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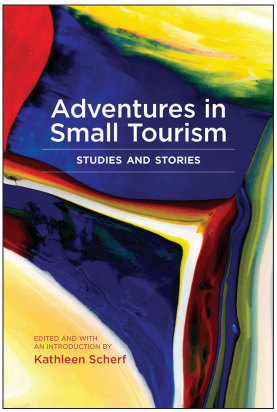

ADVENTURES IN SMALL TOURISM: STUDIES AND STORIES

Edited and with an Introduction by Kathleen Scherf

ISBN 978-1-77385-477-9

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Small Tourism and Ecotourism: Emerging Micro-Trends

Ian Yeoman and Una McMahon-Beattie

Introduction

COVID-19 has changed the world, and from a tourism perspective, destinations have started to think about the values that are important to them. Therefore, tourists in general are thinking "local," "visiting friends and relatives," and "doing the right thing" (Carr 2020; Sharfuddin 2020; Sheldon 2021). Often, this means small trips to visit small groups. This return to basics encompasses a number of micro-trends that, when combined, are driving a focus onto everything that is small (Yeoman and McMahon-Beattie 2020; Yeoman, Fountain, and Meikle 2020). Penn (2007) and Penn and Fineman (2018) illustrate how micro-trend changes are occurring in society and ask what these mean for products and services, whereas Yeoman and McMahon-Beattie (2019) illustrate how these trends are shaping tourism experiences. The purpose of this chapter is to illustrate a series of micro-trends within the context of small destinations, whether that be a community festival or a small city. Additionally, the chapter explores these micro-trends from an ecotourist perspective.

Micro-Trends Driving the Ecotourist

Trend 1: Accumulation of Social Capital

As consumer-citizens we carry a vision of our better selves: that vision is how we like to be seen and appreciated by others. Increasingly we profile our skills, our accomplishments, and our experiences rather than merely our material possessions. This trend influences significantly the services we crave and the

communication language that works best with us in the marketplace (Jones and Comfort 2020; Kallis 2011). In the tourism context, it may affect the holidays we want and what we do when we are on those holidays. Its essence is that, as we grow wealthier and better educated, we like to put our twenty-first-century sophistications on display. These are features of the ecotourist (Yeoman 2008). We want to achieve *savoir faire* and *savoir vivre* and thus endow our lives with quality experiences we can share with others (Bourdieu 2000; Robertson and Yeoman 2014). This sharing with others is an important feature, as Casado-Diaz and Benson's (2009) study of expat Brits who created a social network between English-speaking retirees located in Calpe, a municipality on the Spanish Costa Blanca, indicates. The study found the importance of smallness in creating community through social capital and networks. The research highlighted how a small community creates bonding and bridging through networks and activities, many of which are nature-based and related to tourism. As retirees, the expats became involved in the community, and in the process enriched their lives as well as those of the community. Similarly, a study by Situmorang (2017) of an ecotourism project within the Muara Baimbai community in Indonesia is an example of using a tourism project to bond a community together. Here a collective sense of purpose between community members and tourists was achieved by creating an experience based around the renovation of the mangrove area. As such, one of the outcomes from the study was a sense of community and achievement through the accumulation of social capital. Therefore, smallness in terms of tourism numbers and destinations can engender positive community outputs, and for the individual, can deliver quality experiences that build their social capital.

Trend 2: Authenti-seeking

As global consumers continue to embrace the convenience and reliability delivered by mass production, they also aspire to an alternative to the perceived "homogenization" of contemporary culture, food, and leisure experiences (Yeoman et al. 2014). There exists a craving among many consumers for products, services, and experiences imbued with a genuine sense of authenticity. We call this the authenti-seeking mindset (Factory 2018b). Authenti-seekers search for experiences that are real and original, not contaminated by being fake or impure (Yeoman, Brass, and McMahon-Beattie 2007). Cohen (2010) has argued that since the 1970s, escaping from the pressures of one's own

