Chapter 5
Creative Tourism as Sustainable Initiative of a Coastal Destination:
Creative Routes in Fethiye

Meltem Altınay Ozdemir

https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3002-6127
Mugla Sitki Kocman University, Turkey

Emre Ergun
Mugla Sitki Kocman University, Turkey

ABSTRACT

The study examines tourist attractions and creative experiences of Fethiye, a coastal destination in Mugla, Turkey, based on theoretical overlaps in creative tourism. Creative tourism is suggested as an initiative for sustainability of local lifestyle, unique culture, and authenticity of Fethiye in this study. Therefore, the study was maintained with an exploratory and conceptual viewpoint. The results are presented as Fethiye's tourist attractions (13 categories) and creative experiences (six themes). The prominent creative experiences are specified as house wine, squeeze of olive, cheesemaking, mushroom (morel) picking, agriculture cultivation (local fruits and vegetables), Dastar weaving (geotagging product), carpet weaving (carpet of Kaya), wool spinning, local festivals, traditional bazaars, and soap making. Finally, a creative tour case was offered, and two creative tour routes were proposed in the appendix. The study revealed that creative tourism has importance for sustainability of authentic culture, responsible consumption, and economic development of the local community.

INTRODUCTION

The "creativity" in tourism refers to tourists learning a destination not only by being physically present there but also by consuming local cultural products and engaging in local activities (Gordin & Matetskaya, 2012). Creativity in tourism increases originality and innovation that can affect competitive advantage

of companies and destinations (Bialk-wolf et al., 2013; Miles & Green, 2010; Richards, 2013; Richards & Wilson, 2006a). Creative tourism is considered as a new form of tourism that is separated from mass tourism and linked to development of urban tourism niche products (Rogerson & Visser, 2011; Waitt & Gibson, 2014) as well as rural tourism (Blapp & Mitas, 2018; Jarábková & Hamada, 2012; Mitchell & Fisher, 2010). Various concepts have been presented in the literature, such as creative tourism (Carvalho et al., 2016; Ohridska-Olson et al., 2010; Richards, 2011, 2014, 2017; Richards & Wilson, 2006), creative activities (Richards & Wilson, 2006), and creative industries (Booyens & Rogerson, 2015; Ohridska-Olson et al., 2010) that arose due to experience economy. The experience economy suggested by Pine II and Gilmore (1998) includes providing tourists with more opportunities for active involvement and environmental engagement, and more particularly, tourists are more interested in real experiences. "*Experiences are memorable*" is according to Pine II and Gilmore (1998). The more sensory an experience is, the more it can be effective and unforgettable (Hung et al., 2016; Pine & Gilmore, 1998; Winter, 2004).

The emergence of creative tourism has been defined as an extension or reaction to cultural tourism, because, unlike traditional cultural tourists, creative consumers seek more interactive experiences that assist them in their self-improvement and identity creation (Richards & Raymond, 2000; Tan et al., 2014; Tan et al., 2016). Therefore, creative experiences that correspond to a trend towards experience-based products in creative tourism attract attention (Alsos et al., 2014; Booyens & Rogerson, 2015; Prebensen, 2014). Creative tourism experiences combine different creative content elements and engage with creative lifestyles (Richards, 2019, p. 7). Thus, creative tourism involves the involvement of tourists in doing something experimentally to participate in the "real cultural life" of destinations authentically and memorably (Hung et al., 2016; UNESCO, 2006). In other words, tourists become co-producers of experiences they consume (Prebensen, 2014; Richards, 2010, 2012; Tan et al., 2014). Creative tourism, if well planned, brings diversity to tourists and preserves the cultural heritage of destinations. Indeed, creative tourism can regain and re-evaluate a place's identity. Meanwhile, it can also be a tool of economic development in these regions and attract tourists interested in the learning and interaction process (Carvalho et al., 2014; Marujo et al., 2020).

The present study examines current offers and future potential of creative tourism in Fethiye, a coastal destination in Mugla, Turkey, based on the aforementioned theoretical overlaps in creative tourism. The following research questions served as the study's guidelines:

- RQ_1: Besides natural tourism attractions, how creative tourism can be a tool for determining authentic tourist attractions in Fethiye?
- RQ_2: What kinds of creative experience are available around Fethiye?

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Creative Tourism: Concept and Context

Cultural tourism has been recognized as an element of tourism policy by national and regional governments of the world (Richards, 2016) and is generally shown as a major growth market in tourism worldwide (Richards, 2002). On the other hand, tourists participating in cultural tourism who wants to experience the local culture and the places they visit, expressing a shift from cultural tourism to creative tourism according to Richards (2002). The tourism industry and creativity have a long-term connection.

Related Content

Russian Arctic Cities' Sustainable Development Strategies

Alexander Sergunin (2019). *Handbook of Research on International Collaboration, Economic Development, and Sustainability in the Arctic (pp. 495-511).*

www.irma-international.org/chapter/russian-arctic-cities-sustainable-development-strategies/218628

The Process of Collectivization Approached in Romanian Propagandistic Literature

Loredana Stoica (2013). *International Journal of Sustainable Economies Management (pp. 36-45).*

www.irma-international.org/article/process-collectivization-approached-romanian-propagandistic/77341

Co-Creation with Stakeholders: The Key to Enhancing Sustainable Value

Shridhar M. Samant, Shirish Sangleand Sonal Daulatkar (2016). *International Journal of Social Ecology and Sustainable Development (pp. 34-46).*

www.irma-international.org/article/co-creation-with-stakeholders/158081

Implementation of Multilingual Education for Sustainable Development in the Netherlands and Kazakhstan

Fatima Duisebayevaand Assel Imasheva (2020). *Toward Sustainability Through Digital Technologies and Practices in the Eurasian Region (pp. 224-238).*

www.irma-international.org/chapter/implementation-of-multilingual-education-for-sustainable-development-in-the-netherlands-and-kazakhstan/251703

Forecasting Renewable Energy Technologies in Desalination and Power Generation Using Taxonomies

Gihan Dawelbait, Andreas Henschel, Toufic Mezherand Wei Lee Woon (2013). *Creating a Sustainable Ecology Using Technology-Driven Solutions (pp. 219-233).*

www.irma-international.org/chapter/forecasting-renewable-energy-technologies-desalination/75385