

Social Tourism

# INNOVATIVE TOURS

Designing tours for social tourism

Lectures by  
Sergio Rodríguez Abitia

Sesc Serviço Social do Comércio

Serviço Social do Comércio  
Departamento Nacional


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Rio de Janeiro  
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2020

The bottom half of the page features a large, abstract graphic design. It consists of several overlapping, wavy, light gray shapes that resemble a stylized landscape or a series of hills. A solid dark gray circle is positioned in the upper left quadrant of this graphic area, resembling a sun or moon. The overall aesthetic is clean and modern.

Sesc | Serviço Social do Comércio

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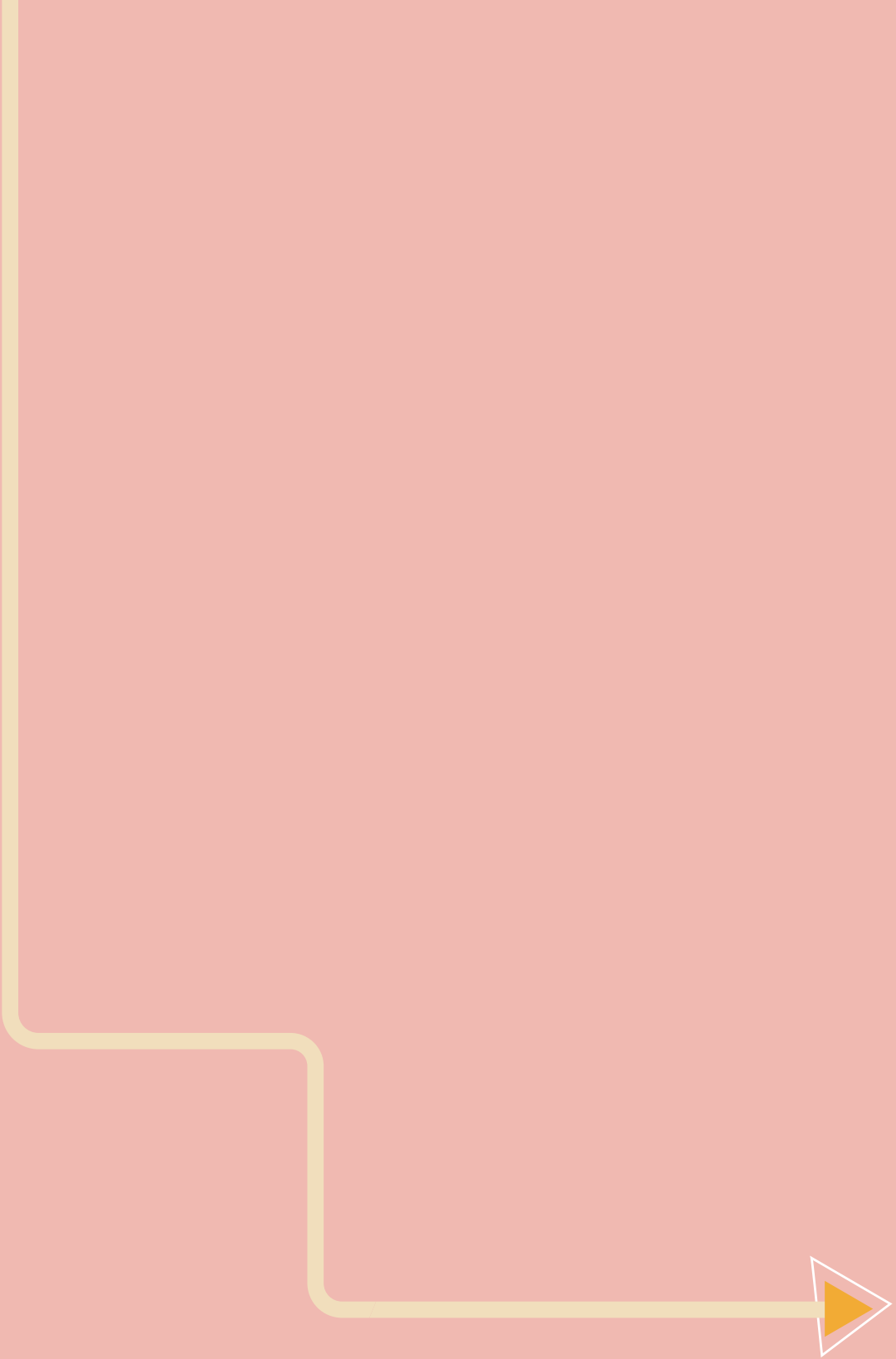
The diversity of the Brazilian population and the sheer size of the country are critical factors that guide Sesc's endeavors, which aims to create more well-rounded and active citizens by providing greater access to culture, education, health, sports, leisure and assistance. The work undertaken every day in the 591 units present in every Brazilian state contributes to the improvement of the quality of life of the general population, especially people working in trade, whether of goods, services or tourism, giving them the opportunity to develop their full potential.

In the field of Leisure, social tourism stands out as a key democratic activity for the cultural enrichment of citizens of every age group, bringing about discoveries, encounters and exchanges. Sesc's tours are not limited to conventional attractions; they promote different perspectives towards Brazil, especially when it comes to culture, the environment, history and each region's unique population. These are exclusive tourism products, ranging from the Amazon to the Brazilian South, in addition to 41 units of accommodation that receive, at affordable prices, around one million tourists a year.

These activities have been the hallmark of Sesc's journey since its founding days, with the first tourism caravans and, as early as 1948, the opening of the first summer camp. By its 25th anniversary, in the early 1970s, Sesc had already made available to its target clients a tourism complex that included eight summer camp sites. The breadth of this work grew even more in 2010, when Sesc partnered with the International Social Tourism Organization (ISTO), which shares our mission in this field: a tourism focused on the human being, on sociocultural development, solidarity and sustainability.

In light of this, the Sesc's National Department creates, coordinates and monitors the general guidelines and the programs and projects that are developed in the regional units. Strategy alignment includes training workshops and educational courses for Sesc professionals all around the country.

This book, published in conjunction with ISTO Americas, represents the educational essence of the social tourism developed by Sesc, both in terms of tours and accommodations, as well as in intellectual activities, such as courses, debates, lectures and workshops. The decision to turn Sergio Rodríguez Abitia's lectures into a book is the result of an ethical commitment that involves all of the members of the Leisure field, employees working in tourism services, entrepreneurs, public officers, teachers and professors and a wide network of tourism services providers, aiming towards the best practices in the segment. This innovative and ethical approach is attuned to the three pillars of sustainability: economic, social and environment.



Dear readers, friends and members,

It is with great pleasure that the Secretary for the Americas of the International Social Tourism Organization (ISTO Americas) is proud to support the presentation and promotion of this work, which is the result of the transcription of a course offered by Sergio Rodríguez Abitia, notable member of the entity's Board of Directors.

First and foremost, it is always a pleasure, not to mention extremely important to this regional section of ISTO, to support the many initiatives organized by its members across the American continent. In this particular case, by the Sesc's National Department, in Brazil, which has been a key ally in our endeavors since 2010. The pioneering effort of SESC-DN has become an example to other countries with which ISTO Americas has been working. Furthermore, it has become a creative model for other courses and trainings in various fields, not only in the Americas, but also in Europe.

In this way, the fundamental result of following the process of reviewing the concepts in social tourism and the way in which they are currently understood, in order to put into everyday practice the conceptualization and operation of specialized touristic products, those which incorporate the highest values of social tourism, is the development of the kind of tourism we propose: a tourism that is inclusive, responsible, sustainable and sympathetic to everyone's needs.

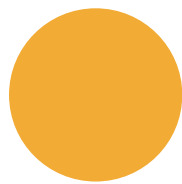
This social and educational goal, which is what proposals in social tourism should offer tourists and travelers, constitutes the most important challenge when it comes to pointing out the differences in regards to traditional tourism, which is almost exclusively commercial in nature and which forgets to "put the person at the center of the touristic activity being offered," as stated in the Montreal Declaration.<sup>1</sup>

In the following pages we will all have the opportunity to reach a shared vision with regards to what is social tourism in the current global scenario, along with the opportunities and challenges it presents. This will allow us to revisit our way of doing things and, perhaps, to reformulate our practices in order to align ourselves with the vision of 21st Century tourism proposed by the International Social Tourism Organization for all its members, all around the world.

Enjoy the book!

**Veronica Gomez**  
*Director of ISTO Americas*

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<sup>1</sup> Official document of the International Social Tourism Organization released in 1996 at the ISTO Global Conference in the city of Montreal, Canada.



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# About Sesc

Sesc has been involved in social tourism since its foundation. In 1948, Sesc inaugurated its first summer camp, Sesc Bertioga, on the São Paulo coast. In the same period, it started promoting vacation trips for tradesmen and their families in Rio Grande do Sul and Pernambuco states.

The institution's first initiatives were focused on the psychosomatic development of tradesmen in order to improve their quality of life and reduce corporate absenteeism. There was an intense leisure program conducted by social workers, nurses, physical education teachers and other professionals.

By the end of the 1970s, more modern concepts of social tourism started to be implemented. Networks of accommodations, excursions and tours began to expand in several Brazilian states. This movement consolidated Sesc as a pioneer and a protagonist in the country's social tourism.

The path in search of more educational, cultural and humanistic tourist activities is what brought Sesc and ISTO (the International Social Tourism Organization) closer together. As early as 1980, Sesc São Paulo became affiliated with ISTO, which at the time was still called BITS (Bureau International du Tourisme Social). It became the first institution in the Americas to be a part of the organization and was an active participant in its international meetings.

By way of this initiative, the Sesc network gained access to the most contemporary concepts and practices in social tourism, developed in the most diverse corners of the globe. These new ideas matched the institution's goals, especially when it comes to valuing people and the environment in tourist activities. They were also strongly related to the institution's other spheres of business, like recreation, culture and education.

Training programs were thereby developed by the Sesc's National Department all around the country, handling topics like the creation and operation of qualified tourist itineraries. The department conducted training programs, seminars and workshops, both online and in-person, which included various techniques used to create itineraries, including preparation, execution and evaluation.

In one of these endeavors, in 2015, three lectures given by Mexican professor Sergio Rodríguez Abitia stood out due to the depth of the conceptual theories in regards to contemporary social tourism and, most importantly, due to the potential for practical application of his message in the process of planning and creating Sesc's program. Since the lessons were recorded, we were able to transcribe the content in its entirety, the result of which is this publication in partnership with ISTO, by way of its branch in the Americas.

Throughout the three lectures – represented herein by the three chapters – diverse nuances of social tourism were approached in a practical and straightforward manner, from its sociological contexts to its most important features and applications.

In the first chapter – *Reviewing Concepts in Social Tourism* – the author questions the dichotomy between governmental goals regarding tourism and the actual reasons why people travel. Generally speaking, people use their spare time to satisfy their personal needs, such as rest, fun, learning, appreciation and self-expression. These stages are visually represented in the shape of a pyramid, an adaption of Maslow's hierarchy of needs pyramid, which makes it easier to understand and also works, together with the content in its entirety, as a kind of checklist with which to analyze tourist itineraries in light of social tourism.

In addition to this, Sergio Rodríguez emphasizes the importance of leisure moments for people's well-being. According to him, idleness and leisure make up the most significant moments in life as part of society and tourism has a fundamental role in human beings' quality of life. This fact directly impacts the work of tourism professionals, which are charged with keeping everybody happy at all times, with activities capable of satisfying multiple needs.

But what exactly is social tourism? It's a difficult question to answer, especially after the arrival, in recent years, of a multitude of other concepts, some of which are very similar to social tourism precisely because of its juxtaposition to the traditional tourism model.

In order to answer this question, professor Rodríguez puts tourism in its historical context and follows this with a narrative that values the content of touristic experiences. He emphasizes how people are at the center of this, as is the full development of their potentialities.

In the second chapter – *Designing social tourism itineraries* – the author manages to fulfill the goals of applying the concepts and principles of social tourism in the practice of creating tourist itineraries. This process, according to him, requires even more attention to planning, starting with a definition of the priority audience – one must pay attention to groups unattended by conventional tourism, such as families, senior citizens, youth and people with disabilities – and culminating in the goals of the organizing institution, looking also at conceiving the theme and the destination of the trip.

In order to do this, the author presents the product design of social tourism, which much be based on its goals and materialized by its components (tourist attractions, tourism services and tourist activities). In the explanation regarding each of these components, he reinforces the functional nature of tourism services and the advantages and potentialities

of prioritizing activities, which may be of preparation or reflection, which turn out to be essential for the educational and transformational purposes of the social tourism itinerary.

In the last chapter – *Executing Social Tourism Itineraries* – Sergio Rodríguez asks us a provocative question: do we enjoy the operational aspect or do we suffer from it?

According to the author, one of the main elements that contribute to this answer is the quality of the relationship with suppliers: transport services, restaurants, among others. The performance of travel guides is given special attention: in social tourism itineraries, these professionals play key roles as mediators in interpreting the heritage, insofar as to promote educational experiences to tourists.

Finally, the author presents the phases of the touristic experience and how this experience is influenced by the traveler's expectation levels. In discussing this relationship, the author shows how the conduction of the itinerary must consider a variety of possible situations, balancing expectations and the individual impressions of every participant.

By the end of the three lectures, we had a unique content, with the necessary depth and objectivity to generate material that could be used train tourism professionals at Sesc, as well as other members of ISTO and anyone and everyone looking to develop their activities in tourism with quality and responsibility.

In light of this, The Sesc's National Department has restructured the course "Social Tourism for Tour Guides", presenting to these professionals the methodologies used in the classroom, as well as its practical applications, which were already being implemented by some of Sesc's Regional Departments.

We also created the Training in Innovative tours, aimed at professionals employed in social tourism at Sesc. This endeavor developed the content from this work in an experiential and analytical way, which prompted Sesc's Regional Departments to come up with thematic itineraries in their respective regions. Part of this production is included at the end of this publication, as examples of how the methodology can be applied in practice.

Lastly, we must emphasize that, in publishing this material, Sesc and ISTO's main goal is to spread a kind of tourism that has content, that is centered on human beings and is supported by the principles of social tourism (solidarity, sustainability and social responsibility). We hope that this work will allow many tourism professionals to seek new ways of working, so as to contribute to the realization of people's utmost potential.



# CHAPTER 1

## Reviewing concepts in social tourism

In tourism schools, we are taught the idea, or instilled with the belief, that tourism generates jobs, contributes to economic development and attracts foreign capital. We have the preconceived notion that our countries are poor and that we need foreign tourists. In Mexico, this idea is so entrenched that, for us, every tourist is a “gringo”, in other words, someone from abroad. Mexican citizens are not tourists. This “belief” is very hard to change. When I lecture on social tourism, I always ask people to raise their hands if they agree with this concept and, usually, the majority raises their hands. For most people, tourism is about jobs, economic development and money. When I ask the audience who likes to travel, everyone’s hands go up. Yet when I ask them whether they would travel somewhere in order to generate jobs, money and economic development in a given tourist destination, everyone’s hands go down. Because nobody travels for those reasons. Who travels in order to leave their money elsewhere? People don’t come to Rio de Janeiro to part with their money. Tourists don’t care about that, nor do they concern themselves with increasing the employment rate or with local developmental indicators. Why would you come to Rio de Janeiro? To enjoy the beach, to people watch, to eat good food, to experience good moments, to go out clubbing, to go hang-gliding and so on; to get to know the city. You would come for reasons that have nothing to do with tourism’s economic benefits. They are selfish and personal reasons, yet completely valid ones, as you can see in Figure 1.

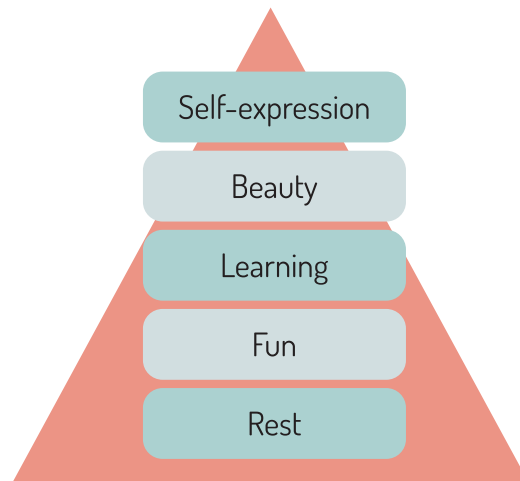


Figure 1: Pyramid of people’s needs in their free time

Figure 1 illustrates the reasons why people want to make use of their free time. It's shaped like a pyramid because people travel in order to fulfill pretty concrete personal needs, which are summarized from bottom to top. The first thing one does in one's free time is to rest. **Rest** is what restores physical strength and brings balance to the body. Our daily tasks put us in an unbalanced physical state and we need to recover this physical balance. It is the first thing anybody will look for, which is why rest is at the base of the pyramid.

Once we're rested, we can move onto the next stage, which is **fun**. Fun is about restoring mental balance. After we've recovered our physical balance, since we've rested, we need to recover our mental balance. Fun is not possible unless there has been physical recovery beforehand. If I were to ask you who's already been to the movies, everyone would raise their hand. And if I asked you who's ever slept in the movie theatre, I'd get the same show of hands. Why do we fall asleep when we watch a good movie? Because we're too tired and we haven't yet regained our energy. No one can make the most of a fun activity without having rested previously.

First we must have to restore our physical balance, and then we have to restore our mental balance. Cities, where most of the world's population inhabit, leave us in a state of imbalance at the end of every day. I come from Mexico City, where approximately 22 million people live. Every day, the traffic, the violence, the climate, the transportation problems and daily stress result in 22 million unbalanced beings. Hence, the first thing people do when they go on vacation is sleep, to recover physically, and the second thing is to try to restore emotional balance. How do you restore this emotional balance? By having fun: a series of activities that distract our minds, so we can forget our daily issues. Fun includes activities that have no apparent order, but which get people's minds to forget all of their problems for a moment. The simple act of swimming in a pool is a distraction. Why? Because we have to concentrate on breathing properly and not drowning or else we die. Hence, we instantly stop thinking about the office, the boss, our debts, about our worries as a whole. And this is precisely why such moments are so important.

When the needs of these two stages in the pyramid are met, we can go one step higher, which is **learning**. It's hot, the chair is uncomfortable, the sound is off, my voice is boring and yet, despite all that, if you slept well last night and managed to disconnect from your worries, you will be capable of learning. If that hadn't been the case, you'd already be asleep. We could check how many people are sleeping or how many are preoccupied with other issues, like paying their credit card bill, for example. However, if these things are already sorted, then you're ready to learn. But not before that, no. Learning requires balance; if the person is not balanced, learning cannot happen.

Now that we are balanced and we have learned something, we can move on to aesthetic appreciation, or **beauty**, which is the fourth level. We cannot appreciate beauty, we cannot appreciate food, we cannot appreciate much of anything unless we have prior information necessary for that. When we stand in front of pyramids like the ones in Mexico, if we don't have at least some basic knowledge about them, the only remarks we can possibly have are: "They're so big!", "They're so ugly!" or "They're so pretty!", "It's so hot? Where can I buy some water?". This is because the tourist's experience, in this case, is limited to what is most evident. There's no understanding regarding the significance of the constructions, no historical knowledge, no understanding of why they matter. Someone decided these pyramids are a world heritage, but without an understanding of why, an experience that could be very enriching becomes a poor experience. It's an experience that doesn't leave us interested and doesn't bring us a sense of transcendence. No one can appreciate things if they know nothing about them beforehand. It's like the Rio de Janeiro Carnival. I won't enjoy Carnival in Rio unless I know what it means to celebrate it in the way the people in Rio do. If I ignore that, the only thing I'll be capable of seeing is a costume parade. Carnival goes much deeper than that, there's an entire culture in the background. The uninformed tourist sees the tip of the iceberg, but isn't able to understand the content or the significance of the occasion. On the other hand, when he's been prepared, he can enjoy and give value to the magnitude of the event because he understands what is happening.

Finally, when we've achieved learning and appreciation, we can make it to the top. At the top of the pyramid are activities people do in order to achieve self-expression. If I've already learned how to play soccer for fun, if I've learned the rules and the techniques, if I can appreciate the strategies and understand what happens on the field, the only thing left is to actually play soccer. And there's maximum joy in being able to do so. Then, if I can partake in Carnival by actually joining the parade, it's like achieving glory.

In short, these are the reasons people travel: to rest, to have fun, to learn, to appreciate things and to be a part of something in which they are personally interested.

## 1.1 Historical background

Many years ago, in a distant land, there lived some gentlemen called "the Greeks". You studied them in Middle or High School, in History class, which was almost always boring, because it had no bearing on the "here and now". We learned from our teachers and our books that the Greeks lived very far away from here, in a time way before our



grandparents' days, and that these gentlemen with such odd names – frequently ending in “-ees”, such as Demostenes, Aristoteles, Socrates and Euripides – were so important because they built the foundations of Western culture. And how did they manage to do this? Because they were very idle.<sup>2</sup> In fact, they dedicated themselves to being idle. For them, the only difference between human beings and other animals is idleness, because being idle is being conscious of oneself. Activities unique to idleness are what make us human: politics, art, culture and science. That is the definition of idleness.

However, when an Ancient Greek man accumulated debts and was unable to repay them, or if he was taken prisoner during war, he would forfeit idleness, he would lose his human condition, or he would be reduced to the condition of a slave. In Latin, the word for business (*negotium*) means, literally, the negation of idleness (*otium*).

In the 21st Century, we cannot divide society like they did in Ancient Greece. We recognize the human condition of all peoples and, hence, we must find balance between work and idleness. Legislation tell us: “You are obliged to work. But you also have the right to have vacations.” We split up our annual time into work and holidays. In Brazil, you are lucky: you have the right to thirty days of paid vacation days a year. In Mexico, holidays officially last only one week, which one can increase to a maximum of two weeks after seven years of labor.

Between work and vacations, it is fairly clear which time is more important in terms of quality. In Mexico, I always ask the audience who traveled on vacation the previous year and many hands go up, although not everyone’s. Next, I ask who remember what they did on their two week vacation and, usually, everyone’s hands stay up. Finally, I ask them if they remember what they did during the other 50 weeks of the year. Everyone immediately brings their hands down. This gives us an idea of how important idleness is to a person. On your death bed, you will recall your moments of idleness. And you will say: “It was worth going to Rio de Janeiro and being a part of the parade with Imperatriz”.<sup>3</sup> On your death bed, you will not say: “How I miss the good old days when my boss asked to me file documents.” No one will remember that. We do those things because we have to; they’re obligations. Some people may even enjoy that, and that’s another issue, but basically we will remember our moments of leisure, the great personal achievements that happened in those moments, the enormous satisfaction such occasions brought us.

.....  
 2 In English, “idle” and “idleness” may have negative connotations, associated with laziness or with doing nothing. However, in Spanish (the author’s native language), it refers to making good use of one’s free time, or what we call leisure time.

3 A traditional samba school in the Rio de Janeiro carnival.

That is why tourism is important. It's a fantastic moment in people's lives. And we, who work with tourism, are the people that provide such moments. We are responsible for guaranteeing that these fantastic moments do in fact correspond to people's expectations, so that they can look back, for instance, on that day in which, thanks to social tourism, they were able to see the ocean for the first time. Or the day they saw the jungle. Or History. This is the real transcendental nature of the work we do. And it's a matter we should not take for granted, because the traditional discourse makes us forget this when it tells us: "You have to take people here, you have to take people there." And why do we do this job? So that people can get closer to world's natural and cultural heritage and have memorable experiences of fun, learning, rest and success, as shown in Figure 2.

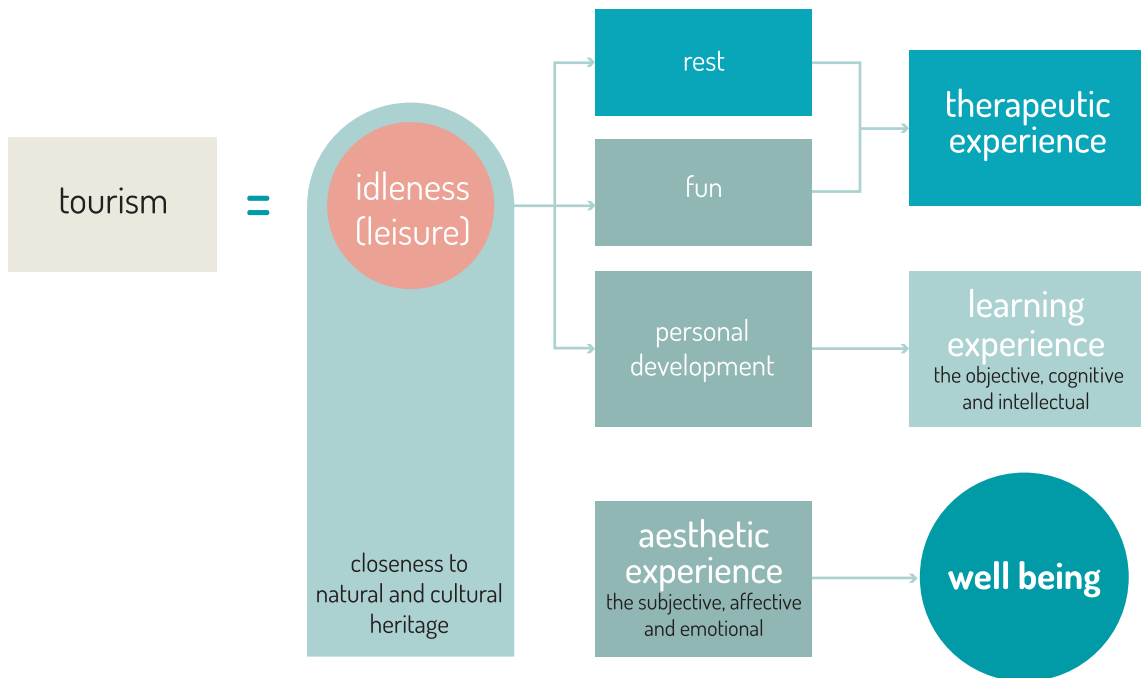


Figure 2: Flow chart showing the relationship between tourism and leisure

From the tourism trip, we will produce experiences of rest, fun and personal growth, which will have therapeutic, learning and aesthetic effects. A room at a hotel will always be cheaper than a room at the hospital. And we are society's therapists, in a way, at least when it comes to prevention. Before they go mad, we let them go

on holiday. Anything beyond that must be treated by psychiatrists. What I mean to say is that we are the vehicles by which well-being is produced. And tourism is important because it generates well-being for individuals and families and, in a way, it's about social welfare. In countries like Brazil and Mexico this is important. But it's also important in Sweden. Not everything is about money. That's a point that we must emphasize and never lose sight of. Not ever.

This means we're lucky because we get to work with people when they are experiencing the best moments of their lives. Yet that is also hard to manage. Why? Because the things I'm able to accept at my job, every day, with my boss, I'm not able to accept when I'm on holiday. Nobody goes on holiday with their boss. Unless their boss is something more than simply their boss. Usually, what I want is to spend my vacation with people like me, with similar interests. Have you ever traveled with your family? What is a family vacation like? It's an endless fight. Isn't that true? The dad wants to do one thing, the mom another and each kid wants something else entirely. And they express themselves with spontaneity: "I don't want to go the mall!", "I don't want to go to the museum!", "This is so boring!". Well, each person wants to pursue their own interests. But the fact is that people end up doing one thing and everyone has to go along and obey.

That is why the last thing young people, as soon as they turn 18 and acquire a certain level of freedom, want to do is go traveling with their parents. But we'll talk about this later on, when we discuss the product design. We can't design the same products for families, for young people and for senior citizens because they want to do different things in the same place. Therefore, the challenge for people who work in tourism is to be able to please everyone by offering a wide array of activities that are in accordance with each person's needs.

When on vacation, the adult, who is used to working and facing complicated situations, goes back to being a child. And what is a child like? The child is curious, restless, impatient, demanding, intolerant and seeks instant gratification. Why does the person transform him or herself this way? Because he or she knows that idle time is scarce, so there's no way someone will get away with making it go to waste. Tourists scream like mad when something doesn't work properly. An adult, under normal conditions, doesn't reveal exaggerated emotions because he or she is working; however, when we're not working, we become utterly demanding. Anyone who has worked in tourism knows this. Failures, however small, are unacceptable, no mistake is tolerated. Because they cost us an entire day and rob us of the small precious time we have. And if the only real good we have is time, a non-renewable resource, we cannot allow someone to let it go to waste.

In this sense, then, tourism is important because it's the most fantastic moment in life. What is life? Life is time. And time is a series of moments, which may be pleasant or unpleasant. Most moments are so-so, because many times we ourselves decided they should be. But there are also terrible moments that happen by chance and fantastic moments that we manufacture ourselves. And that is why tourism is important, because it is this fantastic moment. It's manufactured. We will be responsible for providing all of these people with the opportunity to turn their dreams into reality. That is our responsibility.

Tourism is important because  
it's the most fantastic moment in life.

This may seem like something philosophical, but I believe it's very important to express these ideas because, otherwise, our work would have no meaning.