home society in order to search for more authentic experiences is a primary driver in tourist motivation. He argues further that, on a broader level, escaping "from" in favour of "to" is reflective of Iso-Ahola's (1982) characterization of leisure and tourism experiences in two ways: it is dependent not only on an idea of escape or avoidance, but also on a process of seeking. As such, consumer experiences in tourism can be linked to a notion of searching, and thus seeking authenticity. The authenti-seeker is an individual who enjoys finding products or experiences that have clear links to a place, time, or culture—those that are produced in a traditional way, that are unique, and that have a genuine story behind them. Such authenticity is perceived as adding value. In tourism, authenti-seeking consumers pursue authentic experiences, distancing themselves from mainstream tourism providers and venturing into pastimes that they feel are more meaningful, that test them, and that help them discover themselves. There is a sense, too, of the consumer's desire to be individual, to be unique, to create a social profile that rivals that of any friend or colleague. In this respect, seeking and finding the authentic can increase one's social capital (Stringfellow et al. 2013). Laing and Frost (2015) note that modern holiday-makers wish to experience cultures and to sample foods and leisure activities endemic to a region or country. For example, authenticity in relation to food is about products that are simple, rooted in the region, natural, and ethically produced (Yeoman 2008). If we take this example further within the context of "smallness," Toast Martinborough[1] is one of New Zealand's most successful wine festivals. It is centred on the village of Martinborough in the Wairapara, about a one-hour drive north of Wellington, the capital city (Howland 2008). The festival started in 1992 and runs over a weekend every November. Martinborough is a small village with 1,920 residents whose entire focus is the production of wine. As the wines are boutique in style, many of them are sold at the cellar door or by local restaurants. The village has a strong tourism product that includes wine tasting rooms, delicatessens, women's clothes shops, cinema, boutique hotels, and fine restaurants that focus on pairing local food and wine. The purpose of Toast Martinborough is to create a brand, a story, and a permanent event to bind the community together as a successful tourism destination. This would be the event that defines Martinborough vis-à-vis the rest of New Zealand. Toast Martinborough sells out every year, mainly catering to the wider Wellington residential population. The participating vineyards open their doors for wine, music, and food. As such, wine is Martinborough's

provenance (Murray and Overton 2011), and Toast Martinborough creates an experience for those seeking authenticity through place (Yeoman et al. 2005; Yeoman and McMahon-Beattie 2020). Small destinations with a clear sense of place, heritage, and culture are well positioned to deliver the unique experiences so keenly sought after by authentic-seekers.

Trend 3: Changing Meaning of Luxury

Previously, luxury was associated with materialistic goods, made only for the rich and unaffordable for many. But as society changes, the long-term trend is the growth of the middle classes because of education attainment, improved economic well-being, rising incomes, and capital growth. According to a report published by the Brookings Institution (Kharas 2020), by 2030 the middle classes will grow from 3.9 billion consumers to 5.5 billion consumers, mainly in Asia. Today, GDP per capita in advanced economies still dwarfs that in emerging economies, but growth is expected to accelerate in countries such as India and China over the next decade. By 2030, India's GDP per capita is forecast to rise to USD$11,727—growth of 88 per cent since 2020. However, this growth could be slower because of global inflation, the war in Ukraine, and global uncertainties (Yeoman, forthcoming).

Whatever the economic situation, the formulation of luxury is changing (Yeoman, Schänzel, and Zentveld 2022). Luxury has become accessible, democratized, and transformed. Luxury is often associated with conspicuous consumption (Kastanakis and Balabanis 2012)—that is, the buying of expensive items to display wealth, status, and income. However, luxury also has a double-edged face, showing both light and excess (Kastanakis and Balabanis 2012). Luxury can bring internal as well as external gratification. On one hand, it is about materialism and showing off designer brands; on the other, it is internal and inconspicuous, with a focus on experience, enlightenment, and achievement (Yeoman 2008). Hence luxury is a multi-discursive concept that is fragmented and unsolvable (Li, Li, and Kambele 2012). Within the travel sector, luxury is no longer about price or material goods but increasingly about experiences and other intangibles. These include the experience of time, space, authenticity, community, individuality, and well-being. All of these are dimensions of luxury that are beyond materialism. As such, luxury moves from being merely material to being about experience and enrichment, and tourism is a key beneficiary of this change. Experiential luxury is about consumers' prioritization of doing, seeing, and feeling over the need to

possess material objects. Consumers want to do, learn, or experience something different and unique (Foresight Factory 2017; Yeoman and McMahon-Beattie 2018; Foresight Factory 2019; Athwal et al. 2019). Furthermore, luxury has an aspect of mindfulness that health products and service providers draw on. This is about extending spiritual well-being and looking beyond physical health. From an ecotourism perspective, Mtapuri and Giampiccoli's (2017) conceptual framework "Luxury Community-Based Tourism" (LCBT) focuses on the ecotourist who could be described with reference to the following characteristics:

- They are generally interested in culture, adventure, and interaction with locals. However, unlike the hard community-based tourism travellers, soft CBT travellers want some comfort. They are mainly interested in experiences they deem really unique and worthwhile.
- Are European, aged between fifty and seventy, and educated.
- Their children have left home so they take holidays all year round.
- They are mainly interested in soft adventure activities, combined with luxury and a range of authentic or eco-friendly experiences.

