Growth and Niche Markets in Tourism

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**For Teachers**

**Introduction**

Due to more passive employment roles, tourists are increasingly seeking experiential active type tourist experiences rather than passive mass tourism experiences. Special interest tourism involves consumers whose holiday choice is inspired by specific motivations and whose level of satisfaction is determined by the experience they seek. This niche form of tourism is growing in popularity; this program explores some of these niche tourism segments in more detail and the contributing factors to their growth in popularity. Examples are provided to enhance the students’ understanding of the related concepts along with insight provided by Professor Brian King, a leading academic in the tourism field.

**Timeline**

00:00:00   Tourism growth industries
00:02:27   Volunteer tourism
00:06:41   Dark tourism
00:11:23   Health and medical tourism
00:15:49   Gastronomic tourism
00:20:21   Credits
00:21:23   End program

**Related Titles**

Factors Affecting Global Tourism  
Rotorua: A Case Study in Sustainable Tourism

**Recommended Resources**

Student Worksheet

Initiate Prior Learning

1. What more specialized tourist experiences do you think have contributed to significant tourism industry growth?
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2. What is ‘dark tourism’? Provide examples of destinations/sites that you think constitutes dark tourism.
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3. What is film induced tourism? Provide examples of destinations/sites that you think constitutes film induced tourism.
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4. Why do you think volunteer tourism has increased in popularity in recent years?
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5. Do you think there is great demand for medical tourism? Why/Why not?
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Active Viewing Guide

Tourism growth industries

1 Identify growth niche tourism industries.

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2 What drives those who pursue special interest or niche tourism experiences?

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3 Identify reasons for the growth in special interest tourism experiences.

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Volunteer tourism

4 Define ‘volunteer tourism’. Provide examples to demonstrate your understanding.

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5 How do volunteer tourism programs generally operate?

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Growth and Niche Markets in Tourism

6 Why may people choose to participate in volunteer tourism programs?
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Dark tourism
7 Define ‘dark tourism’. List some examples of dark tourism activities and destinations.
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8 Outline reasons why dark tourism may be considered a controversial concept.
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9 Identify some possible key motivations of a dark tourist.
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Health and medical tourism
10 Define health and medical tourism. List some examples of health and medical tourism destinations.
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_________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________
11 What activities constitute health and medical tourism?

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Gastronomic tourism

12 Define gastronomic tourism. List some examples of gastronomic tourism destinations.

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13 a). What type of people does gastronomic tourism typically appeal to?

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b). Suggest reasons why this demographic has changed over recent years.

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14 Outline the main source markets for gastronomic tourism.

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Extension Activities

1 Reflective Exercise:

Consider your own choices as a tourist.

a) Have you visited sites or destinations associated with dark tourism? If so, what motivated your visit? What effect did the experience have on you?

b) Was the site developed and managed appropriately for tourism?

c) Were other tourists respectful to the site/destination?

d) Why do you think these types of sites/destinations are becoming increasingly popular?

e) Suggest management techniques to ensure such sites are developed appropriately.

2 Research Exercise

Select a special interest or niche tourism site or destination and construct a two A4 page information fact sheet for potential visitors. Information may include:

- Tourist sites
- Population
- Climate
- History or significance of the destination
- Activities/things to see and do
- Pictures/photographs
- Statistics

3 Group Practical Activity:

In small groups, select a destination and develop a food and wine destination development strategy to encourage tourist visitation. As a group, present your strategy to your fellow class members. Include:

- Touring route and sample itinerary
- Potential business participants
- Signage design
- Marketing plan

4 Individual Research Exercise:

Research a volunteer organization. Consider aspects such as how the organization operates, the expectations of the organization and the volunteer, benefits transferred to the local destination community and to the volunteer. Present your findings to your class members.