We work to earn wages and make a living because that is the right thing to do. But we work in tourism especially to be able to offer this opportunity to other people, and that is the most gratifying part of our job. Sometimes, we work too much and earn too little, but, if we achieve this feeling of gratification, we are usually happy.

## 1.2 What is social tourism?

Even if they don't admit it, most people don't know how to answer this question, because if we're in this line of work we can't admit that we're ignorant regarding what it means. This lack of knowledge is more common than we think. Nobody taught us in school what social tourism means. We learn about it from experience, for it refers to a very particular approach to tourism, a very interesting one, which is based on everything I have just said, but offers not only philosophical but also commercial and practical solutions.

Many concepts related to social tourism have been developed in the last few years, such as community, rural, egalitarian, and responsible tourism and a number of other denominations, which are basically suggestions, initiatives and projects for a different approach in tourism compared to how it has traditionally been conducted.

All of them are similar to social tourism, but are not equal because they lack, in many occasions, substance, meaning, or a foundation that really makes them different.

Let us briefly trace the history of social tourism to recall that tourism is not something new. Tourism used to be restricted to the elites; a privilege reserved to the few people who could afford to travel. Because, in the past, traveling was not that simple. Technology was not as advanced, or there was no right of free passage in the territory. To get from one place to another, for example, from Rio de Janeiro to São Paulo, a passport was required, or a permit, because it was not a customary type of activity. It could even arouse suspicion. Not everyone could do it and it was strongly controlled.

At first, people used to travel in small privileged groups for different reasons. Some traveled because they were traders. They weren't tourists, but business travelers. And there were others who traveled for leisure, but those were very few. They made up a small group, as in any country in the world. This elite tourism became fashionable after the British aristocracy from the eighteenth century who, when completing undergraduate courses in famous universities, proceeded to what they called the "grand tour". The destination was reserved for European countries whose culture had been studied in the classroom.

They wanted to experience, in person, what they had learned in their lessons, so they traveled to France, Italy, Greece. The boldest of them would go all the way to Egypt but, in general terms, this was the famous "grand tour". This kind of trip lasted around a year and a half, such were the traveling conditions. And it was a developmental journey. It was likened to a finishing school: the culmination of the formal education they had already received.

Along with these former university students, a series of escorts began to travel along, and tourism became a privilege of the few. As in every society, whatever influential people do is emulated by the rest. This is a natural dynamic that in Economics is called the demonstration effect. Those who are not rich want to consume what rich people consume, and this soon becomes widespread until it becomes a custom adopted by everyone. This is how, each in its own time, it became customary to wear underwear, to comb one's hair, to take a bath or shower – things rich people did that other people later copied.

It was the same with holiday vacations. Common people also started seeking the possibility of traveling as well, because it granted them a higher status, but also because they realized it was pleasurable. Thanks to technological advances of the nineteenth and especially the twentieth century, tourism became a thing of the masses. With trains, boats and airplanes that were able to transport many people from one place to the other, tourism began a new popular phase. For this reason, we now see that, to a certain

degree, anyone can go to these large beach buildings with two hundred, three hundred, five hundred, one thousand, 1,500 rooms, and practically any of us can do that. This mass tourism was booming after World War II, ever since the middle classes starting having more free time. Not because they were richer than before, but simply because the rural population became an urban population, and tourism is an urban phenomenon. My grandparents lived in the countryside. My parents migrated to the city. I was already born in a city. And probably the same happened to you. And your children are urban-urban, grandchildren of the city. So when we live in the city, we have this vacation hiatus and the need to use them; therefore, we demand a mass production of holidays.

Is social tourism an answer to this mass tourism? Yes, because when tourism becomes popular, we try to emulate rich people's consumer patterns: beaches, the seaside, casinos, nightclubs, etc. The middle classes do the same thing that rich people do, and that generates a copied, reproductive tourism, which is empty of content. We travel because other people do, but we don't really know why we want to travel.

Arthur Haulot, the founder of the International Social Tourism Organization (ISTO), and a group of people with common interests, were concerned with this phenomenon. They studied it and discovered that mass tourism only serves consumerist purposes.

We go on holiday, do everything people tell us to do, and we come back even more tired (not to mention poorer). The person returns from their vacation, though not necessarily feeling better than before they left. You need a vacation after your vacation. Why does this happen? The problem is that we are copying the consumer patterns and norms of conduct that aren't teaching us anything, don't make sense, don't add anything to our lives, because we only value the economic discourse. What we need to do is come up with a type of tourism with content, with meaning, that makes the person happy. This is the most important point. With more energy to improve and carry on. That's what social tourism is about. It is an alternative proposal to mass tourism; it is the type of tourism that values content.

Social tourism is an umbrella concept, which encompasses almost all proposals of a different tourism, with content created by well-meaning people who are unfamiliar, nevertheless, with the concept of social tourism. They propose social tourism without even knowing it. There is an intuitive, restless feeling that regular, traditional tourism is not doing so well; that something different has to be presented. Without recognizing the theoretical foundation of social tourism, they develop it, but they would do that better if they knew more about it. They make very similar proposals, in both form and content, to what we have been working on for a long time.

That’s how social tourism can be cultural, it can be adventurous, participatory, responsible and many other things. It’s aware that it involves all of this. The individual is the center of everything. In social tourism, it is not about money, economic growth, statistics, the Ministry of Finance. There is nothing wrong with any of these, but it is the same concept as medicine, for example: the blood tests, the test results and the results of medical treatments are not what doctors should really care about. Medical practice is meant for people to enjoy good health, since the focus is on the individual. The same goes for social tourism: the center of tourism is the individual. People matter to us. It doesn’t matter if they come from France or from Ouro Preto.<sup>4</sup> It makes no difference. They’re all people. Everyone demands the same type of things. Basically, they’re going to do exactly the same things – rest, have fun, learn something. For us at the International Social Tourism Organization, it’s very clear that the individual is the center of everything. A 1996 document called The Montreal Declaration, which I encourage you to look up and which can serve as a reference, states that the prime objective of all tourism development initiatives should be the full realization of each individual’s potential.

Sometimes people ask me: “So consumerism doesn’t matter?”. Of course it matters, but what matters the most is the full development of an individual’s potential. For a person to develop their potential, they will need a guide service, as well as hotel service, food service, bathrooms... There are many services a person will require, but their consumption depends on finding in a destination – such as Rio de Janeiro – something they are interested in doing as an individual.

The important thing is to give the person what they are looking for in terms of being idle (leisure time). And that, when done properly, generates multiple buying habits.

The Montreal Declaration tells us that the word “social” should bring about a heightened sense of solidarity and fraternity and should be a source of hope for all those who still lack leisure time. Usually, the leisure problem is worldwide. In every country there are people who do not have access to leisure, who cannot exercise it yet, and we think it’s important that this possibility exists. Tourism entrepreneurs must be clear and supportive of this population for two main reasons:

First, because it is a basic principle of humanity. And, second, because it is also a good business opportunity.

Although business is not our primary goal, we intend people to have access to this possibility.

.....  
<sup>4</sup> Historical city located in the state of Minas Gerais, in Brazil.

The more people become tourists, the more possibilities will be created for gaining access to well-being. And, therefore, social tourism is tourism for leisure in all its levels: rest, fun, learning, beauty, self-expression. We need tourism activities for all levels.

Social tourism should be tourism with substance.  
It should have a meaning, a purpose.

Naturally, there will always be more supply and demand for rest, and less for self-expression, but we should operate in all five levels. Social tourism should be tourism with substance. If there isn't substance, it won't work. It should have a meaning, a purpose. It is not right to take people to a place if there is no goal to pursue. And this goal is obviously not to spend money.

If the goal is not to consume, I won't take people to stores, which traditionally happens in a commercial tour.

In Mexico, for example, people go on excursions to the Teotihuacán pyramids.<sup>5</sup> They get to the pyramids and stop for five minutes in a location that's suitable for taking pictures. The explanation is minimal because the guide tells them: "Have you seen them? Look how huge they are! They are old, very old." People believe they are Aztec pyramids and that human sacrifices were practiced there, but... they aren't Aztec! They predate the Aztecs, and there is no evidence that human sacrifices were practiced there. Regrettably, the guide isn't an expert so he doesn't know and makes up fanciful stories, such as that they were built by aliens.

This is terrible. It's pathetic. All of this lasts for 15 minutes and, when the sun begins to bother him, the guide takes people to some store so that they can get refreshments or go to the bathroom and, on that pretext, induces them to buy a host of ugly things for which he gets a commission. The only thing that matters in this type of tourism is getting the tourist to consume, consume, consume. The rest does not matter. This is not social tourism.

So what is the objective, if not consumerism? It is for tourists to accomplish their personal goals, on the one hand, and the social goals of the organizer, on the other. It's normal for business operations to take place, but they are secondary.

The same occurs in other sectors: what is the point of improving health? Well, so that people stay healthy, so they can be useful, productive, enjoy life, etc., but the purpose

.....  
<sup>5</sup> Teotihuacán was an urban center in Pre-Colombian Mesoamerica, approximately 50 km from Mexico City.



of health is not to eat. We have to eat in order to attain all of that. Obviously, we have to do business so that all this can occur. No company will ever work if it doesn't receive enough investment. But eating is not the main goal. If it was just eating, we'd all be obese, and that would be healthy, which is not true. Obesity is the opposite of health.

The same can be said of tourism. We have to do business, yes, of course. It is so obvious that I shouldn't even have to say it. No organization will operate without money. That is evident. But the goals go beyond this. The purpose should be the person coming back from vacation feeling culturally enriched from the experience.

So what should be the objectives of organizations that promote social tourism?

The first thing to do is to strengthen family bonds and social networks. This, for a country like Mexico, has reached national importance. The Mexican president said that tourism has to promote the integration of social groups because the country is currently torn by violence. Tourism has become a tool not only for earning money, but also for reintegrating family and social networks, broken or altered by organized delinquency, for them to once again occupy spaces that have been handed over to mafias and occupied by violence. It is likely that in Brazil there are unstructured social and family networks, for there are marginalized spaces. Tourism is part of these possibilities for improvement, as it broadens people's views and allows them to see other horizons.

Another objective is preserving cultural heritage and passing on tradition. Mexico and Brazil have a strong cultural tradition and a clear identity with huge regional variety. All regions have a solid cultural heritage that was constructed, but also a living, intangible cultural legacy. Sometimes the intangible heritage is more important than a constructed one. And it is through social tourism that we can get people to preserve it.

Social tourism helps strengthen local identity, regional identity and national identity, in other words, neighborhood, city, and country identity. It's good for recovering urban and rural spaces for collective use. It's good for developing and incorporating small businesses into the formal economy. In Mexico, the formal economy represents only 40% of the total economy. Through tourism, we seek to contribute so that the 60% represented by the informal sector can make this transition.

Finally, social tourism also contributes to a more egalitarian regional distribution of wealth. There are many objectives about which we are not informed, which should be part of government policies, and which are sometimes far more important than the spontaneously occurring economic goals themselves.

For all these reasons, the principles of social tourism are summarized in what we at ISTO Americas call **the three S's**. In the last century, the three S's of tourism stood for "sun, sea and sand". Some changed the expression to "sun, sea and sex". This is what motivated tourism. Nowadays, with social tourism, we say that the three S's still effectively exist, but now have another meaning: Sustainable, Solidary and Socially Responsible. We can take this as the new creed: Sustainability, Solidarity and Social Responsibility. We cannot talk about social tourism if our actions don't check these three boxes. If the criteria are not met, we are talking about commercial, conventional or consumer-oriented tourism. Therefore, social tourism projects should be conceived and valued through this perspective: "Does my proposal comply with the principles of sustainability? Does it comply with the principles of solidarity? Does it comply with the principles of social responsibility? Yes or no? How much does it comply? And how can I correct it?"

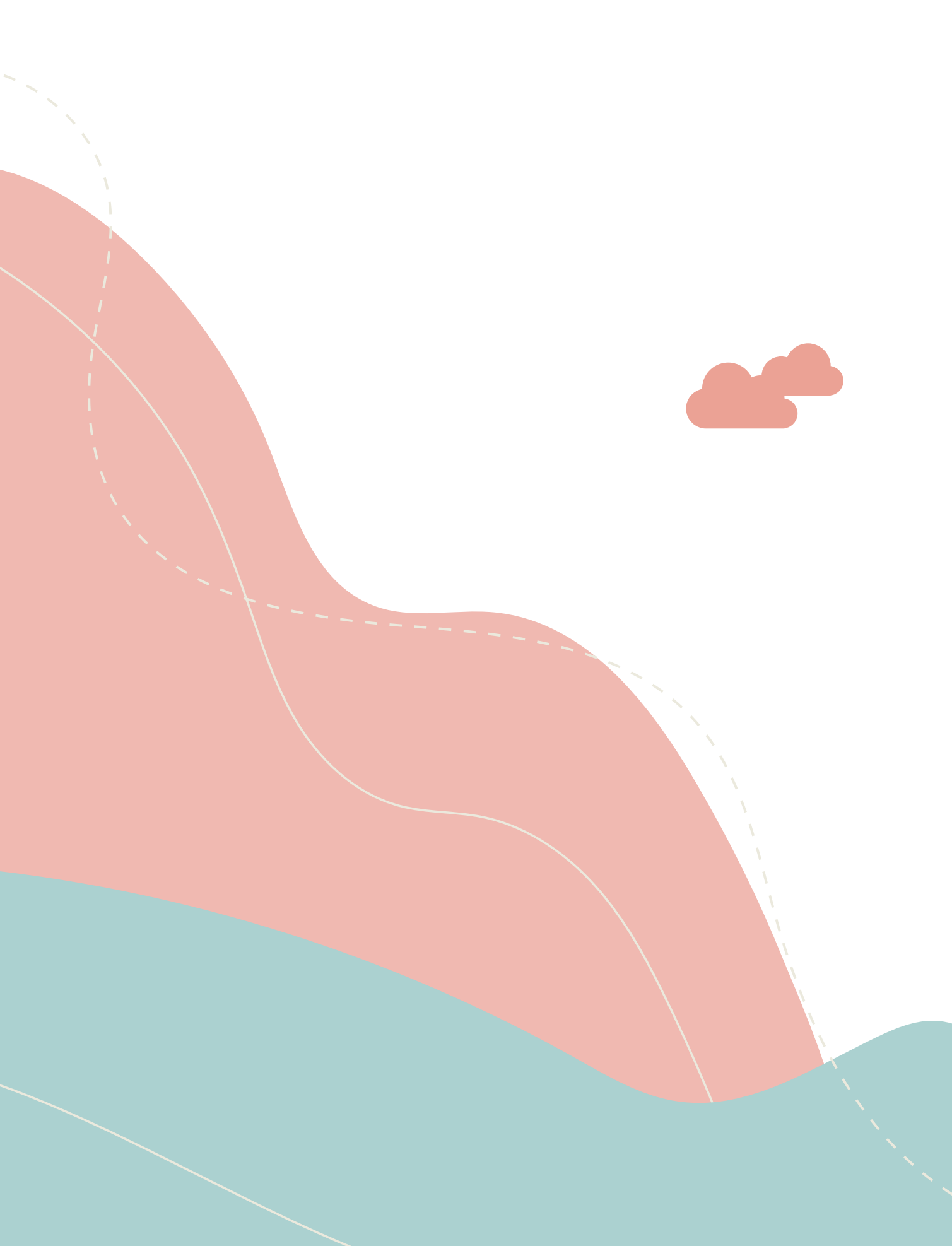
Certainly all projects were very well crafted and are mean well, but if they do not abide by these principles the good intentions will probably not be met.

- **Sustainability**

Social tourism should harness natural resources with a vision of the future. Not the immediate but the long-term future. We should be using natural resources responsibly, so that they can last. We don't want them to be gone quickly. We won't deplete them before other people come. Our goal is to preserve these natural resources.

- **Solidarity**

The social tourism I propose must be accessible under every point of view. Not only accessible physically or economically: there are other points of accessibility that we will comment on that must also be met. Moreover, it must be dignified and adequate for each public, because indignity does not work in social tourism. For many years, people thought that social tourism was for the poor and therefore cheap, poorly done. Marginalized, informal, poorly organized, unsafe tourism, etc. This is not social tourism. It is tourism, but not social. Social tourism must be about dignity, especially in our countries, where we are victims of undignified development. We can and should use tourism as a tool for the dignity of an underprivileged population, with low self-esteem, and this tool allows us to help them recover their dignity. It should also be appropriate for each group, because, as we said, the itinerary cannot be the same for both the elderly and for children.



- **Social responsibility**

Tourism should be based on practical business and institutional practices. We should engage in exemplary ethical institutions. Many don't follow ethical practices, so we need to evaluate our suppliers under this light. Guides, hotels, transportation services, etc. If these companies aren't part of this social responsibility, even if I want to be socially responsible I will be benefitting companies that are not. In social tourism, we can't choose solely based on the price; we have to use other criteria when it's time to pick a supplier. If the supplier is aligned with our values, with these principles, then we must give them preference, even if they are more expensive. It all sums up to a change of mindset at every level, including commercial, labor, fiscal. If companies don't pay their taxes, it's not social tourism. If they don't pay wages according to the legal standards, our principles aren't being followed either. We need to abide by all these general rules in order to be considered socially responsible.

We must emphasize that any tourism project (holiday, tour, outing) that does not respect these rules is not social tourism. It may seem radical or puritan, but it's important that we present these concepts so we can follow the same guidelines, have the same understanding and, above all, speak the same language.





Tourism is basically an urban activity.  
Most of humanity (70%) lives in cities.

### 1.3 An overview of global tourism

What is happening in the world in quantitative and qualitative terms? I was saying that tourism is basically an urban activity. Most of humanity (seventy percent of the human population) lives in cities. That is why, in the twenty-first century, tourism is extremely important. One hundred years ago, 70% of the population lived in the countryside; it is a very important, qualitative change. Brazil is not an exception. In the past, everyone lived on farms. Nowadays, many live in cities. Therefore, we should ensure these people also have access to these possibilities. It's an urban matter.

What is happening at the local level? Around 1.4 billion people travel abroad. The data is from 2018, from the World Tourism Organization (WTO). Our colleagues from other international organizations like to cite numbers and more numbers, and one of them said: "Well, 1 billion and 1.4 billion are practically the same. I don't have the faintest idea. It makes no sense". But it's a lot of people, a lot of people indeed. At a global scale, this movement grows 6% a year. In South America, it grows 3%. So it is really becoming more popular. And it grows at a faster rate than the economy. Even if our economies aren't growing, tourism is.

People still need to take vacation time, and they still need to go on holidays. Tourism is impressive. It's always like this, and we'll always have more and more work. I don't know if Brazil is going through an economic crisis or not, but tourism in Brazil is not undergoing a crisis. This is a fact. I have here a kind of comparison between Mexico and Brazil that we made a few years ago. The numbers are not up to date. During that time, in 2012, 2013, there were 186 million domestic tourists traveling within Brazil, whose numbers are always higher than the number of foreign tourists coming to Brazil. I don't know why we are always more interested in finding out what the French and Swedes do in Brazil than our own countrymen do, but we're getting sidetracked here. Fortunately, social tourism is essentially domestic. So if you want receptive tourism, bring in Brazilians and that's it, no problem, there are a lot of people in Brazil interested in getting to know their own country. Because Brazil is almost like a continent. It's so huge people don't know all of it. And Mexico, which is a smaller

country, has 140 million trips. The only thing I would like to say, as my interpretation here, is that in Mexico, as it is a smaller country, people move around more than you do in Brazil. I understand, because it's harder and more expensive to travel here. Land travel in Brazil is longer and air travel is more expensive. But there has to be something we can do to make it easier.

Anyway, if you pay attention, this is more or less the relationship that exists between Brazil's domestic tourism and international tourism, which is very similar to what happens in Mexico. If we want to eat a cake, we don't have to bring it from somewhere else, it's already here. And now I'd like to add a comparison between Brazil and the European Union, because we always think of Europe in the sense of "Well, they do everything right, and we do everything wrong." That's a mistake. Although their countries are much richer than ours, and people there have a much higher average income, they don't travel much more than we do.

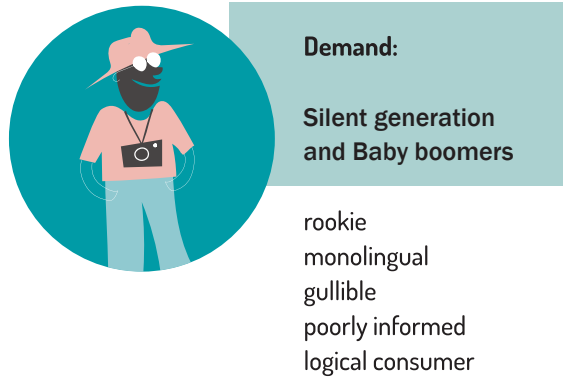
Traveling within Brazil is like international tourism in Europe. I think it takes you longer to get from Belo Horizonte<sup>6</sup> to Goiânia<sup>7</sup> than from Brussels to Amsterdam. You have a huge receptive potential for domestic tourism here. Turn your attention to your neighbors and work with them, because they are the main market.

What will happen to tourism? It will keep growing. So, tourism is the sector that is likely to suffer less, at least in the future, because people will surely keep asking for more, they'll travel more. Besides, people are willing to pay for it, because it's certainly not free. And domestic tourism will increase much more than international tourism. If the international outlook is optimistic, I am convinced that the outlook for social tourism is more than optimistic. There is so much to do.

Now, what do we have to do in qualitative terms? What is being done? It's not about reproducing conventional tourism, but rather creating a new type of tourism. Twentieth century tourism is over, you can say. It's done for, good bye. Our tourism ministers are often not aware of this. They are still stuck in the twentieth century. Many employees are still stuck in the twentieth century and this has to change. Why? Because the world has changed, from a so-called mass-driven perspective to a post-industrial perspective.

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<sup>6</sup> Capital of the Southeastern state of Minas Gerais, Brazil.

<sup>7</sup> Capital of the Midwestern state of Goiás, Brazil.



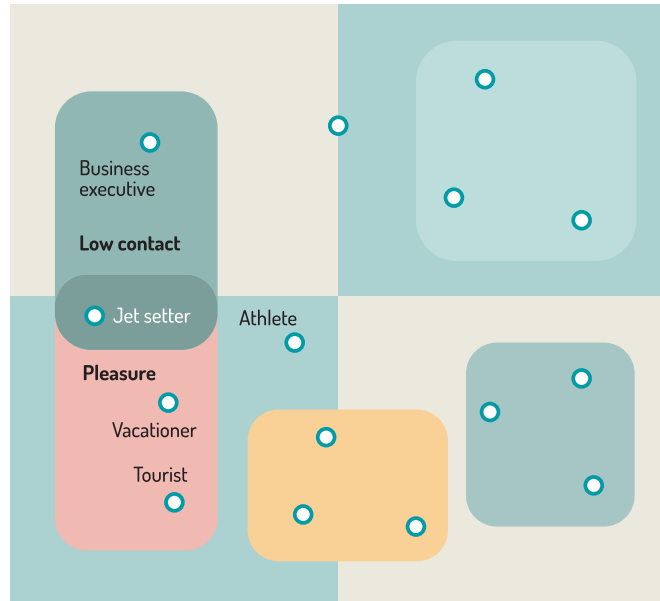
**Figure 3: Model of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century tourist**

Figure 3 represents a typical twentieth century tourist. The demand was made by us baby boomers, who were inexperienced as tourists. Why? Because our travels were very limited. Our parents had traveled, yes, from the countryside to the city, and no more. But the holidays were a new thing for my generation. We were monolingual, in other words, we spoke only one language.

We were naïve. We believed everything they told us. We had no information, therefore we were naïve, and we were consumers that consumed according to what we called “logical reasons”. If I’m going to go on a trip, it’s logical that I need an airplane, a bus, a hotel, a restaurant. That is what is logical. So, we consumed this. We demanded this.

I have traveled more than my parents. You’ve traveled more than your parents, and your kids are going to travel more than you. What does that mean? That people travel more and more, and that the tourist ceases to be inexperienced. They become more and more experienced.





**Figure 4: Types of 20<sup>th</sup> Century tourists**

Twentieth century tourism used to have little contact and used to be about pleasure. Specifically, the traveler was a business executive, a jet setter who appeared in gossip magazines, or a tourist who went on holiday. Very few people were moving and the whole model was configured this way. Hotels were furnished with a large bed for honeymooners, no children. Or with two beds when catering to a couple of businessmen who shared a room; but no hotel was designed to lodge an entire family. So hotels gave us a big break: two adults and two kids in the same room for the same price. What about families with three kids? What then?



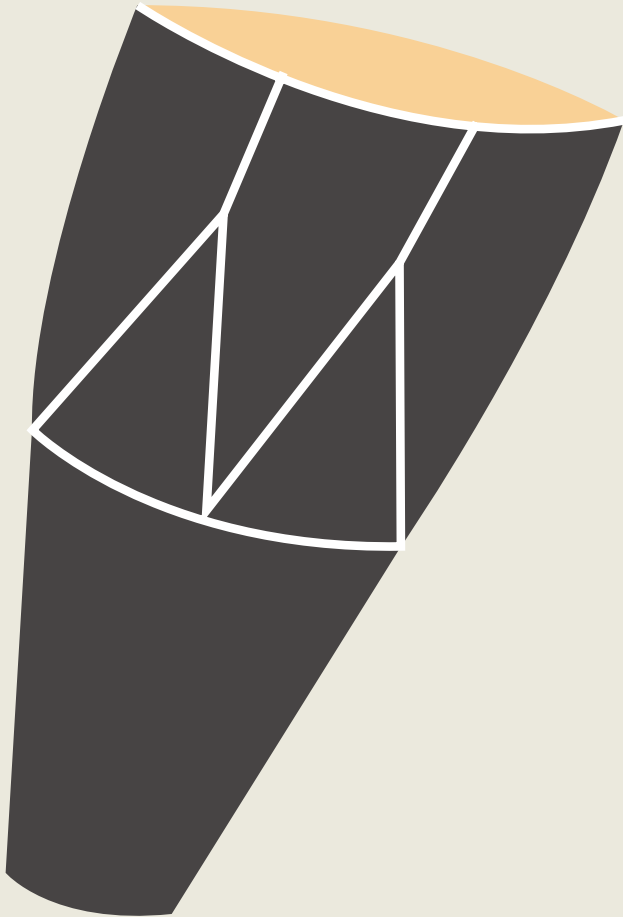
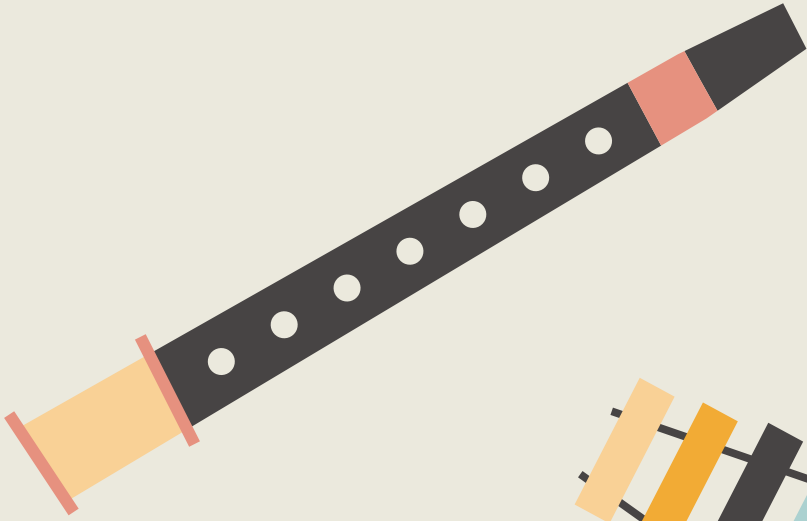


Photo: Claudio Bianchi / Pixabay



Photo: Xavier Espinosa / Pixabay



### Massive and industrial supply:

- Great familiarity
- Little contact with locals
- Standardization
- Americanization
- Recreational and panoramic



### Industrial Tourism

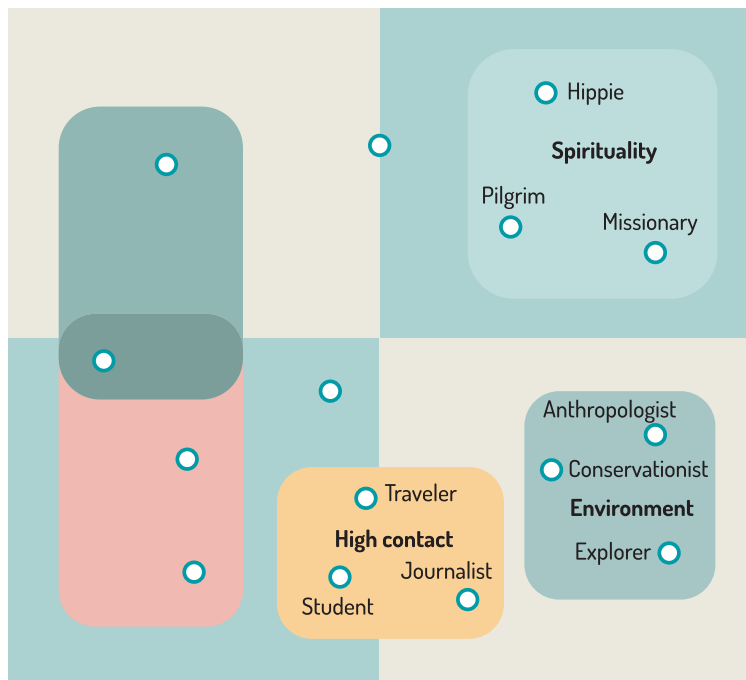
**Figure 5: Model of 20<sup>th</sup> Century tourism**

The model of 20<sup>th</sup> Century tourism was based on massive, industrial supply. In the photographs, we see Acapulco and Mar del Plata, which have already reached a point at which the beach itself is organized like a theater: with preferred seats, mezzanine, stage, and all of the beach sections can be purchased. It's awful. On the other hand, in Acapulco they built gigantic buildings. The same thing happens all over the world. It's something everyone is familiar with. Contact with locals is scarce. It's a standardized, Americanized touristic model, and I refer to the United States because the main public from this era was the American tourist who sought recreational and panoramic experiences. And that is all. They sell panorama, they sell recreation. This is industrial tourism.

