralising	Pluralising	Pluralising
<i>Intervention</i>	Economic development	Economic and cultural development	Cultural, social and economic development	Realising creative potential
<i>Learning orientation</i>	Passive	Passive	Interactive	Active skill development
<i>Mode of consumption</i>	Product focus	Performance focus	Atmosphere	Experience, co-makship
<i>Reproducibility</i>	Serial	Custom, bespoke, co-production	Custom, bespoke, co-production	Custom, bespoke, co-production
<i>Spatial context</i>	Backdrop	Activity	Activity	Activity
<i>Timescale</i>	Past and present	Present	Present, future	Past, present, future

2. Practical Solutions

Creative tourism is practiced in Africa, the Americas, Asia, Australasia, and Europe (Richards, 2018a). In its three-decade existence, tourism developers have established *creative spectacles*, *creative spaces* and *creative tourism* in most tourism destinations around the world.

2.1. Creative Spectacles

Beijing, China. *Chinese / Lunar New Year* is the annual 15-day festival celebrated in both China and Chinese communities around the world related to “the ushering out the old year and bringing forth the luck and prosperity of the new one”. it includes the following traditions: carrying a colourful dragon through the streets by numerous dancers, carrying glowing lanterns during a night-time parade, feasting, firecrackers, fireworks, giving money in colourful red envelopes, hanging flowing lanterns in temples, honouring relatives who have died, preparing and enjoying special foods, red clothes, red decorations, thoroughly cleaning their homes to prevent the resident from facing bad luck, visiting family members (*Chinese New Year*) – Category: Culinary arts; Performing arts, Dance, Music; Traditional arts, Folk.

Edinburgh, UK. The *Edinburgh International Festival* was established in 1947 to bring together world-leading artists and audiences. For three weeks in August, it brings critically acclaimed productions, new interpretations on classic works, unique collaborations, and world premieres, to captivate, charm, and entertain, and audiences from around the world; it brings Edinburgh’s theatre venues (six theatres and concert halls, some smaller and unconventional venues) to life with the best performers and groups from the worlds of dance, music, opera, and theatre from around the globe; it is an annual meeting hub for peoples of all nations; and it is an unparalleled celebration of the performing arts (*Edinburgh International Festival*). – Category: Performing arts, Dance, Music, Opera, Theatre.

Washington, USA. The *Smithsonian American Art Museum*’s travelling exhibition programme has circulated hundreds of exhibitions since it was established in 1951. Here are its offerings at the beginning of 2022: “*Fighters for Freedom: William H. Johnson Picturing Justice*” (*Gibbes Museum of Art* in Charleston, South Carolina; *Smithsonian American Art Museum* in Washington, DC) is “a tribute to African American activists, performers, scientists, and teachers, as well as international heads of state working to bring peace to the world, meant to remind that individual achievement and commitment to social justice are at the heart of the American story”; *Many Wests: Artists Shape an American Idea* (*Boise Museum of Art* in Boise, Idaho; *Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art* in Eugene, Oregon; *Smithsonian American Art Museum* in Washington, DC; *Utah Museum of Fine Art* in Salt Lake City, Utah; *Whatcom*

Museum of Art in Bellingham, Washington) “examines the perspectives of 48 modern and contemporary artists who offer a broader and more inclusive view of this region” dominated by Euro-American historical accounts and romanticized; “*Sargent, Whistler, and Venetian Glass: American Artists and the Magic of Murano*” (Amon Carter Museum of American Art in Fort Worth, Texas; *Mystic Seaport Museum* in Mystic, Connecticut; *Smithsonian American Art Museum* in Washington, DC) “brings to life the Venetian glass revival of the 19th c. on the island of Murano and the artistic experimentation the city inspired artists John Singer Sargent and James McNeill Whistler” (*Smithsonian American Art Museum*). Category: Visual arts.

Other examples of **creative spectacles**: *Cape Minstrels*, *Cape Town Carnival*, “*Cape Town International Comedy Festival*”, “*Cape Town International Jazz Festival*”, “*Cape Town International Opera Festival*”, *Mother City Queer Project*, “*North Sea Jazz Festival*” in *Cape Town, South Africa* (Booyens & Rogerson, 2015), *Trays Festival* in *Tomar, Portugal* (Ferreira Carvalho, Costa & Ferreira, 2015).

