

# The Integrated Approach in Cultural Tourism towards Guidelines Communicating a Protected Heritage

**Gouhar Shemdin-Simison, MA., METU, Dpl. ICCROM**

*Adviser on Architectural Design and Conservation, Communications, Canada*

*Former Secretary Treasurer of ICOMOS Canada*

*Former President of ICOMOS National Training Committees*

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Tourism is on the rise according to all sources, but what kind of tourism? Some statistics also mention that Cultural Tourism is on the rise in an accelerating momentum. However, Museum attendance between 1971 and 91 (20 years) in Canada increased only from 1.8 millions to 2.3 millions. Obviously this is not an alarming rate.

Lets examine the International Case. Some Museums have acquired monument status on their own right as main attractions to visitors. Examples include the Louvre, the Prado and the Offizzi. The overall increase of the tourist to cultural centres cannot be completely attributed to awareness in Culture. The Tourist sees architecture such as the Tower of Pisa and Eiffel tower as curiosities to observe while on tour and to later compare notes with friends, as much as to acquire knowledge in history and culture.

The tendency of changing the character of city centres as people's places in favour of windy corridors between high rise buildings has alienated the tourist with a lack of human scale and friendly environments. A city on a human scale like Ottawa, the National Capital of Canada, was transformed within 15 years from a pleasant people's place to barren streets of high walls. This is due to a lack of master plans and supporting legislation in addition to the greed of developers.

City centres with special character that have developed over centuries or decades with special character should be

enjoyed by the people who inhabit and visit them. Businesses can be established in satellites on the periphery of cities where the working population can commute to work easily.

One of the changes in people's urban lifestyles will occur with the arrival of the telework concept or "work at home". This will eliminate the need for more high rise buildings in city centres.

The tourist is concerned initially with comfortable accommodation and entertainment in terms of eating, shopping, and having a carefree time. Cultural Activity might be secondary on a tourist's list of priorities.

The following are some of the basic ingredients of Cultural Tourism.

## **Culture**

Culture, consists of the non material characteristics, values of appreciation and codes of conduct that distinguish a) a place on any scale b) a group of people of any size, or the interaction of a) and b) in the past and present. These characteristics including physical and non-physical have developed, matured, and produced cultures that represent the identity of places and people. Thus the cultural identity that establishes the social, moral artistic, architectural and spiritual values of practice and appreciation. The cultural identity a non material intrinsic asset of people and places, can be considered their most valuable "capital" for moral and material gains in a world that has become smaller and smaller with the advance of communication and transportation.

### **The Cultural Tourist**

A bus tour of "Rome by night" with an ignorant tour guide who tells personal jokes rather than the history of the surroundings may have been entertaining 20 or even 10 years ago, but not anymore. With the advent of communication and tourism, people are more knowledgeable about countries and cultures, are demanding quality information, and have higher respect for the visited sites. Cultural sites are visited today not only to provide an interesting background for a day out, a picnic or a meal. People are visiting their countries of origin, sites of their spiritual beliefs, sites of nostalgic events, personal or communal among other things. The Cultural Tourist today has acquired a sense of responsibility and respect toward the cultural heritage that guardians of these cultures and places can and should count on this new attitude.

### **Cultural Tourism Destinations**

These destinations are the product of centuries or decades of interaction between a place a people, or a person. The product can be characterized as:

- (1) Environmental: including architecture, landscape and engineering works, heritage or modern
- (2) Spiritual; past or present belief
- (3) Economical, traditional main streets or modern replacements
- (4) Centres that integrate all of the above, such as the town centre.

All the above may include site museums, interpretation, cultural and/or spiritual centres, marketing areas, etc.

### **The Guardians of Cultural Sites and Centres**

The practice of operating cultural assets within the last decade has developed from the idea of promoting a business through increased numbers of visitors to guarding treasures that are open to a wider public based on principals of long-term preservation of the assets. The

leaders and the thinkers have been promoting this approach despite the race for material gain that is considered a sign of prosperity. Material gain acquired by consuming cultural assets will eventually bankrupt the capital invested. No capital, no investment, no material gain, no prosperity.

### **Policies on conserving Cultural Heritage**

Canada is a member of the international community that subscribes to the conservation principals set forth by ICOM and ICOMOS. These organizations have established universal charters for some areas and are in the process of preparing charters or guidelines for the other areas of cultural heritage.

In Canada as in any other country we needed Guidelines on cultural tourism based on the conservation of all cultural and natural assets. Tourist activities impact on all area of cultural and natural environments, as well as on the economy.

The "Tourism Association of Canada" produced the "Code of Ethics for Tourists," the "Code of Ethics for the Industry" and "Guidelines for the Industry" as a result of its "National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy" in 1992. These codes and guidelines (see attached) will be illustrated by Canadian examples of Cultural Tourism Practices for the purposes of this paper. These examples will include National Provincial, and Community museums, historic sites, as well as cultural centres and spiritual centres exhibiting and interpreting oral, physical and non-physical heritage.

Managements styles and conservation approaches should aim at promoting quality heritage conservation, as well as raising the quality of the knowledge transmitted to a more enthusiastic and inspired audience. Heritage sites, museums, interpretation centres and city centres as ecomuseums, are channels for communicating heritage values. Accordingly well developed and integrated guidelines are necessary to insure the preservation of cultural assets while providing constructive and qualitative Cultural Tourism.

## SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

### Code of Ethics for Tourists

A high quality tourism experience depends on the conservation of our natural resources, the protection of our environment, and the preservation of our cultural heritage. The Canadian Tourism Industry has developed and adopted a Code of Ethics and Practices to achieve these objectives. You can help us in our continuing efforts to provide a high quality tourism experience for you and future guests by giving consideration to the following guidelines.