In the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, generations have changed. Now Generation X, Y and Z are dictating the norm. Some of you probably belong to Generation X, and some to Y. But the generation to which you belong is unimportant. What is important is whichever generation your customers belong to. And your customers are, except for the senior citizens/ baby boomers, people from Generations X, Y, and Z, and you should learn to design products for them. What are they like? They are experienced because they have been traveling since they were young. They are bilingual, or at least speak shopping English, shopping Portuguese. They are skeptical. They don't believe anyone because, no matter what you tell them, they will check the information online and say, "That's not true." I'll even bet that you're checking everything I'm saying on the internet right now as I speak. They are informed. These people have more information. And they are emotional consumers. They no longer consume

according to logic. They consume according to their feelings: “I feel like doing this”. And they look for what they want. They are not looking for the most convenient, useful phone, dress, or car based on logical arguments. They are looking for what they desire. They are capable of buying an expensive phone because that’s what they desire, even if that means having to travel by bus, isn’t that right? Or buying an expensive purse, even if that means they have to go on foot. And doing other very illogical things. In the old days, the lower middle class had to practice lower middle class consumer habits, and people in upper classes, upper-class consumer habits. This no longer exists. If I like to go scuba diving, it doesn’t matter if I live in the favela or Barra da Tijuca.<sup>8</sup> Both people will pay the same for the experience because it is an emotional one, because “this is what I desire”. It doesn’t matter how I will dress, what kind of transportation I use, or if I have the money to pay the rent. This is what young people are like these days. They consume like that.

There are things that can be illogical, and they will still invest in them. They don’t pay for hotels, because it doesn’t interest them. They are in the spiritual plane, in the environmental plane, in the level of high contact (Figure 6). They are travelers with other characteristics.



**Figure 6: Types of 21st Century tourist**

<sup>8</sup> Neighborhood located in the West Zone of Rio de Janeiro city, Brazil.





The question is: what customer group are you working with? Which customer group do you want to work with? And with which group can you develop other possibilities? In the 21st century, supply is no longer massive. It's personal. And how can I make a personal offer to a group of 45 people? That is the challenge. We have to offer novelty and differentiation. We have to take advantage of local identity and authenticity.



**Figure 7: Model of 21st Century tourism**

In Figure 7, we see a hotel with a hammock. That is what tourists want now, instead of a forty-story hotel building. But beware, because this hammock must have Wi-Fi connection. It can't be something rustic, completely backwoods and old-fashioned. Travelers seek learning and they want to enjoy different experiences. And they are interested in improving the social and ecological milieu. So, what else do we see in the picture? A nicely-laid table, with a country touch, but which is also refined and chic, in a very contemporary style. The last picture shows an experience that is completely and utterly adventurous. Social tourism has to reclaim that. It was there before, but the customer sought other things. Now the general public is seeking this and, therefore, you have a dual opportunity.

So, what's the difference between industrial tourism and social tourism? Basically, on a fairly objective level, and with that we conclude: in industrial tourism, the tourist is



basically a consumer. In social tourism, she is a citizen. What does that mean? In traditional tourism, my goal is for people to buy, consume, spend money on things. While in social tourism, my goal is building citizenship with each activity which is being developed, so that the tourist remembers that she is a citizen, that she has a role, and in this sense that she can grow and develop. Social tourism has a very important civic aspect.

With industrial tourism, tourists are basically consumers. With social tourism, they are citizens.

In industrial tourism, the activity is important only in the economic sphere. In social tourism, the activity is important from a social and cultural perspective. That is the real theme. In industrial tourism, we have to make sure landscapes and communities are esthetically pleasing according to competitive business objectives. Things should be beautiful, nicely painted, clean, and the people should be groomed. But in social tourism we have to take care of the landscape and the communities for the sake of their well-being. That is, things are nice because people want them that way, not because we tourists want them to be like this.

That is the difference. The scenario is that, in the case of industrial tourism, entertainment will continue to be for the masses. People will continue to demand entertainment. But in social tourism, tourists will increasingly prefer holidays with substance.

Anyone can go to the beach. Now, going to the beach and getting along with other people your age is a whole different experience. A senior ball with specially selected young people – who were casted – to dance with elderly women is a whole different experience. This is what elderly women want; they don't just want to go to the beach. They want to dance, and if those who take them to dance are young, they are even happier. And there's nothing wrong with that. I think it's a very healthy subject, and that makes a crucial difference.



The new middle class is the new consumer of industrial tourism. Okay. I don't see a problem. In the case of industrial tourism, industry also seeks some specialization, but the goal of tourism is the same as that of hospitality: consumerism and money. So we continue to confuse hotel development with tourism development in the traditional model. We have to build more hotels. I don't know if this is happening in Brazil. In Mexico, it is still happening. It's terrible. Violence has prevented the construction of new tourism enterprises and, in the end, this will become a positive thing. Because what are we going to do with so many hotels that generate waste, that create problems?

In the case of social tourism, tourist destinations that have their own identity will increase in demand. The more authentic they are, the better. So traditional places with a clear identity will have more tourist possibilities than those which are mass-marketed. I don't know about the matter of prices in Brazil. I know that Brazil has an international image of selling all-inclusive packages, etc. But that will diminish in the long run, and communities that can maintain their identities will increase their potential to attract tourists. Small businesses will encounter many opportunities in this model because they can design unforgettable activities. Big corporations can't do that, except Disney. But if you create unforgettable small business activities, it's much

simpler because every business is different. Everyone makes cheese, but each type of cheese has a different flavor. Everyone rents horses, but everyone rents a different horse. That makes activities becomes increasingly valuable for this new type of tourism.

What do I wish to pass on to you with all I've said? That the scenario is optimistic, it's positive. The world of Generations Y and Z is a world where material needs will already have been met. Today, hardly anyone starves to death, in principle, at least not in Brazil. It is a problem that has already been relatively overcome here. People generally enjoy all the amenities. They have access to a certain level of education, technology, a certain level of welfare, housing, they have their own assets. Anyway, in general, this is what has happened. Mankind has never lived in better conditions than now. Because we have reached a point in history in which we are the most advanced in terms of material welfare.

But what desires will this generation want to satisfy? They will no longer work hard to own a house or a car. They will work hard to live a life with meaning, a luxury that our grandparents probably didn't have, even if fighting for basic things have allowed them to convey some meaning into their lives. Now, the new generation that has it all is a generation in pursuit of meaning. And how will they achieve this meaning? Through sensible idleness and leisure, which only social tourism is able to bestow. Pay close attention to the increasing importance of our work, because we are responsible for projecting this.

**The new generations will have new existential needs to fulfill.**

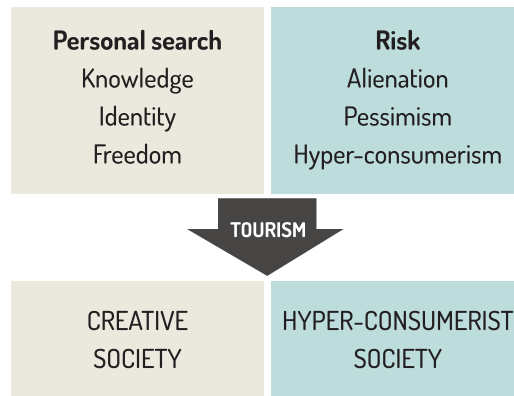


Photo: Clem Onoieghuo / Unsplash

Photo: Veneçia Carswell / Unsplash

**Figure 8: Trends in the new generation of tourists**

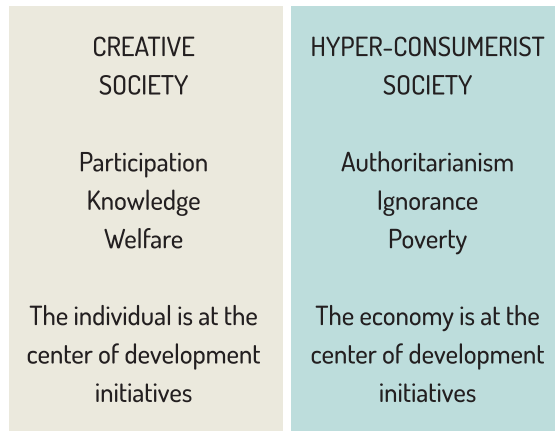
The new generations will pursue knowledge, identity and freedom, which we will grant them, by means of different leisure activities that have already been mentioned. There is a risk that we will end up building an alienating type of tourism, to reinforce pessimism or consumerism. This trend may lead society to hyper-consumerism.



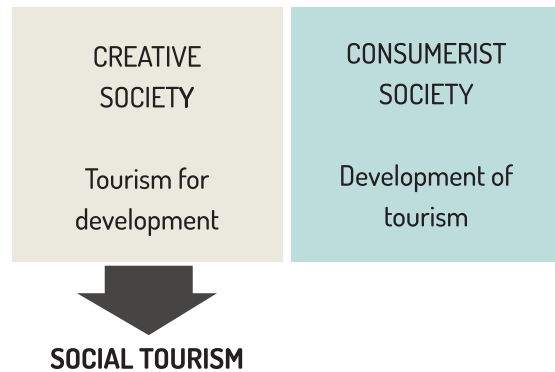
**Figure 9: Directions taken by tourism**

Should we provide a liberating tourism or reproduce the same kind as before? What kind of society do we want to build through tourism? A creative society, or a hyper-consumerist society? What are we doing in each of our states? Are we following the same line, or are we each understanding different things?

In a creative society, the human being is the center of initiatives. There must be participation, knowledge and well-being. In a hyper-consumerist society, the economy is the center of initiatives, and there must be ignorance, intellectual poverty and authoritarianism to allow this to occur. How are we building our model? It should be creative. Our social tourism should be associated with building a creative society, what we from ISTO call “Tourism for development”.



**Figure 10: Comparison between the individual in both society models**

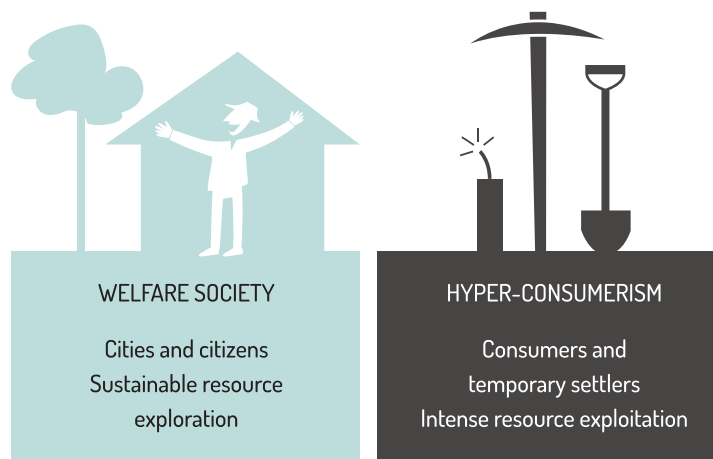


**Figure 11: The exercise of social tourism can only be reached by Tourism for development**

It is no longer simply about developing tourism, which is what the government ministries do. Tourism must have a meaning. What we want is Tourism for development that allows us to have a tourism model that is in keeping with the society we want.

A lot of people went to the Americas from Asia, Africa, Europe, but they went for two reasons: some to exploit mineral resources. How does this sort of person live? They want to take all they can and get rich fast. They dream of finding gold, becoming very wealthy, and going back to where they consider to be home, which is always a place that is somewhere else, but not here. And since their home is somewhere else, which is not here, they won't invest, won't create, they live as if camped in a temporary settlement. What are mining camps like? Violent, ugly, dirty, disorderly. Then they turn into cities,

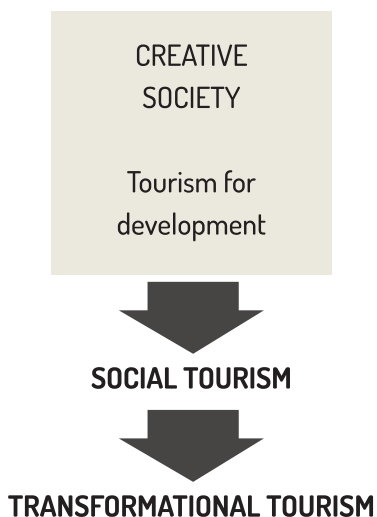
don't they? Then, into Unesco heritage sites, but only because they were abandoned. But at first they were disorganized places where the only thing to do was extract wealth and take it away. But settlers were also among those who came. They came with their families to build a new society, settle down, and founded the cities. Settlers live in cities, not in camps. Organized cities, well-built cities, cities where you can live. So the tourism model must be in accordance with this model of society that we all want. If what we want is a mining, exploited society, we conduct an exploiting type of tourism. Small tourist plantations where the activity is heavily exploited. And the rest doesn't matter to me, I just leave trash behind. Or I can practice a civilizing tourism that makes people have better interactions and live better lives.



**Figure 12: Types of societies and their attributes**

If I want to create a welfare society, I'll implement a tourism model that uses resources sustainably in order to build citizenship. If what I want is hyper-consumerism, then the miners come in. Even in the picture they look bad. Because they want to get fast results, fast money, and then leave. I arrive, I set up my franchise, which is called "Hotel Rodríguez", stay for five years and then abandon the property. I take all the money I can with me and leave the trash behind. Acapulco is a perfect example of this. It has grown and been abandoned to the point that we now have a terrible problem of drug-related violence in old Acapulco, although the new Acapulco remains glamorous. But they are two separate cities that are not at all similar, and the city is being destroyed. In many cases, Mexico serves as an example for how things should not be done.

How do we want to build tourism through our work? We would have to meet the following social goals that relate tourism with substance, with an educational purpose (there is no social tourism without an educational purpose), by stimulating activities that grant people pleasure and freedom. It must ultimately have a liberating purpose. On the other hand – because we are so encouraged – it’s really tempting to provide mass tourism, with a lot of people, for economic purposes, a lot of shopping and, therefore, a lot of people traveling; but not necessarily as free people. Do not be seduced by the siren song. It is better to have a smaller, but articulate, social tourism program in terms of content than a social tourism program with a huge amount of people. However, there is a customer base for social tourism. So we should provide something clever for them, not just the same thing that others do.



**Figure 13: Social tourism as transformational tourism**

We want a transformational type of tourism, not a copycat version. To reproduce the existing type of tourism, there is no need for us. We are here to propose a different sort of tourism, one that is purposeful, that makes room for leadership and generates change, and that others want to replicate because we do it well. Social tourism is already doing this well, but it must be institutionalized, improved, permanently kept up to date.

And what about copycat or reproductive tourism? It’s one that encourages greater consumption. For people who promote that type of tourism, idleness is bad; the

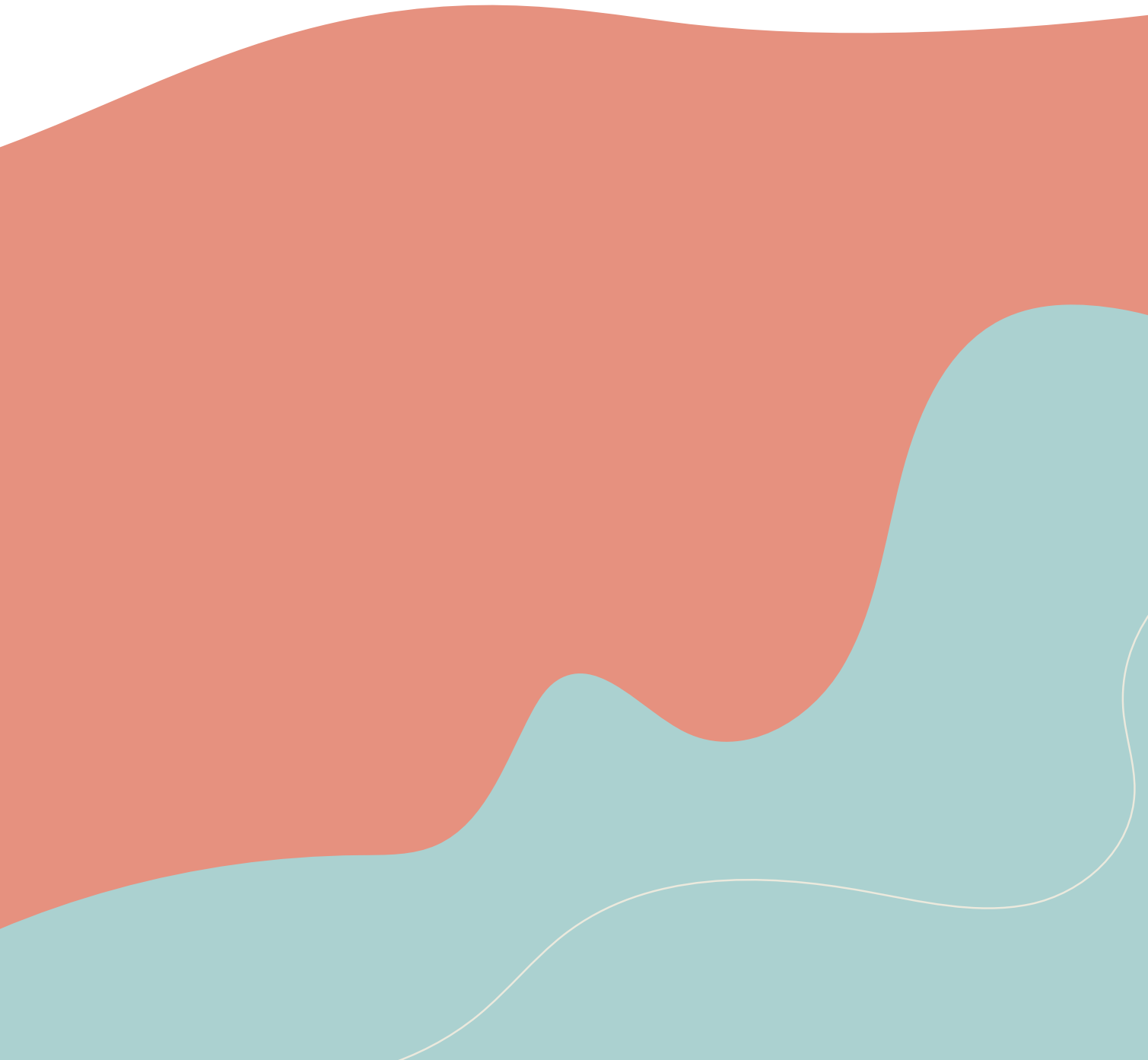
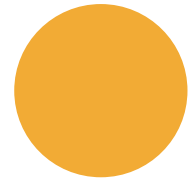




reproductive function is to consume. This tourism makes people, who are already going mad, mitigate their guilt by ceaselessly buying things they don't need. Shopping for stuff and more stuff, buying more and more and more. In conventional tourism, shopping is like a sort of medication that will never cure, but it is a sedative, and it follows the same dynamic as any addiction. The more they consume, the more dissatisfied tourists get. So they have to go back shopping to see if, this time, they'll feel content. Vacations are part of hyper-consumerism. I'm not sure if you are familiar with cases like this. We even reach a point where we travel just to go shopping, don't we? So, what did you do on your vacation? We went shopping. And what else? More shopping. And you hear stuff like: "Oh, we went to Europe. Yes, it's all very beautiful, but there were no commercial centers". And if there are no commercial centers, people don't know what to do. So why would you go to Europe if the only thing you need is a commercial center?



**Figure 14: In the picture, the spectacularization of local community and the objectives behind the exploitation of resources and people**



Reproductive tourism is based on international corporative investment, and its objective is clear. But I want to draw your attention to Figure 14: Tourists taking pictures of girls in an Asian community as if they were exotic animals. The individual is reduced to less than a human being. The same goes for the other photo. It's disrespectful, absurd, awful, but people do these things. Conventional tourism does this. So I hope this is not happening in our community experiences, and that we are rigorous and intelligent enough not only to forbid people from doing this, but also to make them understand that this isn't necessary.

Social tourism is above the pettiness of consumerism. I love to say that, because consumerism is small and tourism is big. It doesn't content itself with economic motivation, which reduces people to a less-than-human level. Your role is educational. We are creating better human beings through education. And Western education, which is based on three things, is what we have to incorporate: love, the law, and the great works. Are these three values of Western culture implicit in our excursions, our tours? Maybe so, and maybe we did this without realizing it. I believe they are, because the work I see in social tourism is full of love, respect for the law and for great things. And it is important to do so, because love generates trust, the law generates discipline, and great works inspire vision. Our tourists, at the end of their experience, should have more confidence in society, more discipline as citizens, and a better vision regarding the future. The sum of these three things will enable a participatory and well-informed society to flourish. And participation and information make it easier for a creative society to flourish.

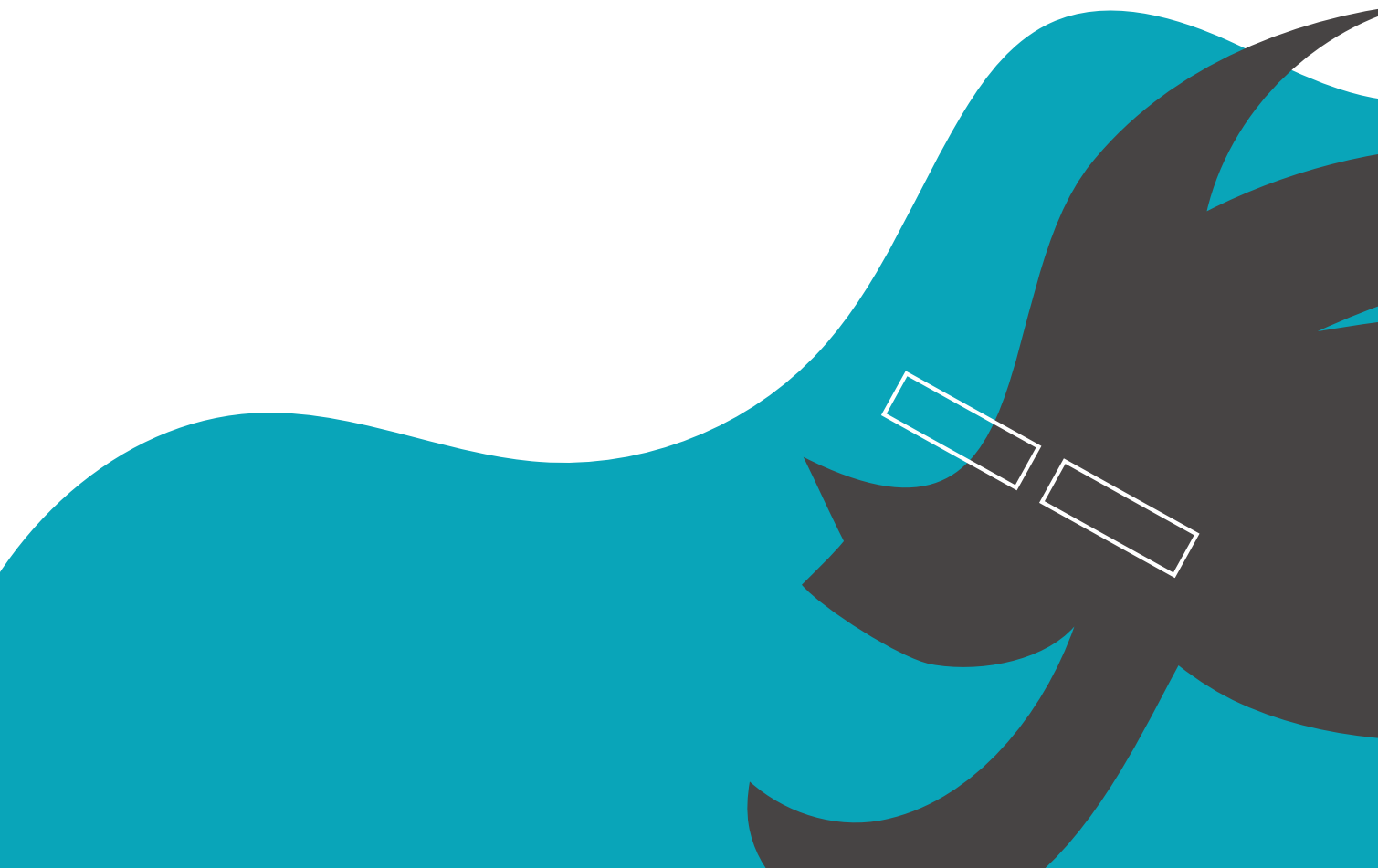
For all these reasons, the ultimate purpose of social tourism is to build a creative society. All of this is motivating. This is important because, if we don't have a direction to our work, we can easily get lost in commercial aspects. The future of tourism is social tourism, I have no doubt. The biggest opportunity in our tourism is the attention focused on the tourist of the future, who will be concerned with what we have been saying here. The tourist of the future is a professional consumer, but their consumption makes sense, and learning, aesthetics, personal expression are what will give meaning to their vacations.

Social tourism is the natural specialization field for small tourist businesses, and social tourism is what we need in order to build an informed, creative and participatory society.

As a final reflection, taken from a book by Lipovetsky called *The World Culture*.<sup>9</sup> One of the passages of the book says: "In a world dominated by the superficiality of what is immediate and consumable, social tourism opens life to different dimensions, provides

.....  
 9 Gilles Lipovetsky and Jean Serroy, *La culture-monde : Réponse à une société désorientée* (original in French).

goals, allows us to move in new directions, stimulates us and makes our understanding of the world not only a logical and objective one, a cold and intelligent understanding, but also an emotional one. Social tourism educates us, socializes us, gives us goals and changes our lives” (LIPOVETSKY, SERROY, 2011). This is what we do every day, although we don’t know it. And if you don’t know, you better find out soon, so that you can do it with insight, because you’re changing the lives of these people who are your customers. And we better be aware of what we are doing so that we can do it well. “It’s not an enemy of the passions, rather, it gives us certainty, contributes to our self-respect, stimulates the desire within to challenge ourselves and to be protagonists of our own lives.” This is our job. That is the importance of our work. This is all the mystical, philosophical, romantic part of why we are in social tourism. Now here’s the question I’m sure you’ve been thinking: “Oh, this is all so beautiful...! But how can it be done? Well, next let’s see how all of this can be effectively conducted, how to put it into practice. And the way we put this into practice will lead us into a virtuous circle in which we will begin to improve even more. This is a part of doing things properly, and we can always spread the word, and do things together, better and a more coordinated way.





## CHAPTER 2

### Designing social tourism itineraries

We previously spoke about philosophical and conceptual aspects that should inspire us in our work. From now on, we will focus on product design. We will deal with two issues: the planning or design and the operational side. The latter is very important because, when we operate groups, no matter what kind of tourism, there's normally a huge amount of problems, which generates excess work and the reason behind it is, generally, because we didn't plan things well enough.

The starting point is a good idea; we plan a sightseeing tour, but we do this in a very improvised fashion. This is what we say: "Well, we're all going to go out, take a group to such and such a place because it's worth it for such and such reason." However problems always come up – for instance, the time. The time allotted never seems to be enough; we can never do the full itinerary we had planned. Sometimes, we are overly optimistic in our calculations and plan less time to get to each location than it actually takes. And when you happen to have 45 people along with you, you end up with lots of problems, an enormous amount of dissatisfaction, additional costs and the like.

Why does this happen to us? Because we didn't sit down to make a good design, we didn't make a good program or because we didn't plan deeply. We usually spend 80% of our time operating, running about, going up and going down. We dedicate only 20% of our time to thinking about what we're going to do. We should be inverting this scenario and thinking about what we'll do, decided what we'll do; this should take up 80% of our time. As for the remaining 20%, we should dedicate them to solving incidents that come up during the operation. This is only attainable if we do, in fact, work on a careful, thorough and detailed plan.