2.2. Creative Spaces

Frankfurt am Main, Germany. The *Museum of Applied Art* is an example of contemporary museum concept. Its exhibitions with utilitarian purpose (art deco artifacts, Chinese lacquer, information design exhibits, modern collections of applied arts and crafts, product design exhibits) address contemporary art and craft, fashion and design, and lifestyles and performance: 60,000 exhibits are mainly examples of European applied arts and handicrafts from the 12th c. to the present day, and of East Asian and Islamic art. It is an open-ended space, a place for conceptual and experiential spaces where ideas, norms, and shapes – which are negotiable – can be enjoyed with all the senses. Inside the museum, there is a restaurant that serves modern regional cuisine (*Museum of Applied Art*). – Category: Visual arts, Craft.

New York, USA. *DUMBO (Down Under Manhattan Bridge Overpass)* is a neighbourhood in the New York City borough of Brooklyn. Its name comes from the local artists who started moving there in the 1970s and 1980s. It is a historic neighbourhood with an authentic New York feeling due to its Belgian block streets, iconic 19th c. warehouses, and remnants of freight train rails. DUMBO exudes creativity: artists and designers have set up studios in its manufacturing buildings and old warehouses, DUMBO's creative workforce is constantly displaying art works in boutiques, galleries, and show spaces at nearly every corner

of this neighbourhood, and furniture makers and woodworkers have created workshops in large loft spaces (*DUMBO, New York City, New York*). – Category: Visual arts,

Siby, Mali. The *village and rural commune of Siby* is an example of development of creative tourism in a non-Western rural environment. Though it has three important nuclei of cultural activities – *Bougou Saba Centre*, *Maison du Karité* and *Siby's Cooperative of Rock-Climbing Monitors*, only the first one, *Bougou Saba Centre* (created in 2006) is directly related to arts and creativity since it can accommodate visitors on its touristic camping site, it functions as an artistic residence, it has a centre built in the traditional architectural style that invests in and enhances local culture (particularly dance and music), it has a local artistic group (the Mandé Koulou), it is a platform for artists on tour, improvement, training, and workshops, it “organises and promotes visitors – locals encounters and performances”, and it “welcomes artists from Mali, neighbouring countries, and Europe (mostly Switzerland, France and Spain)” (Marques, 2012). – Category: Performing arts, Dance, Music.

Other examples of **creative spaces**: *creative industries in Cape Town*, South Africa (Booyens & Rogerson, 2015); interactive learning on the *Saint James Way* or the *Camino de Santiago* in Spain (Cueto Pedrotti, 2012); crafts programme of the French Shore Historical Society in Newfoundland, Canada (Hull & Sassenberg, 2012); Pašman Island, Croatia (Hull & Sassenberg, 2012); archaeological walks on the “Phoenicians’ Route” involving 18 countries in the Mediterranean area (Messineo, 2012); handicraft industry in West Java, Indonesia (Nurgraha & Siddiq, 2022); a think tank in the Province of Noord-Brabant, The Netherlands (Zegers, 2012).

2.3. Creative Tourism

Vallauris, France. The *Vallauris Ceramic Workshops* organises two creative tourism activities – *pottery workshop visits* and *courses in pottery techniques*. *Pottery workshop visits* help visitors discover potters’ know-how by performing filming and decoration demonstrations and different manufacturing techniques. The *courses in pottery techniques* address both children and adults and teach pottery techniques such as decoration, filming (covering with a thin layer of glaze), modelling, plastic art (creating and modifying three-dimensional physical objects), raku (“a kind of lead-glazed Japanese earthenware, used especially for the tea ceremony” – *Lexico*), and sculpture. (*Pottery, Ceramics and Clay in Vallauris, Alpes-Maritimes, France*) – Category: Craft arts.

Saint Petersburg, Russia. This city has a long list of “creative festivals” (Gordin & Matetskaya, 2012): *International Ballet Festival “Dance open”* – Category: Performing arts, Dance; *International Festival of Russian Theatres in the CIS and Baltic States “Meeting in Russia”* – Category: Performing arts, Theatre; *International Music Festival “St. Petersburg Palaces”* – Category: Performing arts, Music; *International Music Festival “Stars of the White Nights”* – Category: Performing arts, Music; *International Theatre Festival “Rainbow”* – Category: Performing arts, Theatre; *Sounds and Colours of the World* – Category: Visual arts, Photography; *St. Petersburg Choir Festival* – Category: Performing arts, Music; *St. Petersburg Prêt-à-Porter Week “Fashion Show on the Neva”* – Category: Fashion, Design; *The Festival of Museums’ Programme for Children “Children’s Days in St Petersburg”* – Category: Education.