LCBT is the basis of holidays provided by companies such a Explore Worldwide,[2] Intrepid,[3] and Exodus Travel,[4] all of which cater to small groups (up to fourteen people), mainly singletons or couples travelling to offbeat destinations and staying in locally owned accommodations. These holidays will incorporate some community-based tourism activity and the meeting of locals. As such small tourism destinations have the potential to deliver luxury in terms of unique local experiences and opportunities for self-enrichment.

Trend 4: Supporting Local

As a consequence of COVID-19 there has been a renaissance of support for the local in all forms of products, services, and places. Consumers are invited to show their support for all that is local, to boost their neighbourhood or town or region by (a) buying products with proximate provenance; (b) choosing companies that engage actively with local communities; (c) participating

in voluntary schemes or initiatives; (d) holidaying in one's own country; and (e) being an *all-around good local citizen*. And at a broader level, these desires propel customers toward supporting homegrown products at the expense of imported alternatives (Featherstone 2020; Towner and Lemarié 2020). This is not a new trend—the Foresight Factory[5] has been tracking it for over thirty years (Yeoman 2008). This trend leads to companies without obvious local credentials in a given market leveraging a sense of localism in their product ranges, focusing on regional tastes or customs. For example, global coffee chain Starbucks transformed an old bank vault in Amsterdam's Rembrandtplein into a new concept store (Interior Design Shop 2020). Described as the coffee chain's largest site in Europe, "its radical design departure and 'Slow' Coffee Theatre [offer] a new experience for coffee, design and food innovation." The interior, which was designed by over thirty-five local artists, features "a floor-to-ceiling 'tattooed' mural celebrating the history of Dutch coffee traders, repurposed Dutch oak throughout the space . . . a ceiling sculpture created from 1,876 hand-cut wooden blocks, and a wall clad in recycled bicycle inner tubes." Starbucks also says that "it was built under strict Leed® sustainable building guidelines" (Interior Design Shop 2020). According to the company, the store "will function as a test space for rare and exclusive coffees, diverse coffee brewing methods, and new food concepts (Interior Design Shop 2020)—including the Clover Brewing System, rare and exotic coffees, and an in-store bakery. Moreover, it said that "what works at The Bank will make its way to the rest of Europe" (Interior Design Shop 2020).

During the pandemic, many destinations have had to refocus on the domestic tourism market. New Zealand, with its closed borders, is a good example of this. According to Fountain (2021) there has been a renewed appreciation of local. In terms of food and wine, festivals based in small rural destinations offer something unique that is clearly associated with place (consider the Bluff Oyster Festival,[6] or the Hokitika Wild Food Festival[7]). Fountain (2021, 8) echoes the findings of Yeoman et al. (2022) saying that *supporting local* is a movement toward the slow, the small, and the local, with food being central to this trend.

Trend 5: The Experience Seeker

The experience economy dominates the philosophy of tourism (Yeoman and McMahon-Beattie 2019). It underpins how we engage with tourism and how we consume it. Research tells us that tourists want to engage a whole range

of experiences, regardless of the particular activities they undertake: holidays abroad or at home, cultural events, fine dining, or cutting-edge leisure activities (Pine and Gilmore 2011). The experience economy is centred on the desire to enrich our daily lives by experiencing new things and undertaking activities that deliver a sense of improvement, enjoyment, and rejuvenation. Consumers prefer aspirational and experiential types of consumption that are based on the concept that sampling new and unique experiences provides them with the opportunity to develop new skills, acquire new knowledge, and thus boost their share of social and cultural capital (Bourdieu 2000). The desire to collect stories is fundamental to so many of our consumption choices: new experiences are sought in order to build memories, identities, stores of social capital. Hence consumers are experience seekers. Notably, social media has become a living journal and portfolio of consumers' daily lives, which naturally increases the demand for experiences to fuel these online story platforms. Snapchat and Instagram Stories allow travellers to display a constant stream of experiences, where the mundane or everyday sits comfortably with more glossy, performative content. Here, shareability and good story fodder is worth more than any material object or reward. Whether one is recording restaurant meals or music concerts, the sharing of every moment with one's followers appears to overtake living in the moment itself. Alongside this, increased access to those items once seen as luxuries has encouraged many people to place greater emphasis on the pursuit of experiences—whether in addition to, or in place of, more material-based forms of consumption. The ephemerality of the experience economy is also a common draw. Limited-edition events feel more exclusive, while transient pop-ups provide extra status for those who are in the know and reach the location first. And the most premium of experiences cleverly create even more hype by eschewing social media altogether—though shareability and status are still key considerations.