Now is the time, therefore, to talk about everything we must take into consideration for an effective plan. It may seem overly long, but it's better to be safe than sorry. It's worth being proactive instead of reactive in this sense and, therefore, work less. I'm a very lazy man; I like to keep my work hours short, and a good way to spend less time working but being very productive is to plan every single stage very well. I don't want to have to do things twice or three times, because that means working more. If you like to work hard and if we like to work a lot, plan your work, and that way you'll have more sightseeing tours. Put your effort into that.

First we'll talk about the recipients of the product and, after that, about the foundation that generates the product, the purpose of each outing, each tour, and which components it includes. Next we'll talk about how to develop content. After that, we'll talk about what shape to give to it and, finally, how to prepare the schedule of activities and services

## 2.1 Priority Audience

It's worth remembering that the main market for social tourism is the domestic market, citizens traveling within their own country. This is something we cannot lose sight of. The beneficiaries of your endeavors are people in the domestic market that belong to three main groups: families, youth and the elderly.

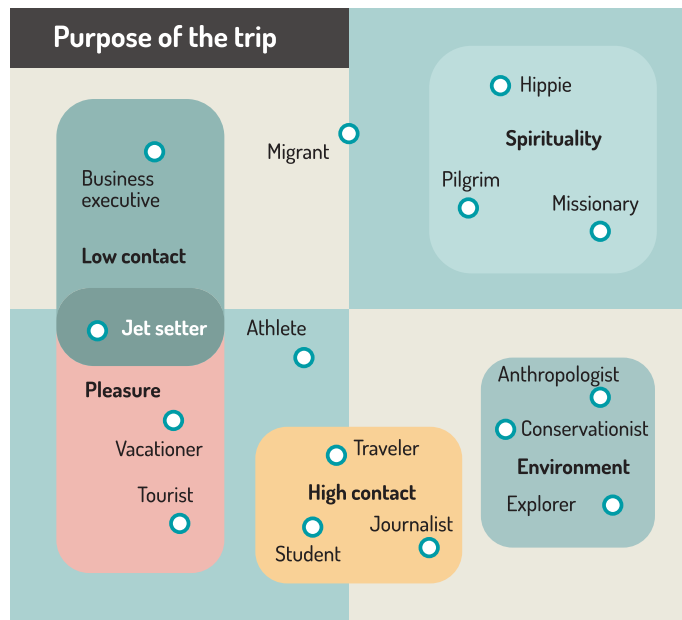
With this logic in place, the first thing we need to define is the recipient of our product.

Mass tourism is tourism planned with everyone in mind, as is the case with juice or any other food product. In the case of social tourism, however, we have to differentiate. The first thing we must consider is: whom do I want to have as an audience?

As such, what must we take into consideration when defining an audience?

First: what is the purpose of the trip? What is the point of the trip? Why is the person going to travel? In second place: what is the nature of the group to which these people belong? What type of person interests me?

In concrete terms, and we've already seen this previously, we have a map of possibilities when it comes to the purpose of the trip. People travel for a great many reasons. What is the reason behind the organization of the project or to which reasons for traveling are we responding?



**Figure 15: Types of tourists and purposes**

Do we want to cater to people that are simply on vacation? Or do we want people that are looking for high contact with the communities? Are we looking to do reflection work, like that of the missionary or hippie? Or perhaps something that is connected to environmental issues? This is the first decision to be made. What is the menu of objectives, purpose, travel styles that you want to promote and which you consider timely and pertinent? Who knows this market? Sometimes, we don't know the market, but we know the people; this may be so, but we don't know what they want.

If there are no research reports or formal information about the subject, you must start by defining the kind of trip you are interested in promoting. As I have said before, it seems to me that these should be primarily the types seen on the right side of Figure 15, since I believe social tourism is neither for businessmen nor for jet setters. For these people, the commercial, conventional options on offer are enough to meet their demands. Hence, these empty spaces presented by the tourism industry are what social tourism fills. However, first we need to define what they are.

Secondly: What is this group like? The commercial tourism we're all familiar with is very competently geared towards four groups: businessmen (not necessarily women executives, but men in particular), couples (specifically couples without children).





Everything related to conferences and large groups and, finally, luxury tourism (which also doesn't accommodate children or the elderly). We in social tourism don't need to occupy these segments, for they are catered by commercial tourism, which takes their needs into consideration and provides solutions for them.

Instead of reproducing what companies do for these segments, we must create different products for different audiences. These different audiences are on the right side of Figure 15: they are the targets of social tourism. They aren't the only ones, but the most visible. Speaking in general terms, if we develop products for them, we will cater to the travel needs of practically the entire population.

Who are these groups? In first place, families, which make up a multi-group, since it includes all others. Family members, however, sometimes don't want to travel with their relatives, so they give birth to what we call affinity groups, which are those of youths, the elderly and people with disabilities. This last group is very important, because those who cater to people with special needs pretty much works for every other group, since installations and services catering to them serve all other audiences.

## **Families**

Let's first talk about families. A typical family in one of our countries is not the British Royal Family. Families made up of regular people, like you or me, simply want to have fun. But how does one define what makes a family? The problem with Latin American countries is that family doesn't boil down to people who share a last name or genes; there are larger conceptions of family. I'm assuming that, in Brazil, there are godchildren, compadres and comadres (the father and mother of one's godchild, respectively), neighbors, uncle by marriage, cousins, adopted uncles, adopted cousins etc., which make family dynamics very different from the kinds in Denmark or Switzerland. Hence, what defines a family in our countries is a bond – which, yes, is first and foremost genetic – but can also be by marriage, affinity, aggregates, or customs. The fact is that many of us live in family groups that incorporate other people into familial life. Therefore, although officially the family has a given size, in countries like ours, this size tends to be bigger than the official number of members. Furthermore, these people share a living space. They live together and intermingle with one another. This endows them with specific dynamics. To be more concrete, in Brazil, according to official data from the 2000/2010 Population Census, made by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE), 87.2% of domestic units is made up of families. It is one of the lowest numbers in Latin

America but, in any case, it's very high. What it means, essentially, is that the vast majority of Brazilians live with family. This comes to 165 million people. In theory, there are 3.3 people per home. But, as I've already mentioned, these homes may be bigger because of this wider view of family.

Nevertheless, not all families are the same. Family is such a generic concept that it includes many different groups of people, with different needs, different expectations. Ideally, we would have to define what types of family we want to cater to. Or, if we would like to cater to all families, we have to figure out how to develop different solutions for families with distinct characteristics.

Hence, we have families with small children and those with school-aged children, which have different dynamics and other interests. There are families with teenagers and families entirely made up of grown ups, in which everyone continues to travel together.

What happens with families? As a whole, with the exception of families of adults, everyone travels during the school holidays. Because a large chunk of their time revolves around the school year and this need to be respected. Most family trips happen in certain times of the year and, during other times, families are simply not allowed to travel. This needs to be taken into consideration when we think of offering something to them.

It's important to emphasize that, in general and all around the world, families travel without professional assistance. They don't go to travel agencies, they don't look for professional consultants, I'm not sure if they turn to social tourism, but they will turn to social tourism if there's something being offered to them. Why don't they look already? Precisely because of what was said before: seeing as commercial tourism options are designed for businessmen and childless couples, where would they stay? There are no interconnected rooms, rooms with pull-out beds, no spaces with an outdoor area or a place to heat up baby bottles. Or even with facilities to leave baby strollers. These families evidently need more space than other types of groups and the traditional tourism industry rarely designs its packaged deals to them. What does the traditional tourist industry do? It accepts them as a complementary segment, but it doesn't plan products especially for them. How do we feel when we know we are invaders in a space that wasn't built for us? We feel uncomfortable. We use the space, because there are no other options, but we know we don't belong there. And that it was usually happens with families. They can use the facilities provided by the traditional tourism industry, but because these weren't adapted for them, a series of last-minute solutions need to be improvised and this will remind them that the space in question wasn't designed

for them. Therefore, the traditional options don't work for them. If you want to truly do something under the principles of social tourism, you'll have to plan and set up an option that takes these characteristics into account. Hire accommodation services with these features (if they exist). Use transport services only if they are kind to this kind of public. Talk is easy, but finding these services is very difficult. That is why design is important.

It's preferable, then, to have a few tours, or a few outings for families, that are well planned, that may find enormous acceptance, than to try to constantly improvise services for them, because that way we wouldn't actually be solving the problem.

Well, what do families want? Basically, services adapted to the size of their group, as I just mentioned. What matters to families is having a place where they can feed their kids. What happens when kids go to a typical restaurant? They order a lot of food and eat very little, they get agitated and start running around. They represent a disturbance to the restaurant. And we know that they are disruptive, so we feel bad. It's therefore preferable for these parents to prepare basic foods that are appropriate for small children, which are few, and serve it themselves. For them, it's also a way of guaranteeing the hygiene standards to which they are used. Also, they will want a private space where kids are allowed to scream, to play, to disturb the peace without troubling others. Nothing is more awful than boarding a plane and hearing babies crying. In time, we come to realize that they only cry in takeoffs and landings, how lucky, right? And why is that? Because the inner ears close and that only way of opening them up is by crying. And if a passenger feels like dying from the mere thought that the baby will cry the whole flight long, the parents feel even worse. That is why it would be better if they were allowed a space in which their privacy was safeguarded in certain moments during their flights. However, the industry does not give them this option.

Families want safe spaces. Families are geared towards the children. All of the decisions are made by mom or dad, but in relation to the children's needs. And the first thing that matters to parents is safety. They don't want their kids to fall, to suffer an accident, to get hurt, to get into trouble. So spaces must be safe, they must be comfortable and calm so that they can feel secure. Families are groups that move at a slow pace and with difficulty. Has anyone here traveled with family? Everyone, certainly. It is quite folkloric, but most of all very slow. Usually, the family leaves, finds its way somewhere and, from there, starts to move as a radius, the center of which is the mother, who's always able to make eye contact with the kids. The mother doesn't want to lose the kids from sight,

although it happens occasionally, but she wants to be able to look up and make sure they're there. Or the dad can do it. This issue is very important for parents. It's quite different from the dynamic of young people or the elderly.

Families want kids to be entertained and they want amenities for children: cribs, clowns, balloons, all these things. They want special prices, because kids don't consume the same thing as their parents. They may make as much of a mess, or maybe more, but they don't eat as much as a grown up. People don't want to pay \$15 for a breakfast that their child won't eat. Above all, they want places in the shade with access to open space where the sun is shining. They want to be able to stay somewhere that's comfortable, but which is close to an open space where the kids can run and play and move, but always safely and appropriately.

Families want socialization activities. They are very interested in socializing, with other families or amongst themselves. They want fun in which everyone participates. It's not about going to the movies, but doing things together. Stuff in which kids can learn, supervise water activities, sports activities, educational spaces etc. All of these activities should be included in the itinerary because parents have an interest in getting their kids to participate in these activities.

In short: families move around slowly, they stay together most of the time, they are sedentary: that is, they arrive, get comfortable and don't move around much more. They don't like to drive around much, unless we're talking about families with grown up children. They prefer short journeys, directly to their accommodation site; they don't like circling around. If there is no direct transportation, they won't go because that creates a mobility issue. As a group, families have mobility issues. They need assistance to move or to install themselves and they are also inconvenient. If you've ever been to mass tourism locations and witnessed families arriving, the queue in which the family goes always takes longer. It's always like that. Families also need priority queues. What we see in some modes of transport is that people with small children are given priority, because they know these families will obstruct circulation and create logistical problems. That is why we need to give them special treatment.

## **Youth**

Let us turn now to youth. Another generation, one that is more experienced, more aware, more demanding, more informed, more cosmopolitan. And very hard to deal with. Why? Because they know more than us about many things. They know less about

a great many other things, but regarding much of what we do, especially travel logistics, they do know more. And that can be very unpleasant for those working in this business.

Young people know what we have to do and they demand that we do it. They are very different from the tourists already mentioned and they're a growing group. But what are they like, exactly? Their vacation and their trips are very long. They travel on average for more days than any other group. A business trip lasts three days, on average. Youth trips last 28 days, on average. There are some preconceived ideas because the business traveler – in three days – spends a lot of money and traditional industry believes that's a very profitable group. However, the young traveler is in fact more profitable, because he may spend less per day, but at the end of his trip he likely spends much more. Besides, he spends his money on local businesses, in different places and, in this sense, at the end of the day, he generates more benefits than the businessman, who only stayed in a single place.

Youth are pioneers; they like to explore, to discover new places, they go everywhere, have no issue feeling tired or getting around. In fact, they even carry a lot of weight. We often see young people in downtown Rio de Janeiro with a big bottle of water in case there are no stores to buy any. It seems absurd, doesn't it? Walking around the city with a big bottle of water, a pair of scissors, and a penknife... don't ask me why, but that seems to be their thing. They have lots of strength and lots of energy, but most importantly: they know they have another sixty years ahead of them. They are the tourists with which social tourism will be working for the next sixty years. We, the almost-senior citizens and actual senior citizens, are somewhere between 50 and the grave, so the ones who will be setting the tone in the world of travel are these kids.

Therefore, we must design tourism products for them because, if we don't, we'll be left behind.

As is the case with other audiences, not all youth are the same: there are the underage and the legal adults. The under age like to socialize and they like to learn. This is obvious. They're at an age in which they're getting to know themselves and other people, outside of their familiar environment, but they need an environment that is secure and controlled, precisely because they are under aged and the responsibility of working with them is ours.

In the case of youth that are of age, they are more interested in discovery, in having more independence than they had before, because now they are legally allowed to do so.

Socializing and learning also interests them. A social life is very important to them. Then there are what we call “young at heart travelers,” people like me who... well, we’ve been young for a long time, and we like trips that have a feeling of discovery and exploration, although we aren’t a part of the age bracket anymore.

What do young people need? What do they want? They want services in which socialization is guaranteed. And what does that mean? For instance, they want a place to stay that is different from the kind businessmen want. The businessman’s accommodation is a place to isolate himself. Air-conditioning, soundproof windows, a TV set with 40 plus channels, internet, minibar. It’s a place in which one can close oneself off in a room with everything, and not need to leave. That is what a businessman needs. The young person needs precisely the opposite: a simple room, except with Wi-Fi that works even in the bathroom. But also large common spaces where young people can meet when they leave their rooms. Meeting areas with a game table – not the kind in a casino, but board games –, a cafeteria where they can serve themselves, freely, including a kitchen where they can share a cooking experience, since they were not taught to cook at home, now that want to learn and see what it’s like. Most of all, they need spaces where they can spend time with other young people staying in the same place. For them, this is key: a social space in the place that’s accommodating them.

They want activities that require a physical challenge; yes, they can climb a mountain, go down a ravine, swim in a river... in short, it makes sense to make these radical activities available to them. They want sociocultural entertainment. What does that mean? That they are interested in knowing more about the culture, the heritage, but on an entertainment level. In other words: brief information, that’s clear and simple, without going into too much depth. If this is provided in a playful way, that’s even better, they’ll enjoy it even more. It’s important, however, to allow them to discover things in their own pace. They are very interested in language courses, since most young people today are not monolingual – and that’s an obsession they have – so if they can learn Mandarin in Minas Gerais, they’ll enjoy it. It doesn’t matter, you can learn Mandarin wherever. I learned to speak English in Mexico, which is why I speak like Speedy González. But, at the end of the day, these things are a possibility, not something that’s absurd.

Young people are interested in everything that concerns their professional and personal future. So they can engage in short-term stays, participating in light professional experiences, which also pleases them very much. They have a great interest in talking to the local population, getting to know the communities. They are at a phase in life

in which they are curious about so much and it's a good time to build their identities. Since they are in the process of building personal identity, the process of building local, regional and national identities is also important to them. Finally, there is also a lot of interest in the environment, of course.

## Senior Citizens

Next we have the elderly population. In Brazil, a person is considered a senior citizen after the age of 60. According to official numbers from the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics or IBGE (2017), there are approximately 26 million people over 60 years of age. The greatest advantage for many tourism service providers is that older people travel during any season. Why? Because most of them don't work anymore.

They like to travel in groups, be it as a family or in a group of people their own age. What they don't tend to like is to travel with children that are not in their family, because they don't have much patience for them. They do like traveling with young people though. Or, if they can't travel with them, at least sharing experiences with them. There can be a tour group of youth and one catered to senior citizens in which they all share a social space; it's quite interesting.

Again, we can see that there are different types: the kind we call active and the ones we call sedentary. In the active group, people are roughly between 60 and 80 years old, though that depends a lot on their physical health upon reaching these ages. Senior citizens are looking younger and younger. Fifty years ago, a fifty-year-old had no teeth. Today, the average fifty-year-old has a perfect set of teeth. Why? Because we've made huge progress when it comes to wellness. What is common to all of them is that they are free of family commitments: the kids are married and, generally speaking, if life goes well, they do not return to live with their parents and so the latter have no more parental responsibility. After all, being a doting grandparent is not the same as being a responsible parent.

They can, therefore, dedicate themselves to making up for lost time in this whole process of being responsible for raising and paying for their kids in the last 30 years. Generally speaking, they also have resources, precisely because they are done paying for their children's education. They still have energy and want to live life to the fullest. I've worked with senior citizens and it's very interesting and very gratifying to see how they really do have fun with everything: dancing, music, the beach, the landscape... it's very exciting for us.



The sedentary ones are those who already have diminished physical abilities due to old age and they require a more gentle rhythm. They all want comfortable bathrooms, no one is up for a camping trip... (perhaps one or two isolated ones, if at all, but usually that phase is in the past). They want pleasant and spacious rooms, because they move with less ease. The bathrooms also need to be roomy, with safety bars etc. The outings need to have a gentle pace. They don't want to devour the world; they want to savor it. So, do they want to come to Rio? Yes, I'll see two attractions that interest me and that's it. I don't feel the need to see every street, every corner, every square. They can count on preferential treatment in queues, and they demand that: they can't stand waiting in queues. They want special fees because they feel it's high time they get the special treatment they deserve and they are right; after all, they've done years of heavy-lifting.

They need there not to be any physical barriers, because they have a harder time getting around and these represent a risk of accidents. They abhor stairs. Architects love stairways; normal people hate them. They prefer ramps. They prefer whatever won't give them any trouble.

They really enjoy socializing and want a balance between rest, fun and learning. Not because they're still learning, although some are still interested in that. It's very interesting to see how, on guided tours, they don't participate in learning; rather, they begin to teach. You may say: "Look, this here is the Sugar Loaf." And they'll respond: "Yes, you see, this is where I met my wife back in so and so year and it looked like such and such." They want to share the knowledge they've acquired, the things they've experienced, and we just allow them the opportunity. Sometimes, guides are not very sensitive. The elderly do not bring us precise historical data or technical information; they provide very interesting details about everyday life back in their day. "This is where Don Lalo's bakery was and they made wonderful cheese pastries, because they didn't use any chemical preservatives." These kinds of details. That is why we should give them the opportunity and the time to share and appreciate their input.

## **People with disabilities (PwD)**

Lastly we have people with special needs. They comprise approximately 45 million people (IBGE, 2016), which to me seems like a lot, compared to the number of senior citizens, but this is the figure I was given. In Brazil, this represents a large percentage of the population, 23%. Generally, at the global level, the average is between 10 and 15%. Within the group, a large part is comprised of senior citizens with some physical



disability. Now, keep in mind that these people travel with their family or in a group, and it's important to emphasize that the group's decision, when it comes to the destination or service provider, is dependent on this person with special needs. We are going to take grandpa to a place where he'll be well, where he'll feel comfortable, where he won't have difficulties getting around.

The reflection that most interests me when it comes to people with special needs is: who are they? Because there are permanent and temporary disabilities, and these may be motor or related to communications. What does a motor disability entail? It means there is reduced mobility. And what about communication problems? That we cannot read our surroundings well. I'm in Brazil, I don't speak Portuguese well – rather, I don't speak Portuguese at all, to begin with – and so I have communication problems. Because I don't understand anything. Not a word.

It doesn't appear that way because I try to look relaxed, nonchalant, but the typical tourist face when he doesn't understand what people are saying is the one in which eyes and mouth are open in the same proportion. It's clear as day that the tourist doesn't understand anything. If you go off to Russia or to China tomorrow, you won't understand a word, because the alphabet is unfamiliar, the sounds are unfamiliar. This situation results in a limitation, a disability. In fact, the entire tourism industry exists so as to solve tourists' limitations – and there are many of them. They are temporary, but there are many. How many times have you witnessed an important politician, who's always so comfortable in his own skin in his country, then go to a new territory, with a new language, and start looking like someone less important, someone who looks like he's suffering? That's because he becomes a nobody, a nothing, because he doesn't know how to behave. This happens to all of us.

Now, look here: amongst the people with reduced mobility, there are primarily the elderly, but people with babies also have a hard time getting around. What about those with excess luggage, young people with those heavy backpacks, people returning from a shopping trip with eight suitcases, how do they get on? What about people recovering from some kind of trauma: we've all had accidents and, consequently, had difficulty getting around. There are people who are obese, those who need to use a walker, people who can't swim. Think of the tourism focused on beaches, and yet how many people know how to swim? We offer a pool, but we don't have that information. Some people are tired, fatigued; there are pregnant women and small children. Here we must not forget to mention women in high heels. This is a temporary limitation; they can't walk and, even so, they go to the pyramids in Mexico in their high heels, oh well...

When it comes to communication disabilities, we must take into consideration people with vision impairments. Is anyone here wearing glasses? I once went to a very romantic, very sophisticated restaurant, with soft lighting, candles... and the menu, which should have been printed in black letters in a white background, for easy reading, so that anyone could read it, was... not! The background was red and the font was green. To make matters worse, it was in a small Arial typeface.

So the person who sees this menu doesn't want to admit he wears glasses, because he went to the romantic restaurant without them, right? Because he wanted to appear younger. So he can't see anything. The first question he is asked is: "What would you like to order?" And the answer is: "A pair of glasses, because this is unreadable." Out of all the restaurants in which I ordered a pair of glasses, only once was I told: "Certainly, Sir. We will bring you a pair." They do this on purpose, because these are so-called luxury restaurants, they're expensive. The market for luxury, however, isn't 18 years old; they should have had a menu one can read. Another possibility is to ask: "Well, what would you recommend?" And they will always recommend the most expensive dish, which isn't even on the menu. It's a way of robbing the client. This treatment isn't conducive to social tourism. What we need to have is just that, a pair of glasses, so that this permanent disability no longer gets in people's way.

People with a hearing impediment, those who cannot read and the ones who cannot write also have problems communicating, as does everyone else that speaks other languages. Other languages native to Brazil as well as those from abroad, why not? Because more than one language is spoken here. And there are people who don't speak Portuguese. If they don't know how to speak Portuguese, then they have a problem.

I bring up these points for reflection so that we can become aware of the fact that everyone has some kind of disability. Every tourist has disabilities. And the products we develop must take into account these limitations, which may or may not be temporary. Even young people may present this type of problem. When an elderly person pushes a baby in a stroller, there are two people that depend on each other for help. The elder uses the baby's stroller to support himself. Neither one could move around without the other. People will find solutions on their own, but it is our duty to think about how to solve their problems. When we resolve issues for people with disabilities, we benefit many others: babies, families, kids who use bikes, skates, scooters and other such vehicles. And this benefits anyone and everyone that desires or requires something similar. Hence, all of the services we provide should be safe, comfortable and offer dignity.

People with disabilities do not want special help. They want independence; they want the same thing everyone else wants. As opposed to senior citizens, who do want special treatment, and as opposed to families, who also want special treatment, people with disabilities don't want special treatment; they want equal treatment. They don't want me to help them get on the bus; they can do that on their own. They don't want me to offer special help maneuvering them around the path; they want to do that on their own. They want to be integrated, not set apart. And we must also be sensitive in this regard: what these people are looking for is treatment that's neither discriminatory nor patronizing. Patronizing or "helping" isn't ideal. Hence, when you program a trip, especially when it comes to time and transfers, you should consider the possibility that there will be people with disabilities and that it's better to prevent, and not have to fix the situation afterwards, sometimes in an unsatisfactory way.

But how then to please everyone in a single itinerary? If there are many different profiles, how is it possible to plan a product that will please everyone? Do you need to segment by each profile?

There are two options: if I have enough of a demand to separate the groups, I can do that if possible. It facilitates the logistics, but isn't necessarily the best solution. The ideal solution is to standardize the services. In other words, we will use the same transportation for all, everyone will stay at the same place, everyone will be taken to the same restaurant. This reduces costs. However, what I will aim for in the operation is to keep in mind that I need to offer different experiences to each person. So I have many options. I can separate them into small groups, or I can simply hand out communication solutions, attention solutions throughout the trip that are specifically geared towards each public. What is essential is prevention, because the guide or driver won't necessarily know how to solve the issues if they weren't predicted... The instructions don't necessarily need to be put in a manual, but they should nevertheless be clear. Solutions must be seen as a protocol; if I have a persona that falls into such and such type, they will prefer this, or they will prefer that. Sometimes, even in a tour, we may offer, let's say, a short outing and a longer one. What do I mean by that? Everyone will be visiting the same location, but some will do the short tour and have more time to rest because they cannot walk or because they don't like to do so, or because they are tired, or they have a small baby, what have you. We offer these people the option of a brief visitation and a pause to rest afterwards, while, at the same time in which part of the group is resting, the rest is going on a longer tour. This is not possible unless we have planned it and designed it this way. You cannot wing it, but you can say: "Well, let's

see, there are options here. We'll be here an hour. Those who want to, can do 20 to 25 minutes walking and then stop to rest, while the rest of the group walks further along."

It's very important to offer these options as a possibility. Because they give people the freedom to decide whether they want to do the short walk or the longer one. Young people will generally choose the longer one; families and older people will often choose the shorter one. But, this way, you give everyone the opportunity to choose; you will be following the plan, with two versions. If you create an effective design, this type of option is possible.

## **2.2 The foundation of the product: objective and components**

How do we begin designing the product? The basic part of the product is its objective. In commercial tourism, the objective is to sell products that sell and bring money. We who work with social tourism can't do that. Well, yes, we can, but we shouldn't. We have to offer tourism with a purpose, as we already said; one which contemplates educational, social or cultural themes. Because that is what is stated in the Montreal Declaration. It says that the primary objective is the realization of each individual potential. If I know what those potentialities are and what people want to do, then I can design the product, that is, the tour, in relation to that.

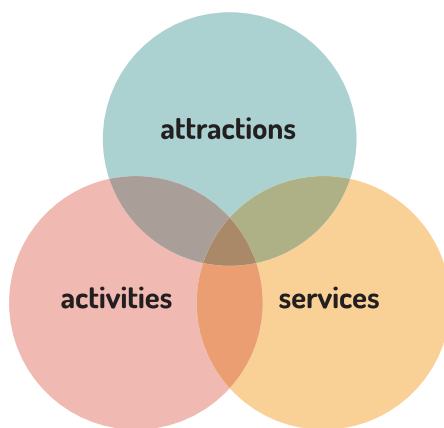
We have to offer tourism that contemplates  
educational, social or cultural themes.  
Social tourism's primary objective is  
the realization of each individual's potential.

What then should we do? Recall the kind of objectives we should have. Whether they are social, education or cultural objectives, or all three. You will make your plan according to your level of ambition and of interest, but we cannot create any type of product without one of these objectives. If the objective isn't the socialization of young people, or to get them to understanding a given thing in civic terms, or in terms of cultural heritage, then there's no point in bringing together a group of people to walk around town taking pictures and getting sweaty. It makes no sense, it serves no purpose, it's not right.



We have to promote people’s respect and development. The objective, the product, must promote these values of respect and development. And we need to define these things for concrete audiences. It is what I was talking about before: we can offer the same itinerary with specific versions for each group. However, this must be designed from the very beginning. We have to add value that’s not economic. This must be part of the product, the prices must be compatible and there should be an explicit desire to not disturb the local environment. All of these aspects must be contemplated, according to the Montreal Declaration. We must define to what extent the tour contributes to all of that because, if it doesn’t, its objectives are not social, but rather commercial. And it will also exclude people for catering only to a privileged group. And now that I have the objective, I can determine the components.

The tourism product is a combination of three things: tourist attractions, tourist services and tourism activities.



**Figure 16: Elements in the tourism product**

We used to think that the attractions were the tourism product: “Come to Rio de Janeiro and see the Sugar Loaf.” That’s an attraction. So the groups would come and then we realized that around the Sugar Loaf there were no bathrooms, no parking spots, there was no information... Well, then we have to provide all of those things. We learned through trial and error. Bathrooms were installed so now when people come to the Sugar Loaf, there are bathrooms, and parking and cash machines... But the get there, take pictures, stay for five minutes and leave. And they took longer to get there than to leave. Why is that? Because there’s nothing to do. So we started thinking: “Oh, we have to provide activities in the vicinity of the Sugar Loaf.” That is what a tourism product consists of: an attraction that includes services, but, most importantly, that offers an activity in the surrounding area.