Barcelona, Spain. The *Barcelona Creative Tourism* programme was created in 2005 as the first official platform for Creative Tourism, a pioneering creative tourism platform at city level (Couret, 2012; Dekker & Tabbers, 2012). It is composed of experts in creative tourism who encourage creative tourists to take part in experiences such as *Around Barcelona* (Live an authentic experience in the nearby countryside) – Category: Authentic Countryside; *Barcelona lifestyle* (Live the city like a happy local!) – Category: BCN Lifestyle; *Craft, DIY* (Participate in creative workshops with the locals) – Category: Crafts, DIY (Do It Yourself); *Culinary art* (Experience the local flavours through!) – Category: Culinary arts, Wine experiences; *Fashion design* (Feel inspired by textile traditions and contemporary fashion trends!) – Category: Fashion, Design; *Performing arts & music* (Barcelona is your stage: learn, improve and enjoy its musical fusions!) (*Barcelona Creative Tourism*) – Category: *Performing arts, Music*; *Traditional art* (Share the local traditions with the friendly Barcelonians!) – Category: Traditional arts, Folk; *Visual art* (Immerse yourself in the capital of visual art!) – Category: Visual arts.

Other examples of **creative tourism**: *Arts in the wild* in Ontario, Canada; *Cape Town Design Network* in Cape Town, South Africa (Booyens & Rogerson, 2015); *Catalan gastronomy and cookery* in Barcelona, Spain; cooking, dance, gastronomy, theatre, and wine in Guimarães, Portugal (Melo *et al.*, 2019); *Creative Tourism New Zealand* in Nelson, New Zealand; *Creatour Azores* (Baixinho *et al.*, 2020); *Danceholidays.com* in UK; *El Raval Neighbourhood of Barcelona*, Spain (Romagosa, Abril-Sellarés & Scherf, 2021); *cooking and crafts in Fethiye*, Turkey (Ozdemir & Ergun, 2022); *Galimard perfumeries* in Grasse, France; *Laguiole knife crafting* in Aveyron, France; *Music Festival ‘Encuentro de Dos Tradiciones’* in Mexico; and *the village of Lübbey*, Turkey (Durmuş & Emekli, 2020).

In some cases, turning *cultural tourism* into **creative tourism** is hindered by *mass tourism* (Richards, 2016): this is the case for *Dubrovnik* and *Zagreb, Croatia* (Jelinčić & Žuvela, 2012).

As pointed out by Richards (2010), **creative tourism** developers need to observe the following principles:

- Be distinctive in tangible assets (accommodation, facilities, food) and intangible resources (ambiance, atmosphere, creativity, skills);
- Build on what they have;
- Develop authenticity and quality;
- Innovate tradition;
- Know where they are and who they are;
- Reinterpret tradition;
- Use creative resources (e.g., local crafts) as a catalyst, local capacity, and what they have more creatively.

CONCLUSIONS

The conclusion of this study is the one formulated by Richards & Wilson (2006): “[...] creative tourism [is not] a panacea or a diametrically opposed alternative to traditional cultural tourism. Instead, the notions of creativity in tourism and (by extension) creative tourism should be viewed as one potential option among many others for destinations seeking to avoid problems of serial reproduction of culture.”

Creative tourism has brought about *creative potential, active participation, co-creation / co-participation, and characteristic experience*.

It has developed rapidly (in 15 years) from **cultural tourism**, changing its “*primary time focus, primary cultural focus, primary consumption focus, and primary learning focus*”.

Creativity, the trademark of **creative tourism**, impacts all contexts of tourism: *artistic focus, competitive environment, cultural context, development context, engagement on consumption process, geographical scale, heritage, identity, intervention, learning orientation, mode of consumption, reproducibility, spatial context, and timescale*.

Its theoretical solutions (*creative spectacles, creative space, and creative tourism*) have been successfully transposed into practice all over the world.

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