

## Book Review

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# Cultural Tourism

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The second edition of *Cultural Tourism* is a well-structured and comprehensive text, which focuses on the relationship between cultural tourism and cultural heritage management. The book has been substantially revised since it was first published in 2002 (McKercher & du Cros 2002) and now includes many new sections, case studies and relevant examples from almost every corner of the world. Aimed at students, researchers and practitioners of tourism and cultural heritage management alike, the book examines the problematic relationship between these two conflicting camps and illustrates how their respective goals can be synchronised to achieve sustainable cultural tourism.

The book is divided into five parts, each of them covering a number of challenges and issues that deal with the sustainable use of cultural resources. Part A is comprised of a theoretical conceptualisation of cultural tourism (Chapter 1), brief introduction to the role of sustainability in cultural heritage management (Chapter 2) and discussion of the potential impacts of using cultural assets as tourism products for local communities (Chapter 3). This introductory part provides a critical analysis of how cultural tourism and cultural heritage management have independently developed core ideologies and responds to the needs of different stakeholders. The authors argue that practitioners in both sectors are far from achieving a successful collaboration and largely work in isolation from each other.

Part B provides a detailed overview of cultural heritage management (Chapter 4) and identifies some key management challenges for both tangible (Chapter 5) and intangible (Chapter 6) heritage resources. This part of the book contains an in-depth analysis of cultural heritage

management principles and practices and further examines their relevance to sustainable tourism.

Part C explores the nature of tourism (Chapter 7), the market for cultural tourism and types of cultural tourists (Chapter 8) as well as tourist attractions system and information gatekeepers (Chapter 9). The authors argue that “many are keen to express an opinion about how tourism *should* work” but very few “really understand the underlying factors that determine how tourism *does* work” (p. 105). To address this gap, they identify 19 underlying principles that drive tourism, based on what attracts tourists and what actually influences their behaviour. Another theoretical contribution of this book is the typology of cultural tourists. The authors provide a thorough review of the segmentation of cultural tourism market focusing on the motivation of travel and depth of experience for cultural visitors. Central to this discussion is authors’ own segmentation model originally developed in 2002 (see McKercher, 2002; McKercher and du Cros, 2002). Particularly useful here are the two tables given that summarise the findings of motivation-based and activities-based segmentation studies.

Part D examines cultural tourism products. Looking broadly at the potential of cultural assets as tourism products, McKercher and du Cros provide a marketing approach to cultural heritage analysing the need of standardisation and commodification of products (Chapter 10) and the processes involved in product evaluation (Chapter 11). This part of the book concludes with an evaluation model originally developed by du Cros (2001). The market appeal/robusticity matrix determines the managerial decisions of cultural heritage and offers guidance to whether tourism or cultural heritage management should be the preferred management tool. The model is explained in detail and may serve as a valuable evaluation tool for both tourism planners and heritage managers (Chapter 12).

Part E examines the planning and marketing of visitor experiences. Exploring factors for successful attractions (Chapter 13), planning and marketing approaches for attracting a suitable audience (Chapter 14) and

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interpretation techniques for visitor experiences (Chapter 15), the final part of the book elaborates more on the development of cultural resources as products for tourists' consumption. It puts cultural assets in the context of "memorable experiences" and largely discusses development options that lead to quality visitor experiences.

The book is very well organised and structured to a high level. Each part of the volume consists of three chapters designed in the same style giving a brief introduction of the topic, comprehensive analyses, examples and key learning outcomes at the end. This clear layout and coherent structure make it particularly useful as a teaching tool. As mentioned before, the book contains many plates, tables and pictures that further suggest its use as an introductory text suitable for both undergraduate and graduate students. From a practitioner's perspective, the book is a good learning resource for both tourism and heritage professionals and for those particularly interested in sustainable cultural tourism management. A key contribution is the theoretical and practical understanding of cultural tourism and its interrelationship with cultural

heritage management and how tourism and heritage professionals should utilise a balanced approach to cultural resources.

In conclusion, the book is a useful volume and is a must for any university library. I would highly recommend it to students interested in cultural tourism, heritage management, visitor experiences and heritage interpretation. However, I should emphasise that the book is not entirely about cultural tourism as the title suggests. Instead, it is largely about the relationship between tourism and cultural heritage management.

## References

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