## Tourist Attractions

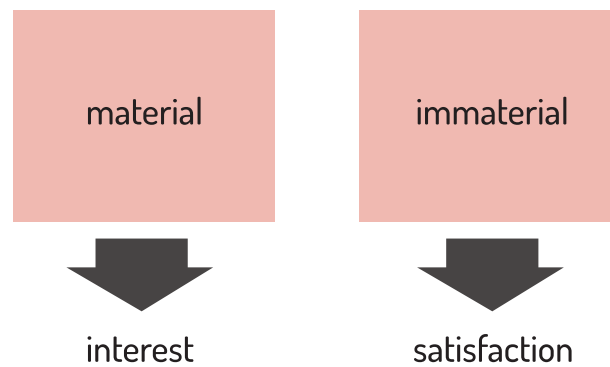
First let's talk about the attractions. The attractions are elements of the natural or cultural heritage, which can be material or immaterial, and which motivate the trip. When I say "Paris" and, all at once, all of you think of an element of the material heritage that exists in Paris and which would happily see and visit. Why? Because the material attraction is what inspires the trip; it motivates me and makes me want to go to a given place. Similarly, if I were to say "London" you're already thinking of another material element, aren't you? Because images always come to mind as caricatures of London, Paris, Moscow and Rio de Janeiro. In every movie with apocalyptic scenes, these cities always appear.

But if I mentioned other destinations, like Mexico, it's a little more complicated to immediately come up with an image. Usually, everyone thinks of a pyramid; that's what usually comes up. But if I say Mexico City, however, people no longer know what to think, because the city doesn't have such a clear identity.

What happens in Brazil? Are there material attractions in Brazil? Yes. There are plenty of them here. Which? One is Olinda, which is in the state of Pernambuco. Another is the cluster of islands Fernando de Noronha, which also belongs to Pernambuco. Then there's Brasília. All of these material attractions were declared World Heritage Sites. They are part of the imagination of any tourist when he or she thinks about Brazil. Another example is a natural attraction called the Iguazu Falls, in the state of Paraná. There are also immaterial attractions. For example, there's Círio de Nazaré, in Belém.<sup>10</sup> Well, we have the celebration of a native community, a dance, in the Amazon. And other festivities that may not be a World Heritage, but they are nevertheless heritage. There are the midsummer June feasts that are celebrated all around the country. Then there's the music. How come? Because Brazilian music is known all around the world, it's part of the cultural heritage. Everyone who comes to Brazil expects to hear this music. Everyone wants to go to Ipanema, here "The Girl from Ipanema," have a seat where the song was composed or walk where the girl went by. In short, these are the important details that make up the heritage. The material heritage is what sparks interest for the trip and the immaterial heritage brings satisfaction during the trip. I come to Rio to see the Sugar Loaf, the Christ statue and Maracanã stadium. But I leave feeling satisfied because I met the people who make the costumes worn at the carnival, because I listened to Tom Jobim's music played by real Brazilians, because I heard the accent, because I saw the bikinis. All of this together is part of the immaterial heritage, and that is what brings satisfaction to the trip.

.....  
 10 Capital of Pará, a state in Brazil's northern region.

## ELEMENTS OF THE NATURAL OR CULTURAL HERITAGE



**Figure 17: The consequences of interpreting material and immaterial heritage**

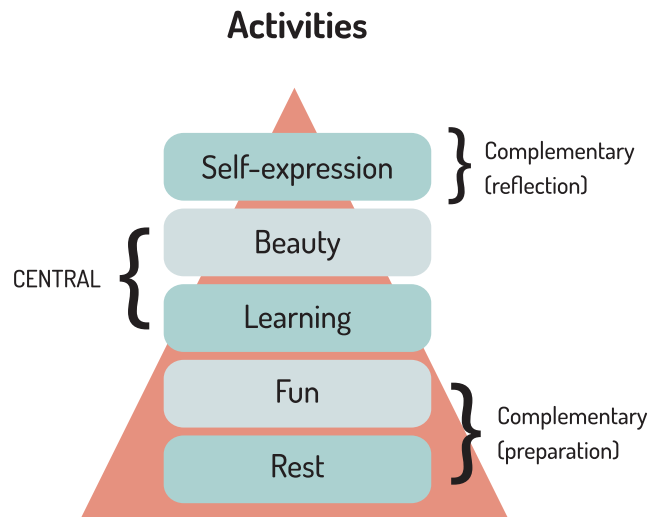
Our itineraries must encompass both elements. We cannot include only elements of the material heritage. There must also be elements of the immaterial heritage, the elements that we choose to include. Usually, what happens on commercial tours is that they take me to the locations that make up the material heritage and contact with the immaterial heritage occurs in a free and spontaneous fashion, by chance, because there are spare moments in which tourists can, in some way, make contact with it. It's the free time from one's free time. In the tour I'm granted free time to... yes, it's absurd... to be free to do what I please. And when I am free to do as I please, I make contact with issues that belong to the immaterial heritage: food, handicraft, music, dance, the local language, contact with the locals, and a very long "etc.". They want to give me a feeling of experiencing the culture.

### **Tourist activities**

It is our duty to schedule both things: contact experiences with the material heritage and contact experiences with the immaterial heritage. This is the first subject your itineraries should take into consideration. From that point on, activities are created.

The first activity is what we will call the core activity or base activity or key activity, which is related to the purpose or objective. If the purpose is to see and appreciate São Paulo's Art Deco architecture (you may not believe it, but it exists and is quite present there) then I have to decide which places, representative of this style, I will visit and which activity will I create, how will I teach people about Brazilian Art Deco. That is the foundational activity.

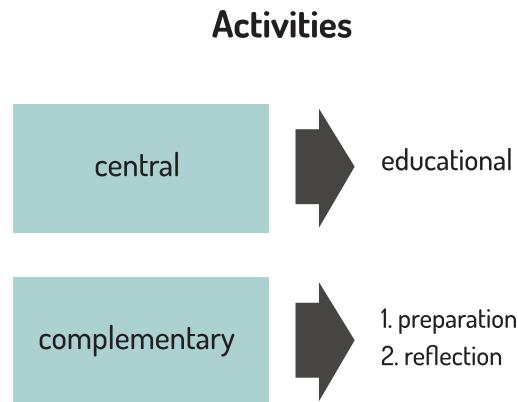
Next I have to plan other things around this core activity. As you recall, the educational activity is on level three of the pyramid and no one learns if they are not rested and having fun. Therefore, I must necessarily schedule opportunities for that to happen, because this is not a Master’s course at a university; it’s tourism. One must schedule activities that prepare people for this learning. They have to arrive at the learning activities well rested and distracted, so that they can be open to this possibility. And this is something I entirely capable of doing during the process. I can schedule a preparation activity, for rest, a distraction activity, so that people are able to relax, forget about what they left behind and prepare for what we’ll be doing and then, and only then, will I provide them with the important information. This is called heritage interpretation but it requires, before starting the interpretation, a group that’s well rested.



**Figure 18: The stages of central and complementary activities**

If someone needs to pee, they won’t be listening to any explanation about the attraction. We need to show them where the bathroom is, take them to a restaurant; we need people to be relaxed in order to prepare them for this experience. When you get on a plane, what is the first thing the flight attendants do? They offer you something to eat, because stress tends to go away with food. Food is served as soon as possible because that is what is established in the protocol. The anxiety generated by the flight is diminished when one eats. It’s not that airlines are generous; it is what makes operational sense.

And this is in regards to safety as well. I'd rather have 250 relaxed passengers than 250 anxious ones. Because turbulence with food is better than turbulence on an empty stomach. The same is true for tours: I must prepare the group to be relaxed. When they are relaxed, perfect, we can bombard them with the educational matters.



**Figure 19: Central and complementary activities**

In summary, there has to be a basic, core activity and a number of complementary activities. They have to be well formatted, well designed. The central activities are related to learning and aesthetic appreciation (beauty). Beforehand, however, we must provide complementary activities as preparation and, after that, other complementary activities for reflection. This is what you need to schedule into your tours in order to achieve an educational objective. In case you haven't noticed, the design is more complex than it seems. Our job is not about filling a bus with people and driving around. It's about achieving a purpose. People may be ignorant when it comes to many matters, but they aren't stupid. They know when our product, the itinerary, is well structured and well organized, and when it's an improvisation. They'll have a good time in spite of everything, but if it's well designed, they will value and appreciate the experience we provided through our product. That is what we have to do.

Our job is not about filling a bus with people  
and driving around. It's about achieving a purpose.



## Tourist services

<p><b>Related to preparation and reflection</b></p> <p>Rest</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Air-conditioning</li> <li>• Bathroom</li> <li>• Seats in the shade</li> </ul> <p>Fun</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sports facilities</li> <li>• Recreation</li> <li>• Sensitivity</li> </ul> <p>Expression</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group dynamics/Dialogue</li> <li>• Practicing what was learnt</li> </ul>	<p><b>Related to the (central) educational experience</b></p> <p>Learning and beauty</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heritage interpretation</li> <li>• Information and guide</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Related to logistics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Travel insurance</li> <li>• Transportation</li> <li>• Accommodations</li> <li>• Restaurant</li> </ul>

**Figure 20: Services that may be used**

Up until now, we've been discussing the topic of activities. Once I've defined the activities, it's time to decide which services will be included and which won't. The logic of commercial tourism is the opposite: you try to fill up the schedule with services, because they are profitable, and not leave much time for activities. In social tourism it doesn't work that way. We have to schedule in a core activity, the ones that complement the core activity and only then do we think about services. In the illustration above, there are examples of the kinds of services we can schedule, such as rest and a snack. Offering too much food is not recommended, as people might fall asleep; the blood rushes to the gut and people end up dozing off. What we must do is trick hunger; so a light, ten-minute snack will do. At this point, you will need to offer a bathroom break and everyone should be able to sit down comfortably and in the shade. This way our group will stay relaxed.

After that, I can provide some fun activities in a sports facility, a little bit of recreation, so people can tell jokes, get distracted. We need to promote situations in which the group forgets about their problems, thereby preparing them for the fantastic experience that's yet to come.

The educational experience comes next. It may be through information or heritage interpretation, followed by all of the services dedicated to basic logistics, which

are: health insurance, transportation, accommodations, and the restaurant, when necessary. I won't include accommodations unless it's necessary. Our tour packages should include a minimum of services and maximum of activities, for two reasons: to fulfill the educational objective and to reduce costs. And you want to reduce the costs. By increasing the scope of services, you will increase costs. By increasing the scope of activities, you will revert this dynamic.

Finally, then, we should program the services according to these activities and not the other way round. In commercial tourism, everything revolves around the hotel. No! In social tourism, everything revolves around the activity. The services function only to make the preparation, the experience and the reflection easier. If they are not doing that, then they're out! We should cut them; they're only increasing the costs. The services should be the minimum needed to guarantee dignity, comfort and safety. Of course, we cannot do away with those things. They should take up as little time as possible; they should be related to the core objective, keeping in mind that excess raises the price of the product.

## **2.3 Social tourism itineraries: content, organization and methodology**

Let's turn to the content of the product. We spoke about how there should be socio-educational and leisure objectives. When it comes to socio-educational objectives, we have to define what the participants will learn in terms of citizenship, in terms of cultural heritage. In other words, it's of the utmost importance that the tour, the itinerary, the outing have an objective in both of these spheres. What will I attain in terms of citizenship for these people? What will I achieve in terms of valuing cultural heritage?

This will vary depending on the audience. When I work with children and young adults, it's very likely that I will have to put more effort into the citizenship issue. So that they can learn civic, environmental and social values. And this must all be done without losing sight of the heritage issue. When it comes to older people, it's more likely that greater value is given to heritage as compared to citizenship. Why? Because adults tend to have already assimilated the latter. We have to strike a balance when it comes to this and define what will be done according to our target audience.

In regards to leisure, what activities for rest, fun and learning will I schedule in to my itinerary so that people learn what I would like them to learn? It seems very simple, but these are questions that must be answered explicitly in the form that describes each outing.

What are the possible socio-educational objectives? Socializing with family and socializing with the community. These are different objectives; you can have one or the other, or both. To get to know and put into practice specific civic values are related either to solidarity, social responsibility or sustainability. Like what, for example? Laws and statutes, environmental culture, respecting diversity etc. There is wide range of possibilities.

In terms of heritage, we can explore a specific topic, understand a specific dynamic, value certain landscapes or monuments, and encourage people to act in a proactive way to preserve the heritage, once they get to know all of these things. There are issues to consider: learn (explore), understand, value and take action.

And we have to start by putting all of this into a form like the one below:


							
DESCRIPTION							
Itinerary/Tour		(IN)VISIBLE SAO PAULO					
CITY		SAO PAULO					
GUIDE		Orlando Araque Pérez					
GENERAL AIM:		TO GET TO KNOW 20TH CENTURY MONUMENT ARCHITECTURE IN DOWNTOWN SAO PAULO					LENGTH: 4 HOURS
Profile of participants:		YOUTH					
Thematic content	Objetivo particular/específicos	Activities		Time	Teaching technique	Evaluation	Necessary materials
		GUIDE	PARTICIPANTS				
INTRODUCTION	GET TO KNOW THE INTERESTS OF THE PARTICIPANTS	E TALKS/ PRESENTS	PERGUNTAS	15 min	DIALOGUE	Feedback	Binoculars
PANORAMA OF MODERN ARCHITECTURE	GET TO KNOW THE CHARACTERISTICS OF MODERN ARCHITECTURE FROM 1920-1960	E TALKS/ PRESENTS	PERGUNTAS	15 min	PRESENTATION ACROSS FROM BUILDING 1		
SAO PAULO BETWEEN 1920 AND 1960	GET TO KNOW THE CITY'S DYNAMICS IN THE TIME PERIOD INDICATED	E TALKS/ PRESENTS	PERGUNTAS	15 min	PRESENTATION AND DIALOGUE ON STREET X		
ART DECO	GET TO KNOW ART DECO ELEMENTS IN ARCHITECTURE	E TALKS/ PRESENTS	PERGUNTAS	45 min	PRESENTATION INSIDE BUILDING 3		
BAUHAUS	GET TO KNOW THE FEATURES OF THE BAUHAUS SCHOOL	E TALKS/ PRESENTS	PERGUNTAS	45 min	PRESENTATION IN BUILDING 2		
BRAZILIAN ARCHITECTS	UNDERSTAND THE IDEAS OF BRAZILIAN ARCHITECTS OF THE PERIOD	E TALKS/ PRESENTS	PERGUNTAS	45 minutos	VISIT INSIDE BUILDING 4		
DOWNTOWN SAO PAULO'S ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE	REFLECT UPON THE VALUE OF 20TH CENTURY HERITAGE SITES IN THE CITY CENTER	E TALKS/ PRESENTS	COMMENTS	45 min	DIALOGUE IN PARK X		
SAYING GOODBYE	END THE ACTIVITY AND GATHER INFORMATION FROM PARTICIPANTS ABOUT THE EXPERIENCE	E TALKS/ PRESENTS	COMMENTS	15 min	DIALOGUE IN PARK X		

Figure 21: Planning form template



This is a learning tool. It's practically a course, because we do, to some extent, use tourism as a tool for learning. The form summarizes the process. I've given it to you to use as an example.

I start by introducing myself and continue with an overview of modern architecture in São Paulo, from the 1920s to the 1960s, which is the period in which all of this cultural heritage was built. I continue by explaining what Art Deco is, what Bauhaus is and who are the most relevant Brazilian architects of the age. Only brief, straightforward points are included. Remember that this is not a formal Master's degree course, but simply an opportunity to discover something that a vast majority of us never sees because we've become indifferent, because we walk by there everyday, because we don't haven't been informed. We will remove this veil and allow people to really see it. What is the architectural heritage of downtown São Paulo? And we finish it off by saying goodbye.

The whole thing takes a few hours and that's it. It's a first approach that we have to take with regards to what we are looking to do in terms of our objective. It's not about creating a step-by-step guide. But it does help us plan how we're going to introduce the themes and the order we want to talk about them, since these things will determine the order of the places we will visit. And not the other way round. I'm not going to visit the sites in the order in which they are presented to me. No. I will visit the sites in the order that the objective demands. That's how I can skip locations, go back to the original starting point, and then go halfway back. Because that is the order I choose to use in terms of learning.

Now let us turn to format. We've already spoken about content, so now let's move on to form. Form is a reflection of content. Once I have everything organized in terms of content, I can start thinking about the type of outing I will do.

What format can tours and outings take, then? There is the format of panoramic tourism or thematic tourism. Here is a comparison between the two:

Panoramic Tourism	Thematic Tourism
Geographic sequence	Main thread
General route	Limited route
Profitability through services	Profitability through activities
Emphasis on resting and having fun	Emphasis on rest and heritage appreciation
Seeing as much as possible	Being and doing

**Figure 22: Comparison between panoramic and thematic tourism**

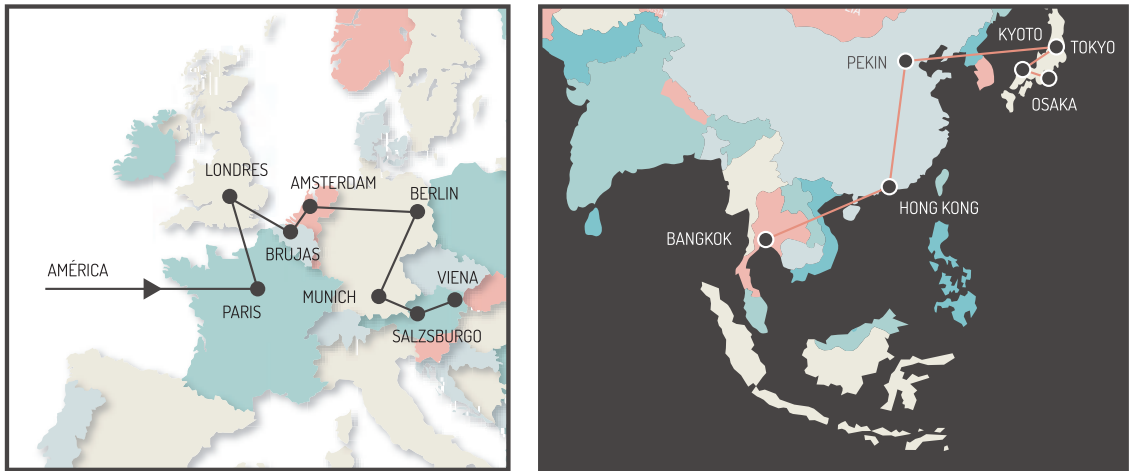
Panoramic tourism has a geographic sequence. First I'll visit Copacabana, then Ipanema and then Leblon. But in the case of thematic tourism, if the theme is The Girl from Ipanema, then I won't even stop in Copacabana, I'll go straight to Ipanema. I may or may not go to Leblon afterwards, to see where the daughters of the Girl from Ipanema live, but I can eliminate certain things because it doesn't make sense to follow a geographic sequence if the locations are not related to the tour's main thread, which is The Girl from Ipanema.

In thematic tourism, instead of doing a general route, the route is a limited one. This makes the operational aspect much simpler. Thanks to commercial tourism, we tend to want to include everything we can in a given itinerary and see things in a very short time span. If I go to the Northeast in this way, then I will spend each day in a different capital city. I'm not sure if I'm in Fortaleza<sup>11</sup> or São Luís,<sup>12</sup> unless I look in my calendar. Hence, I never really know where I am.

As opposed to conventional tourism, which involves seeing as much one can in as little time as possible, thematic tourism aims to see as little as possible in as much time as one can. With all the serenity that this implies. Because we are substituting quantity for quality. And there will be other types of activities. In the table above, it says that in panoramic tourism you have to see as much as possible. That's very tiring. It's like collecting stickers to put in an album. On the other hand, in thematic tourism, what I want to do is to be at a place and do things. One or two things, very concrete things, slowly and with pauses. And what I have left is a whole city to explore. How wonderful! Because that gives people an excuse to, later, sign up for a different tour, with a different theme. After all, the heritage has many possible interpretations. And a playwright's city isn't the same as a novelist's, an artist's, a politician's, or that of a fictional character. They each have different understandings of the same city. In this sense, then, what we have to do is create themes. Panoramic tourism will continue having a spot in our program, but only for certain audiences, which demand this type of tour. Ideally, 80% of tourism should be thematic and 20% panoramic.

.....  
11 Capital of Ceará state, located in the Northeast of Brazil.

12 Capital of Maranhão state, located in the Northeast of Brazil.



**Figure 23: Panoramic routes**

What is a panoramic route such as the one in figure 23 like? It's awful. We fly from America to Paris, from Paris to London, from London we take a bus to Bruges and from Bruges we go to Amsterdam, from Amsterdam to Berlin, to Munich, to Salzburg then to Vienna. Why? We have no idea. Why is the tour set up this way? What's the logic? There is no logic from the tourist's perspective. It's logical to the tour operator, who has a bus going around the continent, and this is the northern part of the circuit, because the southern part goes through Italy and then back through the south of France. Hence, what it does is offer circular panoramic routes. The person gets on a bus in Paris and gets off in Vienna. Throughout this itinerary, other tourists get on and off. It's awful. The distances are long, one place has nothing to do with the next, and the only thing people do is look at the scenery and end up spending most of their time dedicated to the main activity in this kind of itinerary: sleeping on the bus. Because we're talking about long spans of dead time. The route in the second figure is just as bad. You travel from America to Osaka, Kyoto and Tokyo. From there, you go to Beijing, I have no idea why, and from Beijing to Hong Kong, from there to Bangkok, hopping from one plane to another. It's like coming to Brazil, then heading to the south of Chile and, from there, for no reason, going to Hawaii. Where's the logic? In the fare breakdown.<sup>13</sup> So the tourist has to do whatever comes out the cheapest in terms of fare, but it's insane if we consider how long the flight between Hong Kong and Bangkok is! Why do this if, in between both places, there are so many potentially more interesting things to be seen? There is no logic; it makes no sense for the traveler. What we should be doing is something more along the lines of what can be seen in Figure 24:

.....  
 13 Periods with special fares – lower prices.

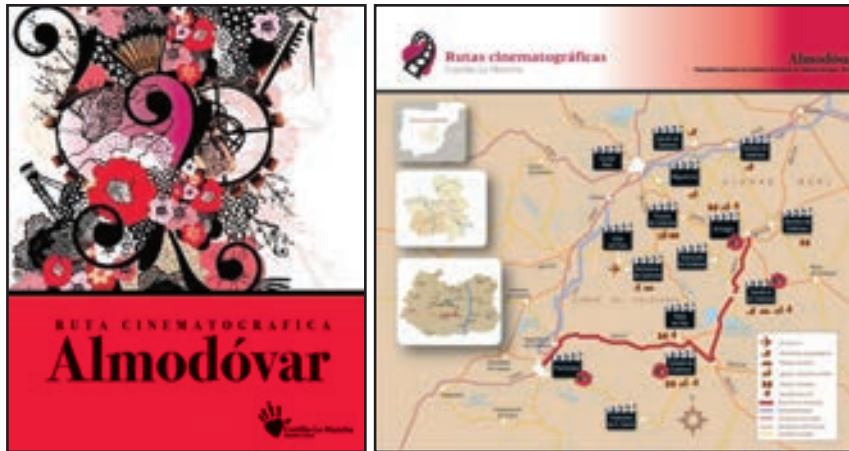


Figure 24: Thematic routes

This itinerary revolves around the figure of a filmmaker: Pedro Almodóvar. Almodóvar was born in a place in Mancha whose name no one remembers. Mancha is a region in Spain that very few people visit because its villages don't have any noteworthy material heritage, especially when compared to the more "competitive" villages in Spain. So what do we achieve with this? Almodóvar's fans will identify the landscapes as important places in his biography: where he was born, where he went to school, where he grew up, where he films, and they'll visit these places. Hence, it makes sense to go to a bunch of places that, generally speaking, aren't especially attractive per se. But the theme, the main thread, gives these places meaning. And it means that I will visit places which I otherwise would have a hard time convincing tourists to visit using mainstream arguments.

In Brazil, there are my cities that are heritage sites, which mean that the cities that aren't get lost in the crowd or are at a disadvantage, however beautiful they may be. Other cities will always be bigger or more spectacular, and since they all look alike, you only have to visit one.

How can you get people to visit all of them and to appreciate the differences between them? Following a thematic logic. For example: I can follow a literary sequence, such as El Cid's route or the one taken by Don Quixote, which can involve historical reality or fiction. I read *Gabriela, clove and cinnamon*,<sup>14</sup> and thanks to the book, I'm interested in visiting the following places: Caatinga<sup>15</sup> and Ilhéus.<sup>16</sup> Ilhéus is probably a city few tourists would visit but, since I read the book, I now have a reference, which perhaps made me

14 Novel by Brazilian author Jorge Amado.

15 Brazilian biome with a semi-arid climate.

16 City located on the coastline of Bahia, a state in the Northeast of Brazil.

interested in the city. This allows me to give a certain value to a series of places that, in any other way, wouldn't be able to compete in commercial tourism, which is a kind of tourism that competes for the greatness of monuments, not for worth. Conversely, if could travel to the Caatinga and to Ilhéus, I would feel like I'm in the book. And that is much more transcendental, more gratifying, and allows me to get to know the country more than at a show made for tourists.

Consider another example:



**Figure 25: Thematic itinerary conducted in Mexico**

This one is related to the cultural itineraries in Europe, which bring together places in which one can find an Arabic-Spanish legacy. This itinerary includes places you would probably not even be able to pronounce, like Teposcolula.<sup>17</sup> And where in the world is that? Hidden in the middle of nowhere, because even for Mexicans these little villages are far inland, and some may have visited these places, which have a certain heritage, but they're all the same. Compared to other places, these locations can't compete. However, in light of the main thread, "Arabic influence in art", someone might say: "Oh, ok, so Tlaxcala<sup>18</sup> could be worth a visit. Wherever it is." Why? Because there's a theme that sets this place apart from others, which gives it value.

.....  
 17 San Juan Teposcolula is a city and municipality in the state of Oaxaca, in Mexico.  
 18 One of the 31 states in Mexico, located in the middle of the country.

If we find themes, we can do great things and, from that point on, we can resolve the logistical matter. We in the tourism business are specialists in logistics, we're not specialists when it comes to content. Everything I've told may sound difficult, because logistics is something we understand. Organizing a party is simple, but finding a theme for one is more complicated. That is why we should become more professional.

The types of tours you know very well are local ones, radial tours, destination tours and itineraries. With these different types of tours, we can create a menu of possibilities. This is how schedules are created everywhere. I assume you do something similar.

Finally, we have the schedule. An outing should be scheduled using a spreadsheet like the one below:

Time	Activity	Service	Duration	Price*
9h	Welcome chat	Transfer	00:30	\$ 30,00
9h30	Rest	Snack/bathroom break	01:15	\$ 10,00
10h15	Sensitizing	Museum – Hall 1	02:00	\$ 20,00
12h15	Rest/socializing	Outdoor patio	00:15	–
12h30	Visit on foot/ key information	Guide/ visit on foot	00:30	\$ 60,00
13h	Appreciation	Lunch	01:00	\$ 40,00
14h	Reflection/ goodbye	Guide/ dessert	00:30	–
Total				\$ 160,00

\*not real values

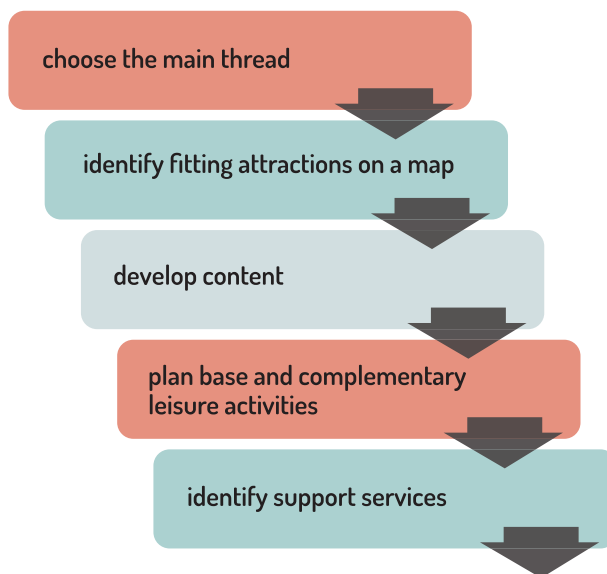
**Figure 26: The spreadsheet allows us to do two things: The operation schedule and a calculation of the tour's costs, including services and activities**

So, in the example above, I'm welcoming the people at 9 a.m. while offering a service. Both things are done simultaneously in the same place, for a total of 30 minutes and at a cost. At 9:30, we provide a break in which people can rest, use the bathroom and have a snack, lasting 1 hour and 15 minutes, incurring in a different cost. In this way, we continue to include everything that will be done, at what moment, and with it entails. At the museum, we will only be visiting Hall 1, which is the part that is of interest to meet the objective, and in this on-foot tour, we will provide key information. That is how we establish what will be done, until when and how. This spreadsheet can be as detailed as you like and the more detail the better. If we put down: "The kids will do this, the senior citizens will make it to this point, we will provide and amount of time so that the young people go all the want to this point and back again," then we can

predict all of the options, and most of the operational problems that may come up afterwards. Furthermore, this spreadsheet serves as a guide for the people responsible for conducting the tour who, often times, do not participate in the planning process.