5 Research Exercise:

In small groups select a destination highlighted in a film and analyze how film induced tourism may be used as a destination marketing strategy. In your analysis consider:

- What potential benefits may film tourism bring to the destination?
- What potential challenges and/or impacts may film tourism bring to the destination?
- Discuss management implications of these challenges/impacts.
- What additional factors do destinations associated with film need to consider within their own destination development?
**Suggested Student Responses**

**Initiate Prior Learning**

1. What more specialized tourist experiences do you think have contributed to significant tourism industry growth?
   *Answers will vary but may include adventure, food, eco-tourism, wine, volunteer type activities.*

2. What is ‘dark tourism’? Provide examples of destinations/sites that you think constitutes dark tourism.
   *Answers will vary but may include a visitation to places of disaster and destruction. Examples may include concentration camps in Europe, Port Arthur in Australia, and Ground Zero in the USA.*

3. What is film induced tourism? Provide examples of destinations/sites that you think constitutes film induced tourism.
   *Visitation to sites and destinations associated with films and television series. Examples include Stirling as a result of Braveheart, New Zealand associated with Lord of the Rings and Notting Hill in London in association with the film of the same name.*

4. Why do you think volunteer tourism has increased in popularity in recent years?
   *Answers will vary but may include young people taking a ‘gap’ year after their final year of high school is becoming more common, seeking a more meaningful experience, influence of the media.*

5. Do you think there is great demand for medical tourism? Why/Why not?
   *Answers will vary for this question and based on the student’s personal views. Subsequently, there is no right or wrong answer however a logical argument needs to be provided.*
Active Viewing Guide

Tourism growth industries

1 Identify growth niche tourism industries.
   Eco-tourism, gastronomic, cultural tourism, volunteer tourism, dark or thanatourism, health and medical tourism, adventure tourism and rural tourism.

2 What drives those who pursue special interest or niche tourism experiences?
   Special interest tourism is driven by specific motivations. The level of satisfaction is determined by the experiences these tourists pursue. Once basic needs are fulfilled, people are inclined to travel more. In travelling more, they’re seeking answers to life’s questions, or they’re seeking pleasure and entertainment or to pursue their hobbies.

3 Identify reasons for the growth in special interest tourism experiences.
   Reasons for growth in these niche areas may include an increase in many people’s disposable incomes – especially in emerging economies such as China and India – and the desire for tourism experiences that are more meaningful, or that align with special interests. This is accentuated by having limited leisure time available, and a subsequent desire to maximize the levels of satisfaction from a tourism experience.

Volunteer tourism

4 Define ‘volunteer tourism’. Provide examples to demonstrate your understanding.
   Volunteer tourism involves travelers visiting destinations in various parts of the world to work on community, social or conservation projects.

5 How do volunteer tourism programs generally operate?
   Generally the volunteer doesn’t pay for their accommodation, and the host doesn’t pay for their help. Often the volunteer pays a minimal fee to the organization placing them to cover administration costs.

6 Why may people choose to participate in volunteer tourism programs?
   People engage with volunteer tourism for various reasons – often it’s about a sense of giving and making a difference. The impact on the traveler can be significant – even life-changing.

Dark tourism

7 Define ‘dark tourism’. List some examples of dark tourism activities and destinations.
   Dark tourism, also known as black, grief or thanatourism, involves travelling to destinations and sites associated with death and suffering – for example, castles, battlefields, disaster sites, prisons and concentration camps.

8 Outline reasons why dark tourism may be considered a controversial concept.
   Dark tourism is controversial – some regard it as the exploitation of tragedy, whereas others take the view that it is more about history. Another criticism of dark tourism is that it is disrespectful – even immoral – particularly when visitors’ behavior might be seen as inappropriate.

9 Identify some possible key motivations of a dark tourist.
   A morbid fascination, an opportunity to silently grieve and ponder, education and historical reasons, or simply to see firsthand the sites of some of history’s more notorious events.
Health and medical tourism

10 Define health and medical tourism. List some examples of health and medical tourism destinations.

Health and medical tourism refers to travel to destinations to make use of medical, health and wellbeing services and facilities. Examples might include cosmetic surgery or dental procedures in developing countries, which cost much less than what they do in first world countries….spa resorts and health farms.

11 What activities constitute health and medical tourism?

Health and medical tourism –travelling to make use of medical, health and wellbeing services and facilities. Different types include cosmetic surgery, dental work, spa resorts.

Gastronomic tourism

12 Define gastronomic tourism. List some examples of gastronomic tourism destinations.

Gastronomic tourism – tourism where destination choice is determined principally by local food and beverages. Examples include: European countries such as France and Italy for their regional systems of wine, and a whole range of food products that come from the localities; emerging places like Vietnam where there’s lots of cooking shows where they’ve got very distinct types of product; Australia for the booming wine industry.