1. Enjoy our diverse natural and cultural heritage and help us to protect and preserve it.
2. Assist us in our conservation efforts through the efficient use of resources including energy and water.
3. Experience the friendliness of our people and the welcoming spirit of our communities. Help us to preserve these attributes by respecting our traditions, customs, and local regulations.
4. Avoid activities which threaten wildlife or plant populations, or which may be potentially damaging to our natural environment.
5. Select tourism products and services which demonstrate social, cultural and environmental sensitivity.

We wish you a pleasurable and rewarding visit and look forward to welcoming you again soon.

## SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

### Code of Ethics for the Industry

The Canadian Tourism Industry recognizes that the long-term sustainability of tourism in Canada depends on delivering a high quality product and a continuing welcoming

spirit among our employees and within our host communities. It depends as well on the wise use and conservation of our natural resources; the protection and enhancement of our environment; and the preservation of our cultural, historic and aesthetic resources. Accordingly, in our policies, plans, decisions and actions, we will:

1. Commit to excellence in the quality of tourism and hospitality experiences provided to our clients through a motivated and caring staff.
2. Encourage an appreciation of, and respect for, our natural, cultural and aesthetic heritage among our clients, staff, and stake holders, and within our communities.
3. Respect the values and aspirations of our host communities and strive to provide services and facilities in a manner which contributes to community identity, pride, aesthetics and the quality of life of residents.
4. Strive to achieve tourism development in a manner which harmonizes economic objectives with the protection and enhancement of our natural, cultural and aesthetic heritage.
5. Be efficient in the use of all natural resources, manage waste in an environmentally responsible manner, and strive to eliminate or minimize pollution in all its forms.
6. Cooperate with our colleagues within the tourism industry and other industries, towards the goal of sustainable development and an improved quality of life for all Canadians.
7. Support tourists in their quest for a greater understanding and appreciation of nature and their neighbours in the global village. Work with and through national and international organizations in helping to build a better world through tourism.

## SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

### Guidelines for the Industry

1. Bring economic objectives into harmony with conservation of resources and environmental, social, cultural, and aesthetic values in the formulation of vision statements, mission statements, policies, plans, and the decision-making process.
2. Provide tourists with a high quality experience which contributes to a heightened appreciation of our natural and cultural heritage. Facilitate as possible, meaningful contact between hosts and guests and respond to the special travel needs of diverse population segments including youth, mature citizens, and the disabled.
3. Offer tourism products and services that are consistent with community values and the surrounding environment. Reinforce and enhance landscape character, sense of place, community identity, and benefits flowing to the community as a result of tourism.
4. Design, develop, and market tourism products, facilities and infrastructure in a manner which balances economic objectives with the maintenance and enhancement of ecological systems, cultural resources and aesthetic Resources. Achieve tourism development and marketing within a context of integrated planning.
5. Protect and enhance our natural, historic, cultural and aesthetic resources as a legacy for present and future generations. Encourage the establishment of parks, wilderness reserves, and protected areas.
6. Practice and encourage the conservation and efficient use of natural resources including energy and water.
7. Practice and encourage environmentally sound waste and materials management including reduction, reuse, and recycling. Minimize and strive to eliminate release of any pollutant which causes environmental damage to air, water, land, flora or wildlife.
8. Reinforce environmental and cultural awareness through marketing initiatives.
9. Encourage tourism research and education which gives emphasis to ethics, heritage preservation, and the host community; and the necessary knowledge base to ensure the economic, social, cultural and environmental sustainability of tourism.
10. Foster greater public awareness of the economic, social, cultural, and environmental significance of tourism.
11. Act with A spirit of co-operation within the industry and related sectors to protect and enhance the environment, conserve resources, achieve balanced development and improve the quality of life in host communities.
12. Embrace the concept of "One World" and collaborate with other nations and international bodies in the development of a socially, environmentally, and economically responsible tourism industry.

### Guidelines for Tourism Industry Associations

#### 1.0 Policy, Planning and Decision-Making

- 1.1 Commit to excellence by incorporating sustainable tourism principles in all aspects of policy, planning and decision-making. Develop a sustainable tourism policy statement and action plan as a demonstration of leadership. Encourage and assist members to develop policy statements and action plans with a commitment to socially, culturally, and environmentally responsible operating principles.

- 1.2 Support a proactive approach in building tourism into sustainable development strategies and ensuring that tourism resources and values are fully identified and provided for in planning and allocation processes.
- 1.3 Work with respective national and provincial/territorial round tables on the environment and the economy towards achieving sustainable development objectives for all sectors of Canada's economy.
- 1.4 Establish an evaluation and monitoring program to measure progress towards policy and action plans.

2.0 *The Tourism Experience*

- 2.1 Encourage our members to provide a high quality tourism experience which brings satisfaction and enrichment to visitors, hosts and employees; greater respect, understanding and appreciation for natural and cultural resources; and which promotes an understanding and appreciation of host communities.

3.0 *The Host Community*

- 3.1 Encourage members to be actively involved in social, cultural, and environmental projects and events of local civic organizations and community groups.
- 3.2 Encourage the preparation of community tourism plans which incorporate sustainable tourism concepts.

This document is 20 page long and includes:

Code of Ethics for Tourists (suitable for framing)

Code of Ethics for the Industry (suitable for framing)

Guidelines for the Industry (suitable for framing)

Guidelines for the Tourism Industry Association (4 pages)

Guidelines for Accommodation (4 pages)

Guidelines for Foodservice (3 pages)

Guidelines for Tour Operators (3 pages)

Guidelines for Ministries of Tourism (5 pages)