In this example, in around five hours, we provided activities that involve rest, fun, learning and consuming.

What methodology should we adopt? Here is an illustration of the first part of the process:

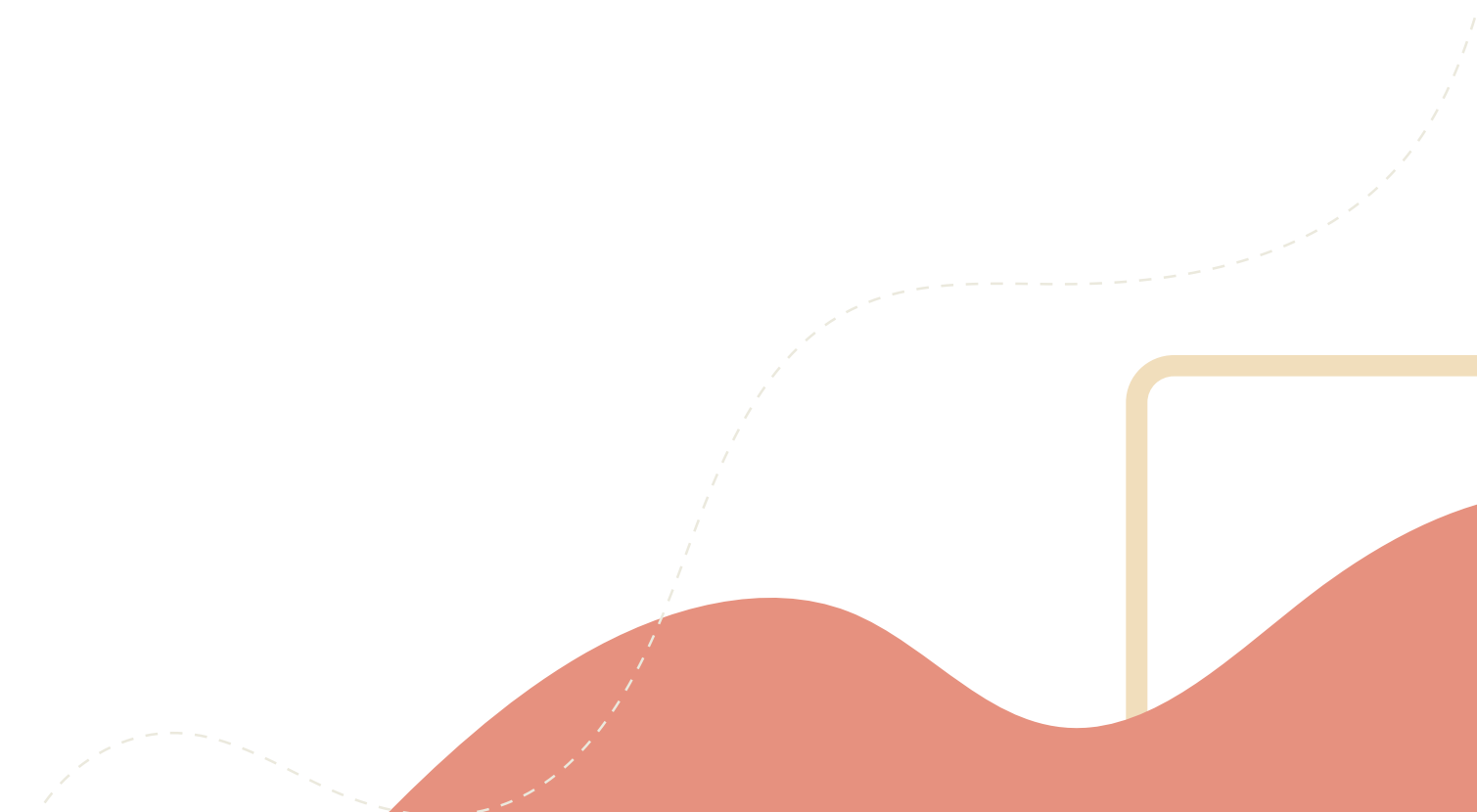


**Figure 27: Sample methodology to conduct the activities**

1. The first thing to do is choose the subject matter, a thematic thread. The tour has to have a subject. Because the subject provides the objective of the tour.
2. Once the subject has been defined, I will identify and map all of the relevant attractions that are related to this theme. For example, in a large metropolis like Mexico City, I can come up with many different angles for the city. “What will be my angle? Luis Buñuel”. Luis Buñuel was a filmmaker who directed the silent short film *Un chien andalou* (An Andalusian dog) as well as French-language films starring Catherine Deneuve. He lived in Mexico for many years, died there, and made a lot of films there. In fact, one of the three films Unesco considers a heritage of humanity, was filmed in Mexico; it’s called *Los Olvidados* (The Forgotten). Thus, I am able to consider Mexico City in this angle, with a visit that

follows in the footsteps of this figure, Luis Buñuel: where he filmed, where he lived, where important milestones in his career happened and his life in the city. This angle is completely different from other angles and from the conventional panoramic tours of the city.

3. Afterwards, I develop the content. “Let’s see, this gentleman lived here, but what happened over here? What about in this other location?” I must have information in order to be able to convey it to others. Therefore, I have to do some research.
4. When this has all been done, I program the base activities and the complementary leisure activities. Because I’m going to be traveling all around the city, but it’s a difficult city to get around in. So I have to plan where we will stop for a break, where we will get refreshments, where we’ll do a whole bunch of things. If I can organize it so that these spaces coincide with the Buñuel theme, that’s even better, because then I can say: “Buñuel used to eat here.” “Oh, how interesting, we are eating at the same place Buñuel ate.” It’s silly, but we all enjoy this kind of thing. Perhaps they don’t care for Buñuel. Maybe they prefer Ricky Martin. It’s all the same: if you have a well-defined subject, you will be able to respond to these stimuli.
5. Finally, I have to identify the support services, but only when necessary: banks, drugstores, clinics etc.





When that has been sorted out, we move onto the second stage:



**Figure 28: Sample methodology to arrive at the operation**

1. Calculate the costs.
2. Establish sales prices for each group, because each group will receive one type of treatment and different criteria will apply.
3. Select and hire all of the suppliers, which should possess the qualities we've already discussed. They must be trustworthy, profitable, appropriate to the client and professional.
4. Promote, make reservations and sell the tours.
5. Operate the tours.

In summary, we have to define what audience will be the target of our tours. The tours can be exclusively for young people, exclusively for senior citizens, primarily for people with disabilities and those accompanying them, or they can be for the public at large, knowing I will receive all kinds of people. We define the segment, the socioeconomic level, the place of origin, the level of schooling, and every information that can be relevant in order to design a product for the audience. What product will we be offering people? What type of content: thematic or panoramic? What kind of tour: radial, local,

spanning many nights? What will be included in the daily schedule? How long will the break for rest be? What about the time for fun? What about the time set aside for learning? Remember that nothing should be left out. All three activities should be a part of the plan (rest, fun and learning). How long will each one last? Which activities are the stars of the program, which services will be provided, and what is the unique element? And finally: if you define the first thing, then this is the unique element, which has a meaning and content that will meet the needs of the current tourist.

The unique element will appear once you have defined everything. What is the unique element in commercial tourism? The price. They say: "I'll give you more things for the same price." However, the more things are included in the itinerary, the more tortuous it becomes. And the less things are included, the more pleasurable. Therefore, you will be including content; you won't be adding quantity, but quality. That is the difference between social and commercial tourism.

Now in terms of cost-benefit, we know that every tour and every itinerary have three prices. And the person, in order to make the purchase, evaluates the cost-benefit on three levels. "How much does it cost me, financially, and what will I get in return?" But also: "How much will it cost me physically? How much will it cost me emotionally?" Climbing a mountain has a physical cost that not everyone is willing to accept. And visiting a *favela* (slum) has an emotional cost that not everyone is willing to accept. That is why I have to understand that my products have these three kinds of prices, and even though the financial price might be very attractive, the other prices may not be that good.

This is something to keep in mind and take stock. For senior citizens, the **physical cost** is more important than the **financial cost**. For young people, the financial cost is most important. On the other hand, for families, it is the **emotional cost** that is more relevant. The possibility of going to a place that isn't safe, to a beach in which the waves break too strongly on the shore and where kids may end up drowning takes precedence over financial cost. This is the kind of detail that determines whether or not a tour will be a success with a given audience.

When it comes to financial cost, it is determined in two ways: either by adding the operational costs and the desired profit or by determining the profit as the difference between market price and costs, and later deciding if that is enough for the organizers.

When a tour is subsidized, we have to see if the cost minus the subsidy is more or less expensive than the market price, because people will compare social tourism products with those found in the market. And perhaps the social tourism option is more

expensive, but it has lower emotional and physical costs. This is the point we should arrive at. In terms of promotion, we have to see what we'll do to spread, inform and sell the product.

In this sense, defining a program that values social tourism itineraries is a matter of setting priorities. We have an objective, a purpose. Therefore, let's do it: let's support, in the first place, all of these activities that lead to the fulfillment of this objective and which, at this moment, may be more expensive, but in time, as they become more common, may end up cutting some of the costs. That is why I was telling you earlier: if we're going to cut costs, let's do it in the conventional logistics services. We mustn't cut the content services. So, for example, if I can save money on the hotel, I should save on the hotel, but now on the guide. Because the guide is critical to the educational objective. If we are able to offer subsidies, great. We can offer different subsidies depending on the project's priorities. That which is a priority will receive more of the subsidies. That which is less important will get less subsidies. That way, we can keep making progress in the direction of whatever we desire to be done well. If there's an interesting in developing a new, more specialized, directions, then we should bet on it; we have to invest in that and, insofar as I start to be successful, the costs can start to improve, because a special guide that I hire for one event charges proportionally more than a guide I already have, a salaried guide. But I can only have a guide on the payroll if I have enough tours for to justify that expense.

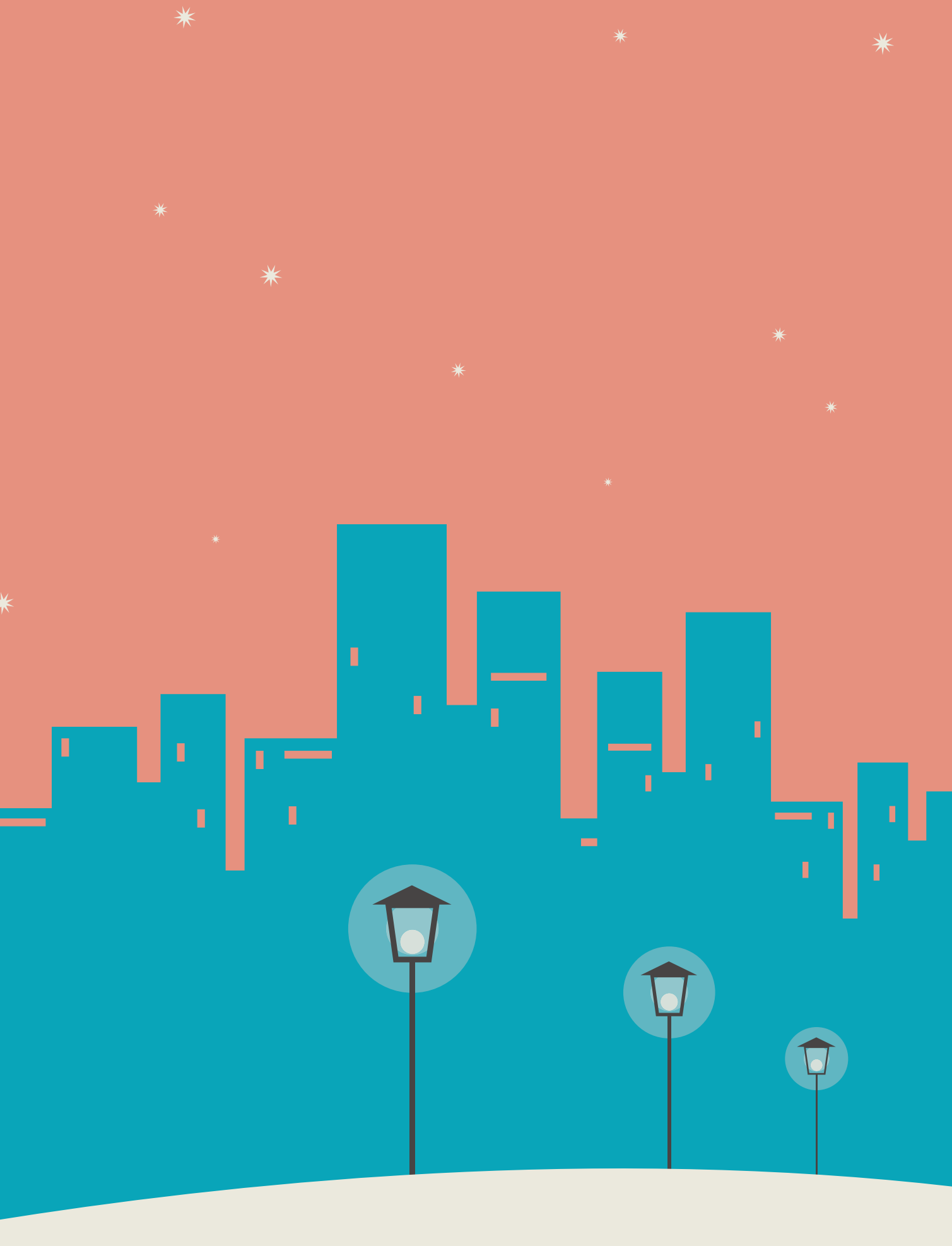
A major challenge is attracting the interest of certain audiences to itineraries that are more thematic in nature. Perhaps it's a communication issue. Every itinerary can be attractive if we emphasize a balance between rest, fun and content activities. We did a study on cultural tourism in Mexico 13 years ago and one of the results of the study was that culture is perceived as boring. That is how people feel about it. However, after they try it, when they go on a cultural adventure, they realize that culture isn't boring at all, it's far from boring, it's very exciting, interesting, as long as we don't mention that fateful word: "culture".

What we have to do, as an exercise in good communication, is a thematic itinerary but never a "cultural" one. It's sad, but it's the truth. This is what is happening with the concept of social tourism. A lot of people hear "social tourism" and they turn up their nose. We have to find the correct language with which to communicate to this specific audience in order for them to find the cultural itinerary interesting, attractive, and buy it as they would buy any other tour, make reservations like they would for any other tour, because later they can say: "Oh, in addition to all that, we learned a, b, c and d. It was so interesting! We did a tour of the inside of the garden."

We have to find the correct language to communicate in order for the public to find the cultural itinerary interesting, attractive, and to buy it as they would buy any other tour.

We must communicate the cultural itinerary just like we would any other tour, any other itinerary. And we also have to mention there will be period of rest, that people will also go dancing, because it's about vacations. We will also have the opportunity to feel good, to have fun. Because people are a little scared. It's part of what we call psychological blocks. People are afraid of culture. Because they didn't study, they assume that culture is something very academic, very strict, something that belongs to universities. And they are right. Because, in general, the world of culture has always been arrogant, holier than though, exclusionary. But if, at least in tourism, culture is not like that, then people will discover it, little by little.

So we won't mention to them that it's cultural, we won't mention that it's educational. We'll keep this information to ourselves, alright? It's part of our black box. What people need to know is that it's a tour and that we will inform them about the material attractions, the immaterial attractions, and that's it. Because that is what people will perceive as either interesting or not so much. We don't have to tell them that the guide is a specialist in archeology or entomology or whatever, because that isn't necessary. They will discover this on their own and, afterwards, you'll realize you just got yourself a fan club, because culture is addictive, more than fun and recreation. And you will have gained a faithful group of clients, who will always want to go on your cultural circuits. It's interesting. But it's a matter of communication. That is more or less how I would resolve the difficulty in selling social tourism itineraries. I wouldn't stop making them financially attracting nor would I stop offering them. I would simply change the communication.



## CHAPTER 3

### Executing social tourism itineraries

We've already talked about philosophy and concepts. We've also discussed some tips about making itineraries. When we design our itinerary well, we have everything set so that we can enjoy our operation. The question we now ask is: do we enjoy the operation or do we suffer from it? The idea is to enjoy it, and that is why we should make a good itinerary, one that is as thorough as possible.

Let's say the itinerary has been sold and, now, we are facing a bus full of impatient people, cameras in hand, ready to start experiencing something. What do we need to do next?

Let us briefly discuss the integration of this product, how to choose our suppliers and what to do to execute the program, including some tips for guides regarding how to fulfill the objectives and stick to the schedule.

#### 3.1 Integration with suppliers

Let's start with integration and suppliers. How do we choose them? What constitutes a supplier? A supplier is a company or person that will provide an activity or a service included in our program: guides, drivers, companies offering concrete activities, for example, horse-back riding, whitewater rafting, boat trips etc. This includes suppliers of specific activities that we often don't choose carefully enough, or those we don't even consider that important. They are usually independent contractors or very small businesses, so small that we think they are complementary when, in fact, they are central. There are also services that aren't central, but rather complementary, such as accommodations, food and insurances, which obviously have to be included in the package, but which are not the essence of the trip, the essence of the product.

All of these people have to be researched; we have to know them well and they must display certain characteristics:

##### **Availability**

The first characteristic the ideal supplier must have is 100% availability for me. He may have a lot of clients, but I need to be the priority: not the second or the third

priority, nor the fifth, in his client list. I want to be number 1! It's like I'm negotiating a marriage; I need the person to be committed to me and available for me, going by the characteristics demanded by my operation. If I need someone that will answer me on Saturday at 10 p.m., then I need to find a supplier that will put that on the table, and not one that will say: "Hm... I leave at 6 and get back on Monday, so I'll get back to you then." This is very important. Because if he's not available for me, this may result in problems in my operation, especially in the event of a problem. For example, if I don't have an emergency phone number, I have no one to turn to. Availability is a very important issue and must be established in the contract. In contracts with different collaborators, remember that this is the sort of thing that must be spelled out clearly.

## **Trust**

In second place, the supplier must be trustworthy; by which I mean that he has to deliver what he promised. In Mexico there's a saying: "Making promises won't make you poor, but keeping them is what breaks you." It's often that case the we don't deliver on anything that we promise. I'm exaggerating, but what I mean to say is that too often things don't turn out the way we'd promised. I was going to do one thing, but I didn't do it, and I'll give you 85 good reasons for it. However, the supplier's private life and his operational mishaps don't matter. It's of no interest. Tourists are experiencing a fantastic moment in their lives and they will not forgive the person who ruins that, who lets it go to waste or destroys their experience. Because there is no second chance and, for this reason, suppliers have to be extremely trustworthy. I have to be certain that will keep their word.

Tourists are experiencing a fantastic moment in their lives  
and they will not forgive the person who ruins that,  
who lets it go to waste or destroys their experience.

I was once in Bilbao, in Spain. We have some collaborators and friends of there. We arrived at the hotel desk to pay for our stay and we were told: "No, it's paid for." "But who came to pay" we asked. "No one, no one came yet, but someone called and said they would pay." "But who?" "I don't know, a gentleman. If he said he would come, he will."

Now that's being true to your word. And, evidently, the man went there later and paid the bill. We see this in many situations. It's a matter of trust, something to be admired. Every supplier should have this quality.

## **Profitability**

In third place, a supplier should make a profit. I'm not talking about being excessively expensive, because that's also not what this is about. Our origins are commercial, we have a commercial vocation, we study tourism; this is all clear, right? And the supplier will seek profitability on our part. Even if we are a non-profit, that doesn't mean these suppliers shouldn't be making a profit, because they have to live somehow. No matter how lofty the work we do, and the fact that it has a social nature, they have to eat, and they look to us for a business opportunity. The deal must be profitable for both parties; it must be positive when it comes to financial expectations for both parties.

## **Adaptability to each audience's needs**

Lastly, and most importantly, the thing about which we spoke the other day: is the supplier suited to the needs of the clients? If he isn't the right supplier for these needs, but there's no one else, I will work with him, but, as soon as another supplier shows up, it's goodbye. It's that simple. If we're talking about people with disabilities, the supplier has to be suited for these people with disabilities. If we're talking about young people or kids, he has to adapt to these kids or to these children. The hotel has to adapt to families. These are things that are easy to do, it's not difficult, but the supplier has to be willing to do so. He has to understand that my clientele is not a conventional clientele. Can I have suppliers from the traditional commercial tourism industry? Yes. But the need to adapt themselves to the demands of my clients. My clients are not businessmen or childless couples; they are a different audience and there has to be a solution for them. You have to consider whether your suppliers fulfill these prerequisites and you need to be sure that they are also providing a worthy service to your clients.

Sometimes we think that the cheapest is the best, but this is not necessarily the case. Perhaps it's cheaper, but are the conditions in which the service is provided dignified for my clients? I can choose two types of boats or rafts to get to a tropical island or to go down a river. I have cheaper options, but I'm not sure they are in appropriate conditions. There has to be a lifeguard, comfortable seating for my clients, all these things. These things have to be respected. If we don't have that, even though it's cheaper, it's better



to chose another mode of transport. The client is experiencing a fantastic moment in his or her life, one that will not be repeated, and he or she deserves the best. It has to be comfortable, especially if we're talking about families with children or senior citizens. This is of the utmost importance. We cannot condemn the tourist to suffering. No, because tourists already suffer. They wake up earlier, go to bed later, they eat more, they stay longer in the sun than they are used to, they feel thirstier, walk a lot, their feet hurt, they receive loads of information, and all of that is tiring. It's complicated, is it not? So we have to make their visit and their experience comfortable. And it also has to be safe. It can be comfortable, entirely adequate, wonderful even, but if the man with the speedboat doesn't have insurance, if he doesn't have a lifeguard, I shouldn't use his speedboat, because if something were to happen, an accident during the operation, what will I do? I don't know how it works in Brazil, but in Mexico insurance companies' coverage is only from here to the door, and not to the world beyond the door. If I fall and I have one foot in the door and one out, then I'm not covered by the insurance. And these small gaps cannot happen, because once you have an operation with 450 people a month, or 4,500 people a month, someone will run into a problem. These things always happen: someone falls, someone gets into a fight, someone gets hurt or gets sick, and all of this has to be perfectly foreseen. We hope that nothing ever happens, but things do end up happening, it's normal. Therefore, it's better to be prepared. All of our suppliers must have that sorted very clearly.

We should also avoid scheduling risky activities. For example, in Acapulco, there's a parachute ride around the bay. The parachute goes up with the impulse from a speedboat, and it goes around the bay. At the end of the ride, the speedboat comes to a stop and, without the wind, the parachute closes and the person begins to fall. This activity, however, is not insured. When someone decides to go on a tour, he or she signs an agreement that exempts the organizers of any responsibility for whatever may happen. I'm not arguing that people should not go on this ride, but my point is that a tour, an institutional trip, shouldn't be contemplating it. You cannot stop people from going on that ride if they want to do that in their own spare time and it's better to have insurance for that in case they fall. Because we cannot schedule that ride on our tour. Why? Because it's risky, and insurance won't cover it. In Mexico we have serious problems because many Americans want us to give them guarantees for everything, even for the sun to come out; if it isn't sunny, they sue us. It's better to schedule activities that we can more or less control than activities with more risk involved. These things may be very exciting, very attractive, but they don't necessarily have an educational objective. I don't know what a person will learn when he or she

is going around the bay in a parachute. It's a matter of fun, but not part of the core theme. It's valid, but it isn't an education matter.

The client is experiencing a fantastic moment,  
which will not be repeated, and deserves the best.

The Montreal Declaration says the following regarding suppliers:

“The prices of the services should be compatible with the foreseen social objective, provided the services have such objective, which they should do.”

An addition value, one that is not economic, must be an integral part of the product. This is not just about giving discounts when it comes to price. If we can count on suppliers that believe in the concept of the educational objective, it is much easier to work with them.

Personnel management must respect social legislation. This is of the utmost importance. We cannot hire anyone that doesn't respect the law. This goes against the core principles of social tourism. Social tourism isn't informal tourism. Social tourism pays taxes. Social tourism pays social security. Every employee and every supplier must have the proper registration. If these aren't formal companies, because they are stranded out there in the middle of the Caatinga and their source of income are three horses, we can empathize, but we have to figure out how they can be incorporated into a supplier development program. What do I mean by that? If I'm going to be working with the man with the horses, I have to help him integrate into the formal economy. If I don't do that, I'm going against social tourism's principles of social responsibility. And I'm not acting in solidarity either; I'm being charitable. And we are not here to engage in charity. We are here to develop, to grow alongside other people. If we demand that our clients be aware of this, we have to demand the same of our suppliers.

### **3.2 Conducting the itinerary**

What is the meaning of social tourism? And of tourism in general? As we said, it is a type of leisure that aims to bring us closer to our heritage, and from this heritage we project therapeutic, educational and esthetic experiences. Our program already includes therapeutic experiences, rest, entertainment, so everybody can relax. We're going to have an educational experience, we're going to teach something new, we're going to educate, but with serenity, and we're going to have an esthetic experience, which is of appreciation.

Today we can come to Rio de Janeiro and not visit the Sugar Loaf, or the Corcovado, or the beaches, or any of those traditional spots, because we've already seen them and we want to see something deeper. We can go to other places, which are more interesting: to the neighborhood of Gamboa, to the Morro da Providencia, in other words, to a deeper Rio. We go on a panoramic ride, but with different themes. So we can experience, for instance, rest and entertainment in Confeitaria Colombo.<sup>19</sup> We can engage in chatter, both at Colombo and Rio Scenarium,<sup>20</sup> where samba is played. This is part of an experience in which we start to relax, to bond with each other. Then, we head to an educational experience at the Valongo Pier, an archeological site where slaves used to come ashore from the ships. It's a short visit, a very interesting one, with enough information: brief data, interesting, quick, so we know that here in Rio de Janeiro a huge number of slaves had been disembarking until 1888. See how I learned something. Then, we can learn some more by visiting the slave graveyard

How about the esthetic experiences? Also appreciating architecture, food and dining, and more formal things such as art exhibits. A little of everything that introduces us to the non-touristy side of Rio de Janeiro.

All this generates a feeling of well-being, of achievement, which is unforgettable. This is what the professionals responsible for conducting the itinerary should seek. One of the professional that deserve highlighting is the tour guide,<sup>21</sup> who is solely responsible for complying with the program, but who, depending on their knowledge, can also act towards the interpretation of heritage. However, in social tourism, it's common for specialists to be involved in the topics covered during the program, as well as musicians, actors, poets, community leaders, etc., who will play a complementary role, especially in the activities of entertainment, esthetic appreciation and reflection. Although we have designed everything in the office, they are the ones who will put it into practice. This must be very clear to whoever is participating in an itinerary. Professionals who are not aware of this will include everything in the itinerary, but they will not make tourists learn, enjoy or rest as we expect, according to the same precision.

## Interpretation of Heritage

Just as important as showing heritage is getting people to understand it. With this in mind, how do we get people to really approach heritage? The answer lies in what we call interpretation services.

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 19 Famous and traditional pastry shop, located in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

20 Traditional venue, restaurant and bar, located in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

21 In Brazil, the tourist guide profession is regulated by the Law nº 8623, of January 28, 1993.

Interpretation services refer to a process in which we bring this heritage closer to people according to their own references and possibilities. What does this mean? That not all people are equally prepared to understand about heritage. Heritage, whether natural or cultural, has its own language, with which we are not necessarily familiar. If we go to the Pantanal tomorrow,<sup>22</sup> the landscape may seem poor to us. Because everything will seem brown to us, or green, depending on the season. As these are elements we are not used to seeing, since we live in the city, we cannot properly distinguish the shapes, we see a mass of different shades, we are not able to recognize the different types of plants and, if we see an insect moving, we aren't able to notice it properly. It's something we are not used to seeing, and it has a language we don't know. The pantaneiros<sup>23</sup> know. They live there, and know what is what, they can distinguish all these elements, know when there is danger and when there is none. The same thing would happen if the situation were reversed. If you take a pantaneiro to São Paulo or Belo Horizonte, they could be hit by a bus. Because they see a gray and noisy mass and won't be able to discern all the elements with the same precision that we have developed over the years in the urban environment. They can't tell one architectural style from another, they don't know what is modern and what is old, because everything looks the same and they are not able to appreciate it. In this sense, we have to help people interpret what is around them, to discover this specialized language.

For example, if they go to church tomorrow, they will see a lot of pictures, but they won't know what or who they represent. They don't know if the image corresponds to Saint X or Saint Y or Saint Z. When these saints were supposedly alive, photography didn't exist. Therefore, everyone looks the same. With our power of interpretation, we observe that one of them has a sword, another carries keys, and another carries a gridiron. What does that mean? These are traits that allow us to identify these different saints. But the person who has never heard of these stories, such as St. Lawrence's, who was burned alive and is therefore depicted carrying a gridiron, will never identify him. They all look the same. That is what I mean to you. Heritage has a lot of information, but we don't know how to read it; It's like a book, and we are illiterate in that language. We need someone to help us interpret it, but this interpretation cannot always be the same. Children will read it one way; housewives another way; mechanical engineers another way; and a mixed group will also read it differently. Because they have distinct references.