13 a). What type of people does gastronomic tourism typically appeal to?

In the past, a typical gastronomic tourist was a little bit older, more mature. But now ages range from twenty and up – a large cross-section across all age groups are looking for that type of experience.

b). Suggest reasons why this demographic has changed over recent years.

Answers will vary but may include: wider range and cheaper prices, more awareness of health concerns with eating well, recent popularity of cooking shows.

14 Outline the main source markets for gastronomic tourism.

Globally, the main source markets for gastronomic tourism include Germany, the UK, Italy, France, Scandinavian countries and the US. Asian countries, in particular China, are also becoming increasingly significant as both source markets.
Extension Activities

1 Reflective Exercise:

Consider your own choices as a tourist.
This exercise is subjective and a wide variety of sites/destinations could be mentioned by students. This exercise is designed to promote self reflection and analytical skills.

a) Have you visited sites or destinations associated with dark tourism? If so, what motivated your visit? What effect did the experience have on you?
Motivations may include education, history, pay respect, personal connection, curiosity etc.

b) Was the site developed and managed appropriately for tourism?
Signage, appropriate tourist access, information and interpretive services etc.

c) Were other tourists respectful to the site/destination?
For example being quiet/paying respect, observing roped off areas, tasteful souvenirs,

d) Why do you think these types of sites/destinations are becoming increasingly popular?
Tourists seeking more meaningful type experiences to which these sites often fall under.

e) Suggest management techniques to ensure such sites are developed appropriately.
Information and interpretation provided to the tourists, areas roped off appropriately, respectful marketing materials, tasteful souvenirs, entrance fees contributed to maintaining the site or returned to victims etc.

2 Research Exercise

Select a special interest or niche tourism site or destination and construct a two A4 page information fact sheet for potential visitors. Information may include:
- Tourist sites
- Population
- Climate
- History or significance of the destination
- Activities/things to see and do
- Pictures/photographs
- Statistics

Answers will vary. This exercise is designed to develop research skills and provide the student with practical skills required for employment in the tourism industry.

3 Group Practical Activity:

In small groups, select a destination and develop a food and wine destination development strategy to encourage tourist visitation. As a group, present your strategy to your fellow class members. Include:
- Touring route and sample itinerary
- Potential business participants
- Signage design
- Marketing plan

Answers will vary. This exercise is designed to develop practical research and creativity skills required for employment in the tourism industry. In addition, students will present this information to the class which will promote skill development in areas of public speaking and teamwork.
4 Individual Research Exercise:

Research a volunteer organization. Consider aspects such as how the organization operates, the expectations of the organization and the volunteer, benefits transferred to the local destination community and to the volunteer. Present your findings to your class members.

Any number of volunteer organizations may be researched including Global Work and Travel, World Youth Organization, Australian Volunteers, Make a Wish Foundation and UNICEF.

Students should outline how the volunteer organization functions, what the organization expects of the volunteer (commitment, enthusiasm, compassion, knowledge and physical skills etc) and also the expectations of the volunteer from the organization (organization of placement, visa and destination information, training, etc), what potential benefits that the organization receives (assistance to build schools, educate children etc) and benefits to the volunteer (opportunity to give back, make a difference in a local community, develop skills etc).

5 Research Exercise:

In small groups select a destination highlighted in a film and analyze how film induced tourism may be used as a destination marketing strategy. In your analysis consider:

This exercise is designed to promote research, analytical, teamwork and presentation skills.

a) What potential benefits may film tourism bring to the destination?
   Increased awareness of the destination, increased visitation, increased economic injection into the local economy, increased employment etc.

b) What potential challenges and/or impacts may film tourism bring to the destination?
   Overcrowding, increased prices, inaccurate portrayal of the destination according to the film, lack of local involvement etc

c) Discuss management implications of these challenges/impacts.
   Visitor management, marketing plans/strategy, local involvement.

d) What additional factors do destinations associated with film need to consider within their own destination development?
   Does the film portray the destination in a way which complements the destinations development strategy? The degree of local involvement. Accessibility to well known landmarks depicted in the film etc.