According to the Foresight Factory (2018a) the ephemeral experience has become an acceptable capitalist asset; it cannot be quantified or valued, yet it signifies authenticity, individuality, and solidifies personal positioning in the realm of the fascinating. One driving motivation for travel is the desire to collect unique experiences; the ultimate souvenir is a lasting memory. At its fringes this trend boosts interest in rarer experiences and unvisited places, because a story uncollected by others is more exceptional and thus more valuable. The increasing ability to personalize trips and create bespoke tours, even for travellers on a budget, gives rise to a wider range of unique experiences

that everyone feels entitled to enjoy. Many experience-led holidays focus on disconnecting from the Internet so as to further absorb oneself in the present. A craving for meaningful human interactions and a sense of belonging in a world dominated by technology drives the desire for immersive, intense, off-the-beaten-track experiences. One of the best examples of this desire for experience and the search for localness, novelty, and authenticity has to be Airbnb Experiences,[8] in which every conceivable type of experience is available. Whether it is making pasta with a grandma in Palombara Sabina, Italy, or chainsaw carving in Salem, Oregon, Airbnb has allowed locals with a skill, interest, or hobby to take that experience and share it with tourists through their platform. The ability of small tourism destinations to deliver rare, bespoke, local experiences provides the tourist with opportunities to acquire, as noted above, the ultimate souvenir.

Trend 6: Fluid and Simple Identity

According to Yeoman (2016), there are two forms of identity, "simple" and "fluid," both of which are shaped by wealth, which in turn influences tourist behaviour. Rising incomes and wealth accumulation distributed in new ways alter the balance of power in tourism. Through the opaqueness of online booking systems for travel and holidays, the power base has shifted from the institution of the travel agent to the individual tourist. At the same time, modern life is rich with new forms of connection and association, allowing a liberated pursuit of personal identity that is fluid and much less restricted by the influence of one's background or geography. Today's society of networks in turn has facilitated and innovated a mass of options provided by communication channels leading to the paradox of choice; consumers can simply choose from an abundance of festivals and events (Yeoman 2016; Yeoman, Robertson, and Smith 2012). The concept of fluid identity is supported by Boztug's (2015) research on the hybrid tourist, which challenges the concept of market segmentation. The hybrid consumer buys cheaper generic and low-end brands but trades up on some occasions. They like to sample, try new experiences, and have no brand preference (Ehrnrooth and Gronroos 2013; Silverstein 2003). Boztog emphasized that the hybrid tourist's purchases vary dramatically. Yeoman and colleagues highlight the success of Visa Wellington on a Plate (WOAP) as a food festival in a small capital city that is in line with all the characteristics of fluid identity:

> WOAP began in 2009 with 43 participating restaurants, 30 events, and sold approximately 400 tickets. In 2018, this had grown to 260 restaurants, 141 events and 11,024 tickets (Meikle 2019). WOAP is an annual festival held in the last two weeks of August that showcases the best of Wellington's culinary and hospitality industry through festival events, special menu offerings and industry activity.
>
> The focus is on "from farm to plate" and the festival incorporates several products including specific lunch and dinner menus known as Dine Wellington. Other events include a best burger competition, free public lectures, events for pets, cookery classes, night markets, and a beer festival. Award winning events have included Rimutaka Prison Gate to Plate where celebrity chef, Martin Bosley, mentors prisoners to create a fine dining experience at the local prison and Dine with Monet which is a dining experience based on the food found in Monet's paintings. WOAP delivers experiences for foodies, innovations, and excitement. Although most events are focused in Wellington, they spread into the hinterland as far north as Kapiti and the Wairapa in the east. (2021, 168)