We were listening to samba music during our tour through Rio de Janeiro. There are many varieties of samba, but if we are not accompanied by an expert who can tell us, "this is this type, this comes from here, this comes from the north, this from the south,"

.....  
22 Brazilian biome present in the country's central region.

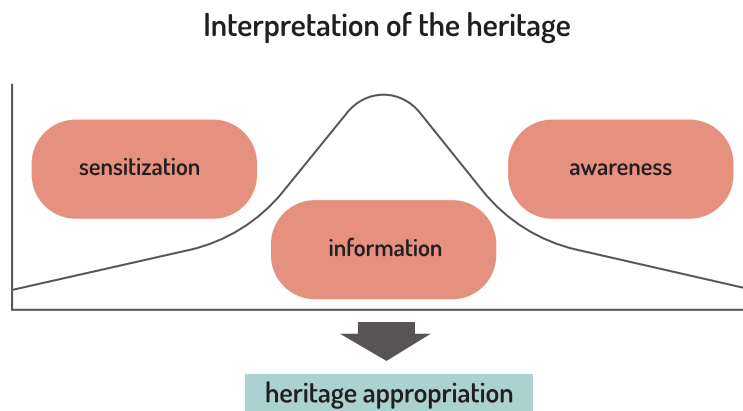
23 Denomination of people who live in the *Pantanal*.



everything would sound the same. Because I cannot differentiate, I am not familiar with this kind of musical expression. It is a specialized language so we need an introduction. There are certainly worse tourists than me. Those who raise their hands and begin to dance the samba. Luckily, I didn't get to that point because I danced with some Brazilians who helped me keep my composure. But raising hands is normal with tourists because, for them, Brazil is Zé Carioca, Carmen Miranda and Vinicius de Moraes, all together. It's a potpourri, the only thing they know is that they have to move a lot and that everything is Carnival. So we need help with this.

But this help should occur in stages. It's not about handing out encyclopedic information, because that won't work either. If you were ever told in high school, for example, "The book is here, and you decide whether or not to read it," I bet you didn't read it. You decided not to read it because you thought it was boring. Information must be conveyed very subtly. It is a magnificent guiding exercise for all participants on a tour.

The first thing we have to do, or the conductor has to do, is raise awareness. I don't know if you've ever joined a traditional commercial tour. They're horrible. Traditional guides are like robots. You press play and the first thing they say is: "As you all know, Rio de Janeiro blah blah blah...". So what happens? When the guide is saying the first point, there are twenty people paying attention, when he gets to the second point, under the pretext of taking some pictures, people leave and only ten remain listening. In the end, when he goes to the other side, the group is already down to three. So then the guide says: "Everyone is ignorant and uneducated in Brazil, you can't work because people don't care." Whose fault is that? It's the guide's, because he doesn't do his job right, and people aren't dumb. The tourist is ignorant, not stupid. And impatient like children, demanding like children and, like children, are quickly distracted. The tourist is free to say: "I have come this far, I don't want to know anymore. You are causing me to waste my time."



**Figure 29: Stages of the process of heritage appropriation**

The first thing you should do is raise people’s sensitivity or prepare them for an intense experience. It’s like cooking. In order to cook, you need to follow a protocol. Banquets follow a protocol: do we get there and start eating right away? No.

We start by serving an appetizer first. An appetizer that prepares our taste buds for the experience; it is usually served in small portions, with a soft liqueur in a generous portion, which is served at room temperature, never with ice. Ice contracts the nerve endings, preventing flavors from being discerned.

With a clean palate, we are able to ingest whatever follows next. That is why it’s a preparation for what comes later. You are supposed to drink one dose, not 25. Its sole purpose is to prepare you for dinner.

We should do the same with information about heritage. Prepare the person. For example: Olinda.<sup>24</sup> Olinda is a world heritage site. Why is it a world heritage site? Because it is very beautiful? No. There are many beautiful cities. There is something extra that led Unesco to award it with this category. And so what am I doing with this? Raising an expectation, but I’m also making the person realize that what she will see requires a different attitude, one of respect; I won’t arrive and start drinking my *caipirinha*, throwing garbage on the street, and so on... because I’m in front of something that is monumental, historical, that should be respected.

I can do this because tourists are like children, and when you tell them: “Attention everyone, this is important”, children are quickly interested, calm down, and pay attention. This is the job they have to do.

.....  
 24 Historical city, located in the state of Pernambuco, northeastern Brazil.

Back to food. According to the French protocol, it works. The French are horrified by drinks with a lot of ice as appetizers because they generate the opposite effect by numbing the senses. In Mexico, we usually serve tequila. Tequila is also liquor, not so mild, but it ultimately cleanses the palate. And it is served at room temperature. People usually drink one dose, probably two, because it is different. In the French protocol, the taste and texture of the food are the most important things, the aroma, the food itself. In the Mexican protocol, the most important thing is socializing. So the beginning of the meal extends for a long time, and there is a period before the meal called “*la botana*”.

*La botana* is a time to taste many different things, where we can drink two or even three tequilas, because we must wait until everyone arrives. French punctuality and Mexican punctuality are completely different things. In Mexico, people will arrive in the course of an hour and a half... and this is the time for the *botana*, to create an atmosphere that will make the food even more delicious, besides the characteristics of the food itself. The French are so punctual they take a quick appetizer and start eating.

Once this sensitization phase is over, the experience begins. Now, in France, they serve *foie gras*, escargots, white meats, then red meats, all accompanied by wine that goes from mild to stronger because, as in Figure 29, the meal keeps on growing until it reaches its culmination, which is the key point of the activity at which I am educating people. They have already been sensitized, are already understanding the topic, and then we pass on the information to them. In French protocol everything is the same for everyone but, in the Mexican one, it varies. We all sit at the huge table full of dishes in the center, and everyone eats at their leisure, as they please. To us, it’s “to each his own”. Each person will serve themselves according to their needs, interests and tastes.

As for the French, they serve a dish and nobody can eat another dish. Everyone is served the same dish, and it is a finished dish. We Mexicans make up dishes. All dishes on the table are the basis for weird combinations. And here in Brazil these strange combinations are made too. You add sugar to avocado, for example! So if you mix sugar with avocado, it’s quite clear to me that Brazilians are capable of anything. For us, this is a sin... The point is that with all the dishes on the table, infinite combinations can be made, and each can make the combination they desire because, besides, there are many sauces, many side dishes, and everything is valid. Part of our exercise is to invent a combination and recommend it, share it. This happens because, for us, the meal has a socializing purpose. This is the high point of the event.



What I want to convey to you is that each one gets what they need and what they want in different quantities and qualities, and that is the guide's greatest challenge: to present basic information to every person and to offer different levels of information to each person. I will not give the same explanation about the Sugar Loaf to a group of biologists, a group of entomologists, a group of Christian priests, a group of historians, and a group of housewives. Each one sees different things on those hills, and each person has different interests.

That is the guide's greatest challenge:  
to present basic information to every person and to  
offer different information levels to each person.

Therefore, I cannot offer a standard explanation of the same space, the same element, to different audiences. The explanation must necessarily be different. Some will ask me about plants, others will ask me about animals, others will want statistics on soil mechanics, and others will simply want general information; the level of depth will depend on the customer's interest.

So, in this sense, the guide must always adapt. This part is complicated. And once that is reached, the next stage is awareness. It is a stage of reflecting about what we do. We know about the historical center of São Luís,<sup>25</sup> so we are informed of many things, learn many things and we also have to see how we can act for the historical center of São Luís to be preserved, well known, even better. What do we do? Aren't we going to do anything? Let's do something? Anyway, that's it. Questions and reflections like these are very important, so people come out of the experience taking something with them. If we do not reflect on what we have learned from this experience, people will not realize it or will not be aware of what they now know.

We have to instigate the tourist, just like we instigate children. It's easy to talk about this process and describe it, but putting it into practice is not easy. In the case of food, when is it time for awareness? During dessert! Well, dessert is more than just dessert: it's all the activity performed after the main meal, including the dessert itself and coffee – in France, cheese and champagne. There is a long after-meal period when people reflect and ponder: "Oh, I ate so much! How lovely! I haven't drunk like that in a while! That was the best dish, that one was the worst, etc."

.....  
<sup>25</sup> Capital of Maranhão, a state located in the Northeastern region of Brazil.

In Mexico, at the end of the meal we also drink digestives and coffee, and then we move on to the big racket that no longer involves food, but socialization, which lasts a long time.

We arrive, and since we are all in the same vibe, that's when we do things, not before, isn't it? Before we were telling jokes, we joked about the tropical protocol of the parties. The parties in the tropics are serious business, they follow a protocol. I have a cousin who married a gringo; a lot of people came from the United States to Mexico for the ceremony and then for the party. When we got to the ballroom, all the foreigners were dancing because music was playing, of course, but it wasn't dance music; it was, you know, that quieter song that plays in the background, as the diners begin to arrive. The Americans were already dancing and didn't understand why all the Mexicans were heading for the tables, rigid as Swedes. They would greet each other and sit down... no one was going to dance, because this was not the time. The *gringos* did not understand that the dance itself would only begin hours after the newlyweds had arrived, after everyone had eaten, after the cake was cut, after the newlyweds had danced. It's a very long protocol before the dancing part starts. When it finally started, the gringos were already tired, because their energy to party only lasts about two and a half hours, and ours doesn't: it's slow because it's going to last a long time, so we take it easy, following a rigid procedure which, at least in our opinion, is clearly correct.

Well, the same happens in tourism. We have to follow a procedure and, if we follow it, things will work just right. If we don't apply a procedure, things will work poorly. If I begin by handing out information as soon as I get somewhere, especially academic information ("This St. Anthony convent was built in the sixteenth century by Father Juan Perez..."), it won't work out. What do I care about that? I care about other things. I want to know about things closer to my life, about "here and now"...

I've already witnessed people visiting ancient convents and their first question is, "Where did they go to the bathroom?" Because it matters to them whether priests went to the bathroom. "And where did they cook?" "Where did they eat?" That's the kind of thing people ask, and that's what we have to say to them, because that is the information level.

And that is why we start an educational process. Why do we do all this? So that what we call *heritage appropriation* may occur. Heritage appropriation does not mean I'm going to yank a piece of heritage to take with me. No. Although many people do just that. When

they go to the sea, they are so affected by it that they want to take sand home. Or they want to take a small crustacean, a seashell, a pebble, which ends up weighing too much and they have to throw it away. That's normal. This is the logical sentiment of a person who is moved by the heritage they are observing, whether formal or informal, and she wishes that this heritage becomes part of her permanent collection. That's quite normal. Most buy little souvenirs. There is a whole industry of souvenirs to supply the need to take something back from a place that I visited and that seemed so exceptional to me.

Well, that is the objective we should achieve. The fact that people appropriate heritage means that they want to make it their own. What does it mean to make it my own? It means to make it part of my home and I'll take good care of it, I'll relish it, I'll share it. Nobody takes care of something they don't consider his or her own. I'm not sure if I'm expressing myself well. For example: when somebody speaks about countries where there are few parks or few houses and everyone lives in apartments, so the parks become their gardens and they take care of them, it is like the square belongs to them. It's a bit like that. When I see an abandoned city, it's because people aren't familiar with heritage, so they don't appropriate themselves of them; they allow this heritage to be destroyed, to deteriorate. On the other hand, when people appropriate heritage, they take care of it. Here in Rio de Janeiro there are things that I see have been appropriated, such as the City of Samba, the Sambadrome, were very much appropriated and they are impeccable. But there are other things I see, some squares, some houses, which haven't undergone this process yet, and are therefore defaced, abandoned. And that is our job, our responsibility: to use tourism so that people get to know the heritage and appropriate it. When this starts to happen, people will start respecting their heritage, taking care of it, because they consider it their own. And this is the first part of a sense of identity, of pride in the space where they live. That is what we will have to do.

This is our job, our responsibility:  
to use tourism so that people get to know  
the heritage and appropriate it.

Knowledge processes occur like sense processes. The first thing we do is look; then, when a person meets someone from the opposite sex, or the same sex, whatever they prefer, what do they do? First they look, and then? Then they listen. And after that? They start approaching. So sight comes first, then hearing, then smell; and then? If things are pleasant the process continues, doesn't it? Then comes touch, then taste, which is the last one, isn't it? People are going to act like that, but... but what I wish

to say with all this is that, in **panoramic tourism**, we appeal to the senses. What's going to happen if you take me to Gamboa<sup>26</sup> today, in terms of senses? It's bad on the eyesight. Because the place is dirty, under construction, the walls are defaced, and the maintenance conditions of the buildings are not ideal. And what happens with our hearing? The place is noisy.

And what happens with our sense of smell? There are moments when you walk past a street and smell a strong odor of flowers, and then you get to the next street and smell the sewer, then flowers again, then sewer again, and that's not pleasant. Well, regarding sense of touch and taste, there is hardly anything to do because the rest was already so unpleasant that I'm not going somewhere to see the view, or to a restaurant to eat, because I lost confidence. These things keep happening because I have negative sensorial impressions. So, panoramic tourism always goes to the same old places, but they are well swept. In Rio de Janeiro, people take me to clean places where the floor has been swept. Take me to Ipanema and Copacabana to show me a life I won't live. It's a bit frustrating, isn't it? I always ask: "Where do the normal people live? Middle class?" Because that does interest me. Isn't that true? I can relate to that. So panoramic tourism can be very harmful because it can produce the opposite of the desired effect with respect to heritage. I can generate a rejection to heritage, for I am promising beautiful views but I'm not showing these beautiful views. If you look out of a window of a cable car to see the view from the top, and you see a beautiful view, of the Teresópolis<sup>27</sup> mountain tops to the Rio-Niterói Bridge,<sup>28</sup> that's one thing; but if you look out of the window and the first thing you see out there is a pile of garbage (because people throw garbage there), you become uncomfortable. I would. Or I sit on a plastic bench, like those from a particular soda brand whose name I will not mention because I don't like it, but... it's not a pretty thing, it's not nice, the plastic texture isn't agreeable. And, if it's hot, I sweat and my clothes stick to my body. So when the experience becomes a negative one, what am I going to say at the end? "Oh, we went to a horrible place!" And it's done. I close up.

So panoramic tourism isn't going to help me in this process. **Thematic tourism** is what is going to help me, and why? Because it appeals to the sentiments and not to the senses. See the difference? What are sentiments? Emotion, beauty, civic engagement, different things, love, emotions which are not in the gut, they are in our head. Because I can go to the same place knowing that sensorial wise, things could be better or worse, but that doesn't matter, because my emotions trumps all of it. The same thing occurs with the

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26 Neighborhood located in downtown Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

27 Hilly town in the state do Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

28 Bridge that links the city of Rio de Janeiro to the city of Niterói.

person who goes to the jungle, is covered in mosquito bites, mosquitos eating her alive, gets sunburnt, gets caught in the rain, feet swollen with blisters... and comes back happy, because she felt like Indiana Jones or Tarzan. Like the Camino de Santiago pilgrim, who has an emotional purpose for traveling. I don't know if you remember the structure of different tourists. The jet setter tourist, the businessman who is in the sensory level. The traveler, the explorer, all of these environmentalists and spiritualized people, are in the emotional level and, therefore, I walk through the Camino de Santiago, which has many kilometers, and it my feet hurt, I don't eat well, I get cold, but I arrive in Santiago and I'm so filled with awe that I lack words to describe it. It was all worth it, despite the physical costs, although there was a component of sacrifice in all I did before.

You've probably seen people who go the Corcovado, where you have to climb up and up, and when they reach the top, start to cry. Why are they crying? Because they are in one of the most iconic places in the world (I'm pretty moved too). That's what you would feel at the Eiffel Tower. People dream about these places all their lives, and the day they see them physically, they are impressed because there is an emotional component to it. This allows people to endure a trip on a dreadful plane ride, feeling like a can of sardines for 16 hours, and even though they don't understand the language, suffer food poisoning, cannot sleep well, suffer exposure to sun and rain, they arrive at the Eiffel Tower, forget about everything else and say, "Wow!"

That's why I was saying that we could have a garden out there, where I can learn what the insects are like, and for me it's thrilling, the same way a child would feel. Thematic tourism appeals to our feelings, and generates within an emotional bond with heritage. That's why I was saying that there could be a garden like we have out here, where I'm learning what insects are like, and to me it's very exciting, I feel just like a child would feel. Children engender an affection, or an affective rejection, regarding heritage. So what we have to do is break it down into topics – little bits of information, interesting information, different information – we can get people to experience this cultural adventure, which we call discovery. The person discovers and says "I have never seen that" or, "I've never looked at it that way." "I've seen it so many times, but I've never really noticed it properly." "I didn't know it was that important!" If I can make people make these types of exclamations, it means reaching a moment of discovery, and this creates an emotional bond, which constitutes the appropriation of heritage.

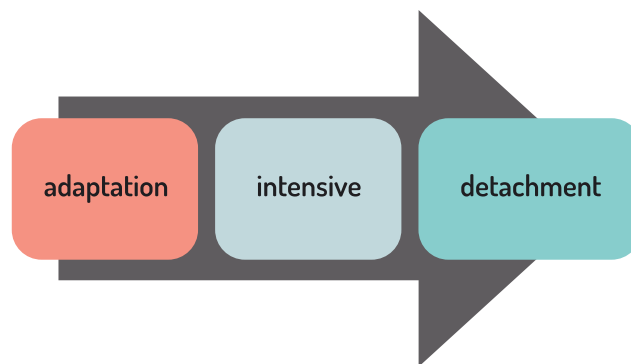
We were in the Valongo Wharf, acting very serious, like a good tourist, taking pictures, looking at the informative signs that say that the wharf is a Unesco heritage site, blah, blah, blah... and many people in Rio (or outside Rio) don't know it's a Unesco

heritage site. There was a man there who looked at us, seemingly amused. We could see it was a local, and there were two possibilities: either he was laughing at us, thinking “what do these people see in these rocks?”, or: “How about that, there is something interesting in my neighborhood and people come to see it. What could it be that incites this curiosity in them?” It’s not important that he learn all the history, whether the queen was called Joana, Petra or Maria... it’s all the same. What matters is that he knows that this heritage is important, that it is part of his legacy and that it is therefore significant.

That’s why tourism has to be thematic, and it has to appeal to these sentiments, generating this emotional bond, regarding pride, identity, awe. Because these are things leave all things sensorial behind. We aren’t a hedonistic type of tourism; we are tourism of discoveries. And everyone suffers privations but gains reward. History is a little like that.

### Observance of the schedule

Let us continue with the theme of execution and observance of the program. This observance is a function developed primarily by the tour guide. The program encompasses the phases of the tourist experience in the order in which they are to take place. The tourist experience has three phases: **adaptation, intensive and detachment.**



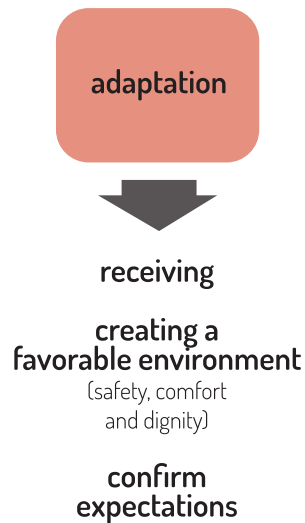
**Figure 30: Phases of the tourist experience**

People come to the meeting point for the ride. “We’re going to meet at this place at this time.” They get on the bus, or start walking, depending on what they are going to do. Here comes the first part, a period that is very important for people to start

getting to know each other and becoming aligned with what needs to be done. We usually have very little time to make a good first impression, but we also have very little time to play with people’s expectations, aligning those expectations on the same goal, and these first few minutes are key to generating the environment that will be conducive to the development of our work. It is crucial that we do this, but for the most part, during this moment, we limit ourselves to passing down a list of participants.

“Ok, is everybody here? Well, then come over here.” And that’s it. There is no kind of preparation activity to generate a favorable vibe, which is critical if we want to work with feelings, not just sensations. What is the first thing I do when I receive guests in my house, as soon as I open the door? I say hello. I say, welcome. I open the door and invite you in to sit down, I guide you around the house, to get things out of the way, move things that don’t need to be where they are and, finally, I follow a number of activities that come naturally, so that the person visiting me feels comfortable. On excursions, this is crucial to making people feel good. It seems so obvious but we don’t do it. When someone arrives, it’s as if I open the door of a bureaucratic office and order: “Come in and get in there.” Yes, I gave the person a practical, helpful instruction, but completely devoid of emotion. This makes the person start to wonder: “Hmm... What kind of excursion or ride will this be?” We want to feel like people and not like animals, right? Because animals must be herded. “Ok, everybody go there. Everybody to the right. Everybody to the left...”

This adaptation phase is essential. Indeed, it’s the most important thing during the passenger transportation stage. It’s the moment we have to receive people as if they were entering our home. This is extremely important. I am the representative of an organization that is convoking (which is worse – charging for a service) and I have to welcome people in my home. It makes no difference if it’s an open-air square or any other place. Just like the airplane crew: while they’re in uniform, they represent the airline and so they must act according to the values of the company. The same happens with us. We welcome people, even though we are on the street, and we create a friendly vibe so that they feel safe, comfortable, and are treated with dignity. What I was saying before: I open the door to my house, welcome people, make them feel at home, and tell them what they need to know: “You can sit here, the bathroom is that way...” Anyway, that is what we normally do to make people feel comfortable. I try to take the weight off their shoulders and create a pleasant atmosphere.



**Figure 31: The adaptation phase**

Then what I have to do is confirm expectations. What does that mean? Let people know what will happen. Because people are enrolled. The description of the excursion is always very brief: “We will visit A, B and C... Oh, okay, yes, let’s go.” People go in the dark, without knowing much. And they don’t know what to expect. So it’s very important that we tell them, “Welcome. I’m glad you’re here, blah, blah, blah.” In the meantime, people are settling into the bus, or wherever they have to settle. What will happen during the next four hours? And during the next four days? This is critical because people want to know. How do I do that? I have to know which things are interesting to people, which factors cause them to be here with me.

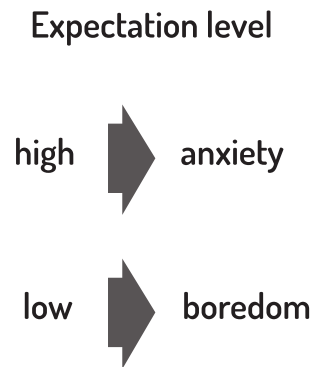
People approach heritage for two reasons: what we call logical motivations and true motivations. What does that mean? “I came to this excursion because I’m extremely interested in popular architecture”. Oh but the truth, the real truth is that “I came because I was all by myself at home, and what I needed was to get out of the house”. So I have to know these things. I have to find out what the true motivations are. Because if I don’t find the true motivations, I will behave in the level of logical motivations. If you go to a modern art museum, the logical thing is that you will want to know about modern art. That is logical. The guides act according to that logic, and say to you: “Here we have a painting... which is a



variation about the same theme, which includes two colors with letters...” They tell you obvious things, evident and technical, and that’s what is logical, right? If you came to the museum to see objects of art, I will explain the technical aspects of this art. But, truthfully, I came for another reason. I came to get away from my parents, my children. I came to keep my boyfriend or girlfriend company. I came because... I don’t know! There are thousands of other reasons why people are there.

As conductors, we have to know what these motivations are. If we don’t know them, we won’t be able to really work with people. Isn’t that true? It’s extremely important to know why. We have to be very honest. Because, even though we are working in a place in which we have to lie because it is a survival tactic, when we are on holiday, we don’t lie. We go back to being children. And children speak the truth. So all we have to do is ask. “Well, I came because I’m keeping my husband company”. How many of you have entered a store filled with women walking around, all of them followed by their husbands, who look bored out of their minds? If you ask one of these husbands why they came in the store, he will answer: “Because I have to go with my wife”. A couple goes to the stadium to watch a soccer match, he’s freaking out and she looks like she’s bored... Well, they have to compromise, don’t they? In Brazil, women like soccer. But, normally, in other countries they don’t.

If I know the true motivations that lead people to be here today, it’s easier for me to work with them. And tell them: “Well, ok, you didn’t want to know anything about Niemeyer, but now you’re here”. So let’s try to work together so this can be pleasant for everyone. Isn’t that right? Now, what happens with the stimulation levels of a group? We’re going to the Amazon and there are so many fantasies about that region, good and bad ones, so when people get there and they see the river, it can generate different kinds of emotions in them. Some very, very positive, some not so positive. I have to detect what level of motivation attracts people.



**Figure 32: Expectation levels and its effects on people**

If the level of stimulation is very high – I dreamt my whole life with the Amazon, and finally, after so many years, I managed to go there, after saving up, and now I’m right in front of it. So I’ll probably be very stressed out. People with high expectations are always very anxious. So, we have to work with them. “Ok. We came to the Amazon, but you have to be aware that we’re only going to be here for an hour and a half. Therefore, it’s very likely that you won’t see any jaguars, capybaras, or piranhas. We are only going to see alligators.” That is what most likely will happen. These other animals are nocturnal and they flee from humans. They are around, but you cannot promise people that they will be able to see them. For that, they must go to a zoo, and not the actual habitat.

But the opposite can also occur. People can come with a very, very low level of stimulation. They say: “I’m not the least bit interested in being bit by mosquitos, nothing here interests me and, besides, last night I went out to dance the samba, and now I’m tired, I drank too much *caipirinha*.” These people will very likely be quite bored. So I have to work with them to say: “Ok but, listen, the things I guarantee will happen, and that are interesting, are A, B and C”. “Why?” – they might ask. “For this and this reason”. I have to rely on that approach so that the stressed out people lighten up a little and the bored people liven up a little. And I should confirm these stimulation levels telling people what really will and will not happen. “No, no, no, the mosquitos won’t bite you.” “Why?” “Because we are going to be in a yacht, and the wind keeps the mosquitos away...” I don’t know! Or I give them a mosquito net so they don’t bite, or a good insect repellent.

This is our duty, because it will make people relax and know what to expect. So, we won’t have the typical tourist who wants more, more, more, more and is terribly

demanding, and the other who, right off the bat, doesn't want to know anything about me, gets left behind all the time and all he does is complicate my schedule. Because, too, if people don't all move in the same rhythm, some are left behind and others are ahead, and an activity I had planned to last 45 minutes ends up taking an hour and a half. It's very important to prepare people for everyone to follow on the same level. But we have to do this in a smart, dignified and respectful way, and not as many do with tourists, treating them like children, with authoritarian bossiness: "You are to behave well, and when I say 'leave', we leave, and when I say 'stop', we stop." No. That doesn't work because nobody, no tourist, likes to be scolded. Kids don't like it either. We have to be smart enough to make them willingly do the things we need them to do.

In that sense, if I don't manage expectations and if I don't make participants feel good, the operation will become complicated for me. Participants will not collaborate because I am not tuned in and so it will be harder to work. It will not happen naturally. It will be forced and therefore fake. I don't want my tour to be like solving a problem with the tax department. I am not following a procedure, I am generating an experience. In this part, the emotional issue is very important. I have to keep people excited, interested, relaxed, as they would be in a meeting at my house. This is not occult science. If I am able to do this when I invite people to my home, why wouldn't I be able to do this when I am inviting people to my other home, which is my job? This is the spirit of this reflection.

Then comes the intensive phase. This phase requires the driver to stick to a predetermined schedule, saying, "Well, I'm checking the schedule, and we're going to late, we shouldn't be late..." I have to see how I make sure that the tour isn't late. And if I am the person guiding, then I reduce the amount of information given, or convey it while we are walking. Instead of letting people stand for ten minutes while you talk, talk, and talk, because that happens often, too, I walk as I give a traveling explanation. We keep walking spontaneously. What happens? No one can scream at forty people as they walk, but I can interact with five people now, five others later, and later with five others all along the way so that everyone's needs can be met. At some point, I pass the information on to people – who are delighted with it – and I place them where I want. This is an art, little by little one learns.

Thematic tourism is about seeing little over a long period of time, and knowing a lot about this little portion.

I also have to provide the proper level of rest and relaxation. And I'm going to evaluate if people are able to follow the itinerary as it was traced. If they can't walk, if they're not used to walking, if they can't climb the stairs, then I have to modify the script. That happens to us; people are walking less and less. I have to be aware of this and make the proper pathways so that people walk as much as they need to walk, get some rest, and continue the ride. And there are people who usually walk more than others. I have to detect these variables as well.

For example: many tourists from the United States walk very little. And they even refuse to climb the stairs to get to the next floor. They wait for the elevator. This causes things to be late all the time. On the other hand, Europeans walk much more. They are used to walking. It's easier to travel around with them in some situations. Are Brazilians used to walking or not? They do walk a lot, don't they? Mexicans are walking less each day. We have to consider this.

