



Business models for literary and cultural tourism

Strategies for territorial valorization

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I. Cultural and literary tourism

Introduction

Cultural tourism and literary tourism

Since the 1980s, studies have shown the **impact of culture on destination growth**, enhancing their competitiveness. Indeed, the connection between tourism and culture offers great potential for local development, as culture attracts tourists and generates income and employment, alongside many other benefits. Many destinations turned their cultural heritage into a driver for gaining competitive advantage in the increasingly globalized tourism market.

Cultural consumption has grown over the years, and tourism led by such interest in culture has become more significant, encouraged by local and international organizations. Scholars identified this phenomenon as a specific form of consumption, called "**cultural tourism**", highlighting the need for stakeholders to measure this sector quantitatively.

Within the larger frameworks of heritage tourism and cultural tourism lies **literary tourism**, recognized as a niche phenomenon rich with potential.

Introduction

Cultural tourism and literary tourism: a definition

Cultural Tourism

“A type of tourism activity in which the visitor’s essential motivation is to learn, discover, experience and consume the tangible and intangible cultural attractions/products in a tourism destination. These attractions/products relate to a set of distinctive material, intellectual, spiritual and emotional features of a society that encompasses arts and architecture, historical and cultural heritage, culinary heritage, literature, music, creative industries and the living cultures with their lifestyles, value systems, beliefs and traditions”.

(UN Tourism General Assembly, 22nd session 2017)

Literary tourism

“We speak of literary tourism as any journey undertaken to visit a place related to a writer, work or literary event. The travel can have a long or short temporal duration and spatial dimension: however, it must be induced by the desire to travel to where a writer lived or to the places, real or imaginary, featured in their work (Croy, 2012). By extension, it is also possible to speak of literary tourism for trips made not so much to retrace the footsteps of an author or to immerse oneself in the landscape that inspired his or her texts, but to visit towns that have taken on the identity of book cities or centers that host literary festivals...”

(Capecchi, Università per Stranieri di Perugia)

Tourism: drivers of choice

The relevance of natural and cultural experiences

Culture and nature are two important drivers in tourism choices in Italy, which should therefore be enhanced in territorial tourism proposals.

A survey conducted by *METIS Ricerche* on tourism habits in Italy details the **preferred experiences** Italians look for during their vacations. The first three categories are:



Nature, considered essential by **37%** of respondents



Trekking, a guiding element for **28%** of respondents



Culture, an experience sought by **18%** of respondents

The target audience: cultural tourists

Profile and average expenditure



PROFILE A. Cultural

Interested in **art**, especially contemporary forms. They love to be **surrounded by different cultures**, diverse ideas and lifestyles.

PROFILE B. Explorer

Passionate about **travel**, they love to constantly visit different places. Dynamic and demanding, they look for **new adventures and experiences**.



Cultural tourists have a higher daily expenditure per capita than the average Italian tourist: **€153** (against the average of €109). This is a significant trend, as expenditure now exceeds pre-Covid values (adjusted for the current inflation spiral).

Cultural tourists showcase a transversal profile, as they look for vacations **under the banner of culture** not only in famous art cities, but also in smaller centers in the countryside, allowing them to combine cultural consumption with other forms of tourist attractions **outdoor activities, natural heritage, and enogastronomy**.

Literary tourism

Data on Italy

Recent international studies show that this type of tourism has **high potential** and offers **many advantages** to small local destinations as well, thus becoming a field of interest for the Italian context.

A recent publication by Forlani and Proietti (Università degli Studi di Perugia) proposes a **categorization of literary tourism**, divided into three categories:



the experience of visiting **specific places related to writers** (houses, tombs, museums, etc.);



the experience of **literary destinations** (literary parks);



the experience of **literary festivals**.



Literary tourism

Data on Italy

Based on the aforementioned classification, this research consisted of a **census of local literary tourism initiatives** and was aimed at assessing how various destinations exploit the potential of such niche market.



Writers' homes and museums are most prevalent in central and northern Italy



Literary parks are more present in southern Italy



Literary festivals are spread across the country, with a particular presence in seaside destinations.



2. Case studies



Case studies

Festivals

Lucca Comics & Games (Lucca, IT)

Lucca Comics & Games is a **year-long cultural initiative focused on comics and games**, going beyond the festival itself. **Lucca Crea**, a company owned by the City of Lucca, **manages festivals, exhibitions, and projects** to promote active participation within its local communities. Lucca Crea's collaborators aim to design new experiences and offer the public **innovative forms of learning**.



Festivaletteratura (Mantua, IT)

Since 1997, Festivaletteratura hosts **renowned novelists, poets, and scientists**, embracing a **broad vision of literature** that welcomes new languages and cultures. Born from a **grassroots initiative**, it was quickly embraced by the local community, supported by volunteers and sponsors. Today the festival remains a cultural landmark for authors and institutions, offering five days of author talks, performances, readings, and concerts.





Case studies

Museums and exhibitions

Lucas Museum of Narrative Art (Seattle, USA)

As the **pioneering museum** dedicated solely to **storytelling through images**, the Lucas Museum of Narrative Art aims to explore how **narrative art can encourage dialogue, foster a sense of community**, and inspire reflections on the role of images in our world. Its expanding collection spans diverse cultures and mediums, featuring paintings, sculptures, photography, comic art, book and magazines, and the cinematic arts.



Tolkien. Man, professor, author. (Rome, IT)

The exhibition explores the **personal life, academic work, and narrative power of J.R.R. Tolkien**. As the first exhibition of this scale in Italy, it focuses on Tolkien as an individual, a father, a friend, and a scholar. The exhibition includes **manuscripts, letters, photographs**, and artwork inspired by his visions, also exploring his **influence on art, music, and comics**.





Case studies

Literary trails and parks

The European Fairytale Route (Europe)

The European Fairy Tale Route draws on the **rich tradition of children's tales from across Europe**. Aimed at children, families, and the broader public, it promotes shared values found in these stories, many of which have centuries-old origins and have been translated into numerous languages, fostering a **cultural network across nations**.



James Joyce Walking Tours (Dublin, IE)

The James Joyce Centre offers two **walking tours: Introducing Joyce's Dublin and Footsteps of Leopold Bloom**. The first tour explores North Central Dublin, where much of Joyce's work takes place. The second tour follows the route of Leopold Bloom in the Lestrygonians **episode of Ulysses**. Both tours provide a rich immersion into the world of Joyce and his characters.



Case studies

Literary trails and parks

Eugenio Montale and Cinque Terre Literary Park (Riomaggiore, IT)

The Eugenio Montale Literary Park offers a rich calendar of activities, including **walks and hikes, poetry readings, and insights into local history, fauna, and flora**. This open-air park spans the entire Cinque Terre area, highlighting its trails and nature as expressions of the landscape. The initiatives provide an opportunity to discover the **region's biodiversity** in harmony with the changing seasons.



Sigrid Undset Park (Lillehammer, NO)

Sigrid poured her artistic spirit into creating an **inspiring space for herself and her children**, with the **home's interior reflecting themes** from the Middle Ages **central to her writing**. The house, garden, and personal objects **bring her strong personality to life**, offering visitors a unique, intimate connection with Sigrid as a mother, Catholic, gardener, writer, and intellectual.



Questionnaire

formules

Questionnaire

QR Code

To conclude this morning's activities, we kindly ask in-person participants to fill up the following questionnaire:



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