Yeoman (2020) and Fountain (2021) argue that in most developed countries, consumer behaviour is the product of uninterrupted prosperity (apart from the global financial crisis of 2007–09), driven by growth in real levels of disposal income, low inflation, stable employment, and booming property prices. Therefore, new consumer appetites emerged in which tourists could spend money on enriching and fun experiences in exotic locations. However, COVID-19 changed that, bringing global tourism to a grinding halt. As a consequence, tourists are travelling domestically, seeking simple experiences and getting back to basics. What we are starting to see are tourists reimagining travel within a local context. People still want adventure and novelty related to fluid identity, but at the same time they seek simplicity as they take refuge in nature, away from COVID-19 (Kock et al. 2020). In New Zealand, the trend has been in the direction of hinterland adjacent to populations centres such as Wellington and Auckland; indeed, the Department of Conservation (2021a) has seen a huge increase in the occupation of tramping (hiking)

huts by domestic travelers. In other parts the world, many small places have been overwhelmed with success, bringing a new meaning to the concept of "over-tourism" (Oskam 2019). For example, Airbnb sold more overnight stays in rural Cornwall (England) than in London, as the BBC reported in 2021:

> "Rural nights booked in the UK used to be a quarter of our bookings, they're now half," Mr Chesky tells the BBC. Cornwall is the country's most-booked summer location in 2021, a title previously held by London. Globally, domestic bookings went up from 50% in January 2020 to 80% in 2021, according to Airbnb's newly released report, *Travel & Living*. (Shaw 2021)

In other parts of the United Kingdom, tourists' desire for space is overwhelmingly evidenced by visits to national parks and wilderness areas. For example, tourists are converging on Snowdonia National Park, and concerns have been raised about the potential devastation this could cause for rural health facilities. Park authorities reported their busiest visitor day in living memory, and that significant crowding on the mountain summits and trails made it impossible to maintain social distance (Mackenzie and Goodnow 2021). Overall, the desire for experiences and novelty has resulted in an increased demand for micro-adventures according to Mackenzie and Goodnow:

> Sierra Club encourages people to explore their backyard, not the backcountry. Local councils promote "isolation adventures" via webpages with adventure opportunities in nearby nature (e.g., DunedinNZ.com) and urban guidebooks revealing secret pathways connecting neighbourhoods to green spaces. . . .
>
> Neighbourhood "bear hunts" have sprung up internationally; social media overflows with images of backyard camping; and people are encouraged to "skip the climbing crag and rig a . . . station in [their] backyard. . . .
>
> On a personal level, the first author has discovered trails around the corner and shifted focus to "pre-schooler paced" adventures exploring the local stream, identifying birdsongs, and practicing outdoor travel skills with her family "bubble." However, the pinnacle of micro-adventure creativity may be

> epitomized by the parents who built a homemade ski slope descending from their backyard treehouse, complete with pulley ski lift to hoist children atop. In the interest of disclosure, it must be said that neither author of this chapter has achieved this level of micro-adventure. (2021, 64)

Trend 7: Quietness—Our Inner Soul

Quiet and relaxation is a dominant motivation for going on holiday, and destinations are helping travellers find calm in their journeys (Quorin, Eeckhout, and Harrison n.d.). An increasing number of studies have begun to highlight the value of quietness in natural environments (Votsi et al. 2014). The emotional experience gained by tourists is often expressed as a sensory perception of silence and tranquility. Regardless of the terminology used, the absence of noise is often referred to as silence. Consequently, the visual and auditory perception of well-being related to an environment free from human disturbance (defined as tranquility) reflects the value of natural quiet. The importance of quietness has received broad acknowledgement within a series of projects and policies undertaken at both the national and international levels.

In the context of COVID-19, personal health is rapidly acquiring a high level of importance (Pfefferbaum and North 2020). Indeed, personal health focuses on the dual importance of both physical and mental well-being, with inner well-being becoming a new priority for the health-aware individual. According to the Foresight Factory (2018b), mindfulness techniques and other forms of exercise that emphasize mental and spiritual benefits are in the ascendant, beneficiaries of a newfound consumer desire to control and sharpen one's mental state. Against a backdrop of widely felt time pressure, stress, and competitive labour markets, mindfulness becomes an essential life skill to nurture and even parade in front of others for valuable social status. According to the Foresight Factory (2018b), a future beckons in which tools and offers that strengthen mental power and alleviate cognitive strain are delivered by technological, health-care, and commercial partners of all kinds. Inner perfection will be as keenly sought after as an optimized outer appearance is today. Meanwhile, exploration into our complex emotional states will inevitably strengthen, with next-generation, wearable devices promising to log our real-time moods alongside our activity in an effort to optimize both.

