



Creative tourism special issue: foreword

First developed in 2000 by Richards and Raymond (2000), the concept of creative tourism is now relatively stabilised and broadly used in research on cultural tourism's emergent modalities (Gonçalves, 2008). According to its initial conceptualisation, creative tourism implies tourists' active participation in learning experiences that stimulate the development of their 'creative potential'. The concept's growing use is related to two significant contemporary societal trends. The first is a shift from 'mass cultural tourism' to an increased interest in authentic 'everyday life' in destinations (Guerreiro & Marques, 2017). The second trend is cultural changes that have been designated as 'the creative turn' (e.g. an insistence on the 'rhetoric of creativity'). Cities must be creative in order to attract not only tourists but also 'creative industries' (Tavares, 2014, 2015) and 'creative classes' (Cruz, 2016; Florida, 2003). Tourism destinations and experiences and tourists themselves must be in some way 'creative', that is, be immersive, interactive and meaningful.

However, creative tourism can also be seen as a catalyst for the socioeconomic development of regions less prone to traditional tourism and as a way to valorise territories' cultural and natural specificities at the community level (Cabeça, 2018). Small places, rural areas, ethnic neighbourhoods and areas with aging populations, among others, can use creative tourism initiatives to attract visitors and invigorate local economies and demographics, simultaneously preserving tangible and intangible cultural resources (Cabeça, Gonçalves, Marques & Tavares, 2018a).

This Tourism and Management Studies Special Issue on Creative Tourism was born within the scope of a quite original project: CREATOUR – Creative Tourism Destination Development in Small Cities and Rural Areas. This project is the first action-research project in Portugal, whose objectives are to study and stimulate creative tourism initiatives in small places and rural areas. CREATOUR is an incubator and/or demonstration and multidisciplinary research initiative supporting collaborative investigation processes involving five Portuguese research centres working with a range of cultural and/or creative organisations. The project also involves other stakeholders located in small cities across Portugal in the Norte, Centro, Alentejo and Algarve regions.

The project is informed by theoretical and methodological approaches from cultural and/or creative sectors, tourism and regional development. CREATOUR's overall objective is to develop and pilot an integrated approach and research agenda for creative tourism in small cities and rural areas in Portugal, including strong links within and amongst regions. Building on a twofold approach, the project links theory and experimentation and combines multidisciplinary theoretical and methodological frameworks, cultural mapping and benchmarking exercises with an array of creative tourism pilot or case studies (see www.creatour.pt). This special issue is also part of CREATOUR's larger bibliographical production, within which can be highlighted Bakas and Duxbury (2018); Bakas, Duxbury and Castro (2018); Cabeça et al., 2018a, 2018b; Duxbury (2018a, 2018b) and Remoaldo and Ribeiro (2019).

The article that opens this issue is authored by the creator of the creative tourism concept himself. Greg Richards provides here a deeper version of his keynote presentation at the 1st CREATOUR

International Conference, whose broad theme was 'The State of the Art in Creative Tourism' and which took place in Curia, Portugal on 1 June 2017. In this paper, Richards situates creative tourism initiatives clearly within 'the broader "creative turn" in society'. Departing from the idea that this 'creative turn' took place first in urban centres and global cities, the author asks pertinent questions about creative tourism's role in smaller places' development strategies.

Using the examples of Guimarães (i.e. European Capital of Culture in 2012) and Den Bosch (i.e. Hieronymus Bosch's hometown), Richards shows that creativity can play an important role in generating buzz, attracting people and fostering economic development. The author's main argument is that creative tourism initiatives based on closer interpersonal relationships and visitors' immersion in destination communities' more authentic experiences can be an important way not only to develop small places but also to preserve heritage and local lifestyles.

However, Richards also draws the readers' attention to the pitfalls of creative tourism products set in smaller locations. Among the most significant dangers is the temptation of emulating other places' creative experiences, namely, big cities' strategies and practices. To be perceived by visitors as unique and authentic, creativity must be anchored in each place's cultural specificities. The author argues that, 'rather than seeing creativity as a model of attracting the creative class or developing a creative city, smaller places should see creativity as a mode of thinking that allows them to maximise their potential' (p. 9).

This special issue's second article consists of a robust analysis of the theoretical and empirical literature on creative tourism. Carvalho, Costa and Ferreira explore the theories underlying creative tourism research. An in-depth analysis of the extensive emerging literature on this subject allowed the authors to identify three main theoretical paradigms being applied in multiple approaches to creative tourism phenomena. These paradigms are the relationship between creativity and tourism, post-modern specialised consumption and the co-creation and experience economy.

Cruz, Perestrelo, Gato and Costa, who authored this special issue's third paper, are active researchers within the CREATOUR team and members of the DINAMIA'CET-IUL research centre. One task assigned to this centre within the CREATOUR project was to evaluate and monitor the implementation of a creative tourism network in Portugal. The article – appropriately entitled 'Connecting the dots' – is a preliminary evaluation of the goals and expectations of the first 20 creative tourism actors (i.e. pilots) selected to be monitored by CREATOUR and, simultaneously, the first mapping of these actors' existing connections within the network. Stakeholder and social network analyses were conducted using the contents of interviews done during the first stage of the CREATOUR project (i.e. idea laboratories). The analyses' results helped the authors identify the actors' main strategic challenges and portray the pilots' relationships at the national and regional levels. The authors draw the conclusion that the two main challenges faced by creative tourism actors in small cities and rural areas are the need to increase their territories' attractiveness and the required renovation and valuation of cultural heritage. In addition, this study confirmed the actors' connections are



regionally polarised. The authors also observe that ‘the network of creative tourism actors [is] still . . . low density . . . and it is only very slightly based on networking dynamics and network logics’ (p. 30).

This special issue’s fourth article, while not specifically about creative tourism, focuses on part of the broad ‘creative turn’ mentioned previously. More specifically, the authors discuss micro and small business managers’ attitudes towards creativity and innovation. The research results presented demonstrate clearly that managers’ positions on innovation practices and creativity are much stronger in companies linked to creative industries.

The last article reflects the special issue editors’ research within the CREATOUR project. Cabeça et al. propose here that the cultural mapping technique can be a powerful tool in the monitoring and designing of creative tourism offers. Creative tourism binds people to places, and it is deeply linked to the territories and communities in question. This paper presents an example of cultural mapping’s application focused especially on the importance of emotional and intangible mapping. The authors also address this tool’s uses in creative tourism by describing CREATOUR’s experiences and outcomes, which provide evidence of cultural mapping’s significance in terms of more sustainable offers and destination marketing.

All five contributions to this issue underline that the relationship between creativity and tourism (i.e. creative tourism products and experiences) is an expanding area of research that needs further attention from academia and the relevant industries. Tourism’s new phenomena and more scientific approaches are extremely dynamic and intrinsically related to major global societal tendencies and advances because tourism is all about people. Future research must study more extensively the creative ecosystems and sustainability of offers developed under the label of creative tourism. These in-depth experiences’ impacts should also be analysed more deeply.

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The guest editors

João Filipe Marques

CIEO | Centro de Investigação sobre Espaço e Organizações – Universidade do Algarve, jfmarq@ualg.pt

Alexandra Rodrigues Gonçalves

CIEO | Centro de Investigação sobre Espaço e Organizações – Universidade do Algarve, marodrig@ualg.pt

Sónia Moreira Cabeça

CIEO | Centro de Investigação sobre Espaço e Organizações – Universidade do Algarve, soniacabeça@hotmail.com

Mirian Tavares

CIAC | Centro de Investigação em Artes e Comunicação – Universidade do Algarve, mtavares@ualg.pt

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