The same is not true for older people, who walk one way, and for young people, who walk at a different pace. I have to guide the participants regarding logistics: where we will go, where there will be a bathroom, and not wait for them to ask. "In five minutes we'll get to the bathroom, and we'll have a snack five or ten minutes later." It's important that they know about these things. And above all, we must be very strict about the schedule. Of course, when it comes to setting the schedule, I can't be strict. I have to be a little flexible, take a break. Everything must have certain leeway so that the driver can manage our time better. That is why, I repeat, it is crucial to see as little as possible for as long as possible during the program. Again: thematic tourism is supposed to see a little in a very long time, and to know a lot about that little. If people want to see something else, sign up for another ride. The more expectations you raise in this regard, the better.

Finally comes the detachment part, which is like when the party is over. The farewell. Encouraging reflection on the moment we have experienced, what we learned. "Remember what we learned today... blah, blah, blah..." Or let the participants themselves start to reflect. Pay attention to people. "What did you learn? What did you think? Did you enjoy it? Did you not enjoy it?" But more important than "liking" or "disliking": "What did you really absorb from that?" Because all of us, always, we are very diplomatic, and we say we like everything, everything is wonderful. Just like

my wonderful course, everyone says they like it, but I don't know if you will retain anything later. It is important that you retain something from the course. It can be whatever, whether a lot or a little, but something.

Evaluating the experience in general terms. To make this assessment, I have to be aware that interpretation and conveyance are services, and that services, unlike products, involve personal interactions. So the expectation I can have for a service is the expectation I have for a personal and interpersonal experience. It is always difficult to make this judgment, because everyone sitting here or there has different expectations. For some, kindness is more important; for others it is knowledge; for others, it's the formality... Anyway, the courtesy, the protocols... Each person thinks of different things.

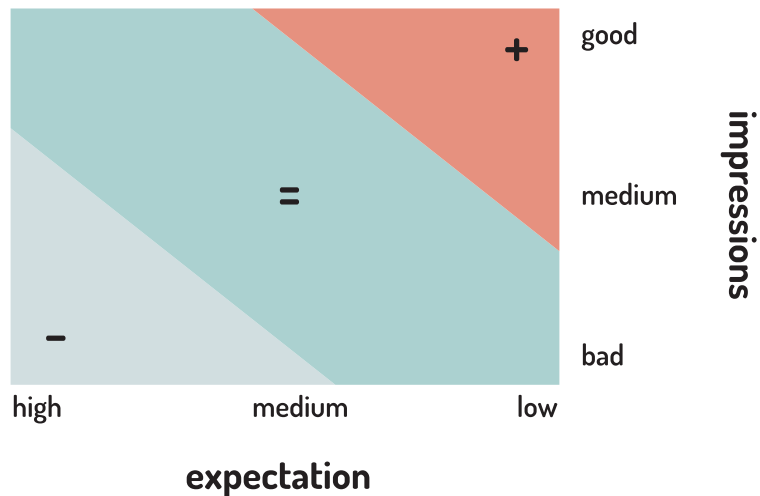
What do you like most when you go to a restaurant? The best thing for me is being able to read the menu without my glasses. Others want the waiter to be nice. Others want the food to be very good. Others want the service to be fast. And others want it to be cheap, others want the bill to come right away.

Anyway, we all have different expectations, and this will be an issue with both our conduction service and our guiding service. It's already clear that participants want different things from us. And we have to develop enough versatility to be able to please everyone. All of us have a natural ability for certain things, while others require a little more work in order to achieve minimum quality levels. Many years ago, I owned a travel agency. And I didn't understand why people would buy from me. All travel agencies sold the same things for the same price, but some preferred buying with me, and others didn't. We had to research why. And we did. We weren't very friendly. In what sense? Of course, we greeted people, but we left them waiting on the phone for too long. We were slow. Someone asked us something and we would take too long to get back to them. So we didn't understand why they bought from us. We knew we were good, in the sense that we had plenty of knowledge, and there was a group of people who valued that, and we didn't lie. We would never lie. "Is there vacancy?" Yes, there is vacancy. If there wasn't, we would say so. People knew that, if I told them "yes, your reservation is booked", the reservation was really booked. They appreciated that. Those who appreciated the fact that I knew how to do my job well would buy from me. And those who didn't like it, wouldn't buy from me. But we also realized that we had to transform the small details that were harmful to us, or weren't that good, into something that reached a minimum profit that could please us all. Thus, we were concerned about being faster and friendlier, and that helped us a lot, because then we could excel at what we do well, and the rest, we could do relatively well, as long as no one complains.

And so we had to reflect: What are our guides and conductors like? What are their skills? At what points do they have to improve? There are two things: aptitudes and attitudes. People nurture expectations regarding aptitude because it's a technical matter. And they nurture expectations about attitude, which involves personal factors. It's hard. Well, but people try. So what should we do? In order to reach a minimal satisfaction level, we have to develop all these themes. If we know that we excel in any of them, that's good, but we can't be distracted. We have to make everything reach certain levels of satisfaction. Basic levels. One of these things is knowledge. Another is efficiency. And another is how fast we can respond.

How are we doing? And how are we dealing with our rides? How are our conductors working? Sometimes we hire guides because they know a lot of information. But it's not only about them having a lot of knowledge, because they aren't university professors. They're guides. Sometimes they need to have more ability to answer than knowledge per se. I'm not interested in knowing if the Santo Antonio Church was built in the sixteenth century, but I am interested in knowing the name of that tree over there. And there's more than one guide in the world who would feel offended by that. "How come he asks me about a tree when I'm talking about baroque art?", "Because I'm from abroad and, personally, this tree is more interesting to me". That's a valid response. The problem is that, sometimes, this is obvious in the expressions of the guides and they don't notice it, and it ends up being unpleasant in the eyes of the tourists. So we also have to learn to say: "I don't know, but I will research it". And really do the research. Because the guide cannot be inconvenient. Some guides are arrogant, haughty, and do that too, don't they? "Well, it's called so and so. But, back to the main theme..." No, no, no. This is a very important matter to consider.

Another aspect is attitude. Are we courteous? Are we honest? Do we honor our promises? This is crucial. We, as well as our suppliers, are making a promise during a tour. And we are concerned that this promise will be kept. Because if I offer the tour and the promise has not been kept, it's not the guide's problem. The problem is not the conductor's. The problem is ours. It's my problem because, as an institution, I designed something and made a promise that was not kept. It's very important that the promise be kept or, if it is not kept in its entirety, that at least the standards are good enough that there are no complaints.



**Figure 33: Relationship between expectations and impressions**

What does the image say? Well, it's a cross between people's expectations and their impressions. I have expectations when I start the tour. Throughout the tour, I will keep having impressions, I'll take different impressions with me, which are related to many factors: if it's sunny, if it's raining, if there is a police station in the *camelodromo* and we are unable to get in... All these things will affect the performance of the tour, of the outing. They will become good or bad impressions. I have some good and some bad. Some of my expectations were high and some were low. So what happens there? If my expectations were very low and my impressions were bad, there was no surprise there. Makes no difference to me. I'm in a zone of indifference. If my expectations are very high and my impression was very good, I'm also in this zone of indifference. This is about people having medium expectations, but very good impressions – and that's why managing expectations is very important. Why then, what's going to happen? Satisfaction will be huge.

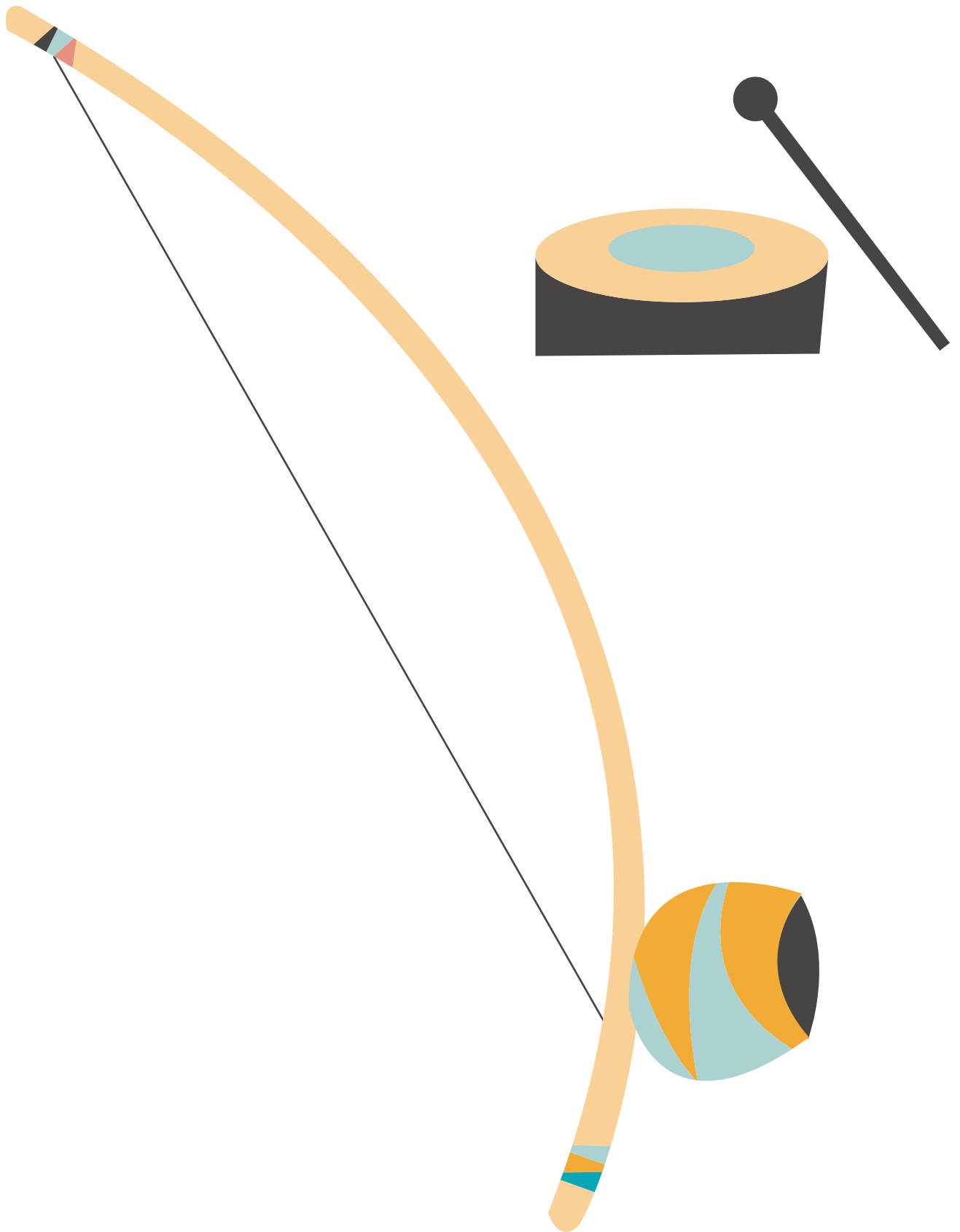
Now what happens? Many people say: "No, no, we shouldn't please them so much because, if we do, we're going to have to give them more and more, and it'll never end". Yes and no. Because, at first, I will always manage expectations. So if they are too high, I lower them a little. I bring them down to a real level, so people always know they can't ask for more, more and more, because otherwise it never ends. But we have a model, and we work with that model; when we know the model, everything's fine. And we should avoid high expectations and bad experiences at all costs because then people will enter the frustration zone, and frustration generates many complaints, many problems. I don't know how your rating is on your tours. In this sense, people know this, perceive it and

demonstrate it. But, well, this is a question we have to think about. What is happening on our tours? How are we doing our tours? How are we evaluating our tours?

At the end, the program should be the consequence of the knowledge about your clients and about what they need, and not about what they want. In the tourist industry, the tourists get all they want. In order to reach this status and this preference, that's okay. But first we have to give them what they need, due to the objective of the institution where we act. This boring speech is designed to plant the seed of reflection in all stages of your work, so that you can offer interesting things.







## FINAL THOUGHTS

Tourism with a social approach transforms and enriches people who practice it.

Tourism of the future is, undoubtedly, tourism with a social emphasis, since both market trends and development priorities go in that direction.

Social tourism, by giving meaning and content to the trip, will be a growing demand of all actors playing the field. Today we call this “experience” but, in reality, what the traveler is looking for is a formative, enriching and transcendental activity.

When becoming a “professional consumer”, that is, a consumer highly prepared to search and obtain personalized solutions, the tourist of the future will prefer consumption with meaning, that facilitates learning, esthetic experiences and self-expression.

Thus, the natural field of market intervention – and of the development of small businesses – is social tourism. Those who specialize in any of their possibilities will have a brighter future than those who try to compete in a general tourist consumer market.

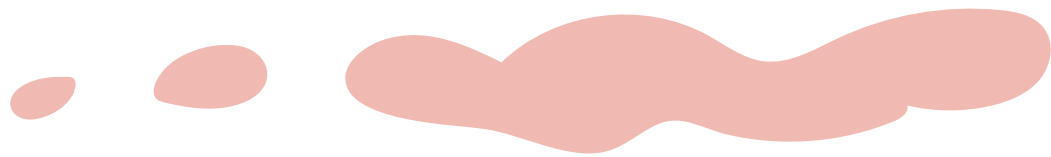
In order to build a creative society that is more informed and more participative, tourism with a social approach is the most adequate one, because it transforms and enriches the people who practice it, along with their services providers.

Companies that develop products that are appropriate for tourism with a social approach can better differentiate themselves from the majority and thus be more competitive in an increasingly intelligent, informed and demanding market. The challenge is very interesting, but it also promises to be rewarding enough to be worth facing.

Differentiation, specialization, content development, didactic and aesthetic activities, professionalization and quality will haul social tourism companies to a higher level of productivity and competitiveness through the transformative power of society, which is currently a necessary thing in Latin America and worldwide.

Paraphrasing Gilles Lipovetsky<sup>29</sup> again, the development of new products and business projects related to social tourism will allow tourists and service providers to awaken to different dimensions of life, to seek new goals, new roads and new directions that stimulate their potential. Social tourism educates, socializes and brings new meaning into people's lives. It nurtures the good passions, renders security, certainties, contributes to self-respect and stimulates the desire to exceed ourselves and to become protagonists of our own lives.


That is the true transcendence of our job and the reason why we are responsible for doing it increasingly better. Contributing to the construction of outstanding, memorable and transcendental moments of people's lives is a privilege. We have to live up to that.



.....  
29 Adapted from Gilles Lipovetsky and Jean Serroy, *La culture-monde: réponse à une société désorientée*, Odile Jacob, 2008.


## ATTACHMENTS

- Brasília: City of Rock (DF)
- The conductor and the litorina (RO)
- Laguna: Cultural Landscape (SC)
- Papangu of Bezerros (PE)
- *Quilombolas* of Belo Vale (MG)



The itineraries presented on the following pages were created by Social Tourism professionals of Sesc, from several regions of Brazil, based on the methodology detailed in this publication.

Those are thematic touristic products, which presents new perspectives from different regions of the country, and serve as a practical example of the elaboration and development steps of tours based on innovation, learning and social responsibility.



# Brasília: City of Rock

## Location: Brasília | Distrito Federal

### What is it?

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This tour introduces Brasília,<sup>30</sup> which was considered the main hub of Brazilian rock in the 1980s. Employing primarily musical elements and visits to notable places in this historical context, the itinerary is built around the city's music scene.

### Operational details:

- Tour conducted in air-conditioned tour bus.
- Duration: approximately 4 hours.
- Age restriction: none.
- Portable speakers are required to reproduce the songs during the trip.
- Also required are printed lyrics of the songs that will be played, to distribute to participants.

### Our purpose

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Birthplace of many of the most important rock bands of the eighties, Brasília has been called Capital city of Rock for being home to names like Legião Urbana, Plebe Rude and Capital Inicial, among other famous Brazilian bands. The purpose of the tour is present the history of rock in Brasília to the public in a dynamic and engaging way through reflection, music and visitations to places the marked the beginning of the movement.

### Our positive impact:

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- The presence of a local tourist guide, preferably someone that's a music lover and expert, promotes an environment of trust and reciprocity, essential elements in the construction of social capital in the destination.
- Supporting local businesses by using equipment connected to the local cuisine, which add to the characterization of the itinerary.

### What can improve?

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Hiring, training and getting the artists to be sensitive to the project, so that they can perform interventions in different places during the tour.

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<sup>30</sup> Capital city of Brazil, located in the Midwest.

## Activities:

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### Complementary reflection activities

#### Self-Expression:

- Opportunity to share feelings based on the tourists' experiences.
- Meeting up afterwards to show the pictures taken during the tour and socialize with other participants.

### Core activities

#### Beauty and learning:

- A cultural show at Garagem Theater.
- Objective: introduction to the musical context.

### Complementary preparation activities

#### Fun and rest:

- Performance of many songs from the places and stories mentioned in the itinerary.
- Periodic stops to rest.

# The conductor and the litorina

**Location: Porto Velho | Rondônia**

## What is it?

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As part of the project “Fearless Pioneers,” this itinerary suggests an immersion in the golden age of the *Maria Fumaça*,<sup>31</sup> using audiovisual elements and a ride on the *litorina*<sup>32</sup> with the same conductor of the age, in the railway zone of the Madeira-Mamoré Railroad.

## Operational details:

- Walking tour.
- Duration: approximately 2 hours.
- Age restriction: none.

## Our purpose

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The Madeira-Mamoré Railroad is the ground zero of Porto Velho;<sup>33</sup> an open-air museum with many stories to offer visitors. The purpose of “The conductor and the litorina” is to bring about a better understanding of the region’s socioeconomic development in the beginning of the 20th Century and to pay homage to the most important figures in the history of Rondônia, by triggering a trip back in time, through the narratives of former railway workers, with the participation of a historian and regional musicians.

## Our positive impact:

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- Promoting a distinctive outlook on the city’s material heritage.
- Valuing the sociocultural roots of Porto Velho, by offering participants a greater understanding of the city’s history.
- Involving the local community by way of artistic interventions and other activities planned in the itinerary.

## What can improve?

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In order for the protagonism of the former railway workers not to be overshadowed by the speech given by the teacher that participates in the tour, it’s necessary for all the speakers to be aligned regarding the expression of the content.

.....  
31 A Brazilian term for steam train.

32 A type of train with its own motor (electrical or diesel), which functions simultaneously as both a train and a passenger wagon (Source: Michaelis Portuguese Dictionary).

33 A municipality in the state of Rondônia, located in the North of Brazil.

## Activities:

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### Complementary reflection activities

#### Self-Expression:

- First-hand narratives about the experiences of people who are former employees of the Madeira-Mamoré Railroad.

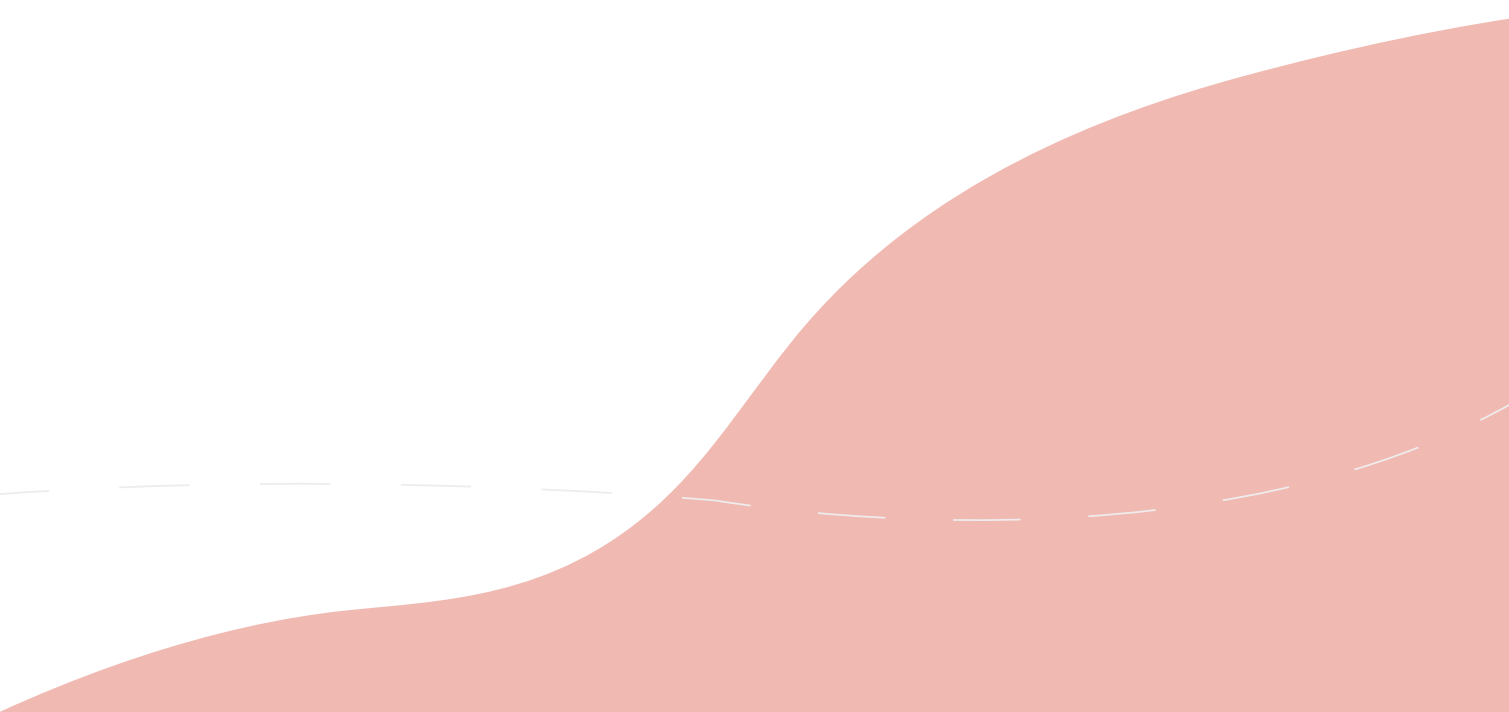
### Core activities

#### Beauty and Learning:

- Performance of three songs by regional songwriters. Objective: introduce the participants to the musical and artistic context.
- All of the suppliers wear clothes that allude to the time period of the narrative and audiovisual resources are integrated in the railway hangar. Objective: trigger the spectators' imaginations.

### Complementary preparation activities

#### Fun and rest:

- A ride on the litorina, conducted by a former railway worker, which allows participants to relive the experience of the time period.
  - Two rest stops.
  - Interactions with the songs presented during the tour.
- 



# Laguna: cultural landscape

## Location: Laguna | Santa Catarina

### What is it?

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This itinerary is about getting to know the history of Laguna,<sup>34</sup> walking the streets of the historic city center on the routes in which you can find constructions that are representative of each historical period. Protected by the Institute for the Historical and Artistic National Heritage (IPHAN) in 1985, the city's rich heritage consists of around 600 buildings dating back hundreds of years.

### Operational details:

- Walking tour.
- Duration: approximately 3 hours.
- Requires bookings for closed groups on other days of the week.
- Age restriction: none.

### Our purpose

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- Encourage social and economic development in the city by way of tourism.
- Contribute to the conservation and appreciation of the city's cultural estate and allow for a more democratic access to the monuments and goods.

### Our positive impact:

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- By not using any vehicles, there can be greater integration between tour participants and locals, promoting an environment of trust and reciprocity, essential elements for the construction of social capital in the destination.
- Appreciation of the material heritage.
- Greater inclusion of the local community and public schools in the region, members of which are able to take the tour for free.
- Low environmental impact.

### What can improve?

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- More engagement from public institutions for potential partnerships.
- Increased PR and communications of the project.
- Identification of experts to diversity the topics discussed on the tours with artistic intervention. For example: presenting the figure of Anita Garibaldi by discussing gender issues or getting a historian to discuss the conflict between development and heritage preservation, among other possibilities.
- Broaden partnerships for the project, with the community and local businesses.

.....  
<sup>34</sup> Municipality in Santa Catarina, a state located in the South of Brazil.

## Activities:

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### Complementary reflection activities

#### Self-Expression:

- Roundtable chat with the purpose of instigating a reflection on the importance and the contribution of Laguna in the history of Santa Catarina state and on Brazilian history.

### Core activities

#### Beauty and Learning:

- Storytelling at the Anita Garibaldi Museum, conducted by a local artist representing the figure of Domingos de Brito Peixoto, the city's founding father. Objective: present the story behind the foundation of the municipality of Laguna in a playful and engaging way.
- Identifying the main constructions by architectural styles (Portuguese-Brazilian, Eclectic and Art Deco) located along the route. Objective: in an interactive manner, allow the participants to identify the characteristics typical of each of the above-mentioned styles in the details of the buildings in the historic center.

### Complementary preparation activities

#### Fun and rest:

- Stop to rest and to get refreshments.

# Papangus of Bezerros – Pernambuco

## Location: Bezerros | Pernambuco

### What is it?

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The tour presents the story of the Papangu, an important cultural manifestation during the carnival of Bezerros,<sup>35</sup> a town in the state of Pernambuco.

### Operational details:

- Tour conducted by bus, leaving from the state capital, Recife.
- Duration: approximately 6 hours.
- Age restriction: none.

### Our purpose

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The Papangu figure originates in the family of plantation owners who used to leave their homes wearing masks and ugly attire in order to visit their friends in the *entrudo* parties – pre-lent carnival parties common in the 19th Century – and eat *angu*, a cornmeal porridge typical of the region. That is why the kids began to call the masked men “papa-angu”. The purpose of the itinerary is to spread the local culture by way of the history of the Papangu, as well as valuing local artists involved in the chain of production for the city carnival.

### Our positive impact:

.....

- Appreciation and income generation for local artisans and artists.
- Spreading the story of an important cultural icon in the state of Pernambuco.
- Appreciation of the immaterial heritage by promoting interactions with a local artisan, a precursor in the production of the Papangu masks.
- Appreciation of the social capital.

### What can improve?

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- Difficulties in getting partners to understand and be sensitive to the project.
- Negotiation regarding the objectives of the visit, especially involving the tour guide on the content to be conveyed during the tour.

.....  
35 Municipality in Pernambuco, a state located in the Northeast of Brazil.

## Activities:

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### Complementary reflection activities

#### Self-Expression:

- Opportunity to talk and get to know the work of a local artisan focused on the production of the Papangu masks and its relation to the city carnival.
- Interaction with the papangus throughout the entire itinerary.
- Workshop to make your own Papangu mask.

### Core activities

#### Beauty and Learning:

- Visit to the Papangu Municipal Museum. Objective: present the story of this cultural icon.
- The tour closes with a culture show by the Papangus. Objective: to experience the traditional Papangus Parade, which occurs on Carnival Sunday in the city.

### Complementary preparation activities

#### Fun and rest:

- Stop at a lookout to rest and admire the location.
- Meal at a local eatery.

# Quilombolas of Belo Vale – Minas Gerais

## Location: Belo Vale | Minas Gerais

### What is it?

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The itinerary presents the life of the *quilombolas* (maroons) and enslaved persons who lived in the region of the *quilombos*,<sup>36</sup> employing elements from music, dance, storytelling and aesthetic elements from the Slave Museum, which help to understand the historical place and context in the beginning of the 18th Century.

### Operational details:

- Tour conducted in a minibus.
- Duration: approximately 12 hours.
- Age restriction: none.

### Our purpose

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The tour contemplates a visit to the Slave Museum, the Chacrinha dos Pretos and Boa Esperança Farm. The purpose of the tour is to propagate knowledge about people of African descent in Belo Vale,<sup>37</sup> appreciating African culture, the foundations of Brazilian traditions, especially when it comes to art, history and cuisine.

### Our positive impact:

.....

- Appreciate and value the immaterial heritage by disseminating the culture, traditions and customs of the *quilombola* people (maroons).
- All of the food services are offered in regional businesses, contributing to the economy of the local community.
- Introducing the local community to tourism as one of the options for socioeconomic development.

### What can improve?

.....

Getting everyone on the same page with the idea of empowerment in regards to the content presented in the tour, as well as improving the directions given to suppliers when it comes to the services employed in the creation of the itinerary.

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<sup>36</sup> In the period of Brazilian colonialism, quilombos were fortified communities founded by blacks escaping slavery as well as a white and indigenous minority, that organized themselves politically, representing a form of resistance to and combat of slavery (Source: Michaelis Portuguese Dictionary).

<sup>37</sup> Municipality in Minas Gerais, a state located in the Southeast of Brazil.

## Activities:

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### Complementary reflection activities

#### Self-Expression:

- Opportunity to participate in a roundtable chat with the granddaughter of quilombolas, who's a leader of the Quilombo Chacrinha dos Pretos community.
- Conversation with a leader of the Quilombola Community inside the ruins.
- Learning to how make an Abayomi doll.

### Core activities

#### Beauty and Learning:

- Performance of various songs and dances that are traditional to the quilombolas. Objective: introduce the participants to the musical context and dances.
- Visit to the Slave Museum. Objective: reflect upon the habits and objects used in the slave period.

### Complementary preparation activities

#### Fun and rest:

- Food stop at a quilombo.
- Three rest stops.
- Singing and dancing during the tour.

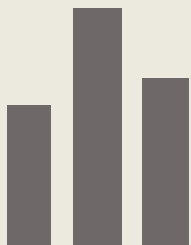








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Un turismo para todos  
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**Sesc**