In fact, natural environments will be seen as therapeutic landscapes that encapsulate healing and recovery notions when associated with mental health, hence one of the reasons for the surge in ecotourism and outdoor activities in a COVID-19 world (Majeed and Ramkissoon 2020). Tourism is a participant in this trend, from well-being and detox retreats, to yoga, spas, and many more tourism products and experiences (Ma et al. 2021; Yeoman 2010). Examples highlighted by Jiang and Balaji include the following:

> Health house Las Dunas provides a two-night digital detox programme named "mobile fasting at the Costa de Sol," where the hotel guests have their phones kept at reception on arrival and stay in a sea-view room without TV or any mobile device. . . . Likewise, the Robinson Crusoe experience has been a novel appeal promoted by island destinations such as Maldives, St. Vincent, and the Grenadines (SVG), where travellers have to hand over their electronic valuables. Technology is discouraged on the beach and even alarm clocks are frowned upon. (2021, 2)

Small tourism destinations with fewer tourists offer ideal locations to provide this much sought-after quietness in natural environments, thereby promoting inner health and well-being.

Trend 8: Slowness

Mass tourism is dependent on a globalized system of large-scale industrial agriculture that, contrary to the claims made by the green revolution, has historically entrenched underdevelopment, dependence, poverty, and loss of food security. It is a significant contributor to climate change, the destruction of the local and global commons, and has adverse impacts on environmental and human health (Fusté-Forné and Jamal 2020). Calls for slow tourism and slow food experiences reflect the need for a conscious, active way of being and living, oriented not to speeded-up lifestyles driven by mass consumption, business competition, and jockeying for market position, but rather to slow, responsible, mindful relationships and practices that foster resilience, sustainability, and social and ecological well-being. As Fullagar, Markwell, and Wilson (2012, 18) explain "slow is embodied in the qualities of rhythm, pace, tempo and velocity that are produced in the sensory and affective relationship between the traveller and the world." Slowness is reflected in a number of

social movements, including those of slow food, slow city, slow tourism, and slow travel (Williams et al. 2015). The slow food movement was initiated by Carlo Petrini in 1986 in response to the arrival of a McDonald's fast food restaurant in a culturally significant area of Rome. Its principles of good, clean, and fair guide aesthetic taste, promoting locally sourced ingredients, traditional recipes, and the need to take time to source, prepare, and enjoy food. Small tourism destinations that demonstrate a slow tourism or slow food approach emphasize the importance of local people, cultures, food, and music. Focusing on the moment, the here and now, they have the potential to have a marked emotional impact on the tourist, while remaining sustainable for local communities and the environment.

Caribbean tourism has faced various challenges in recent years (Walker, Lee, and Li 2021), with a focus on large-scale, mass tourism developments that create employment. However, this approach to tourism has been challenged over such issues as ownership, economic leakage, and climate change. Thus, an alternative model is advocated based on the principles of regenerative tourism and community. Whereas mass tourism is mainstream in Jamaica and the Bahamas, tourism in Cuba, a communist country, is focused on small-scale projects, community tourism, and entrepreneurship due to its political system and restrictions on inward investment and the size of businesses (Hollinshead 2006; Navarro-Martínez et al. 2020).

Trend 9: Ethical Choices

Tourists clearly distinguish between their holiday travels as something extraordinary and their everyday lives, where environmental factors are much more likely to be considered. Prillwitz and Barr's (2011) study of tourists' attitude to sustainable travel ten years ago saw insignificant acknowledgement of the willingness to change travel patterns because of climate change. Today, aviation is increasingly in conflict with societal goals to limit climate change and challenges related to air pollution, noise, and infrastructure expansion, and thus we see a movement away from aviation to rail travel, particularly in Europe (Gössling et al. 2019). COVID-19 has further accelerated our understanding of consumption, our environment, and how we live. These considerations then come to inform our understanding of tourism (Kock et al. 2020b), with small communities and rural destinations being the beneficiary, such as the Orkney Islands in the far north of Scotland (McGee and Arpi 2021), or the Chatham Islands in the Pacific Ocean (Cardow and Wiltshier 2010;

Sok 2022). These small islands are running at maximum occupancy due to the rise of ecotourism. One specific form of tourism that is booming because of COVID-19 is volunteer tourism (Dashper et al. 2021; Lockstone-Binney and Ong 2021). In New Zealand, the Department of Conservation's scheme for volunteers has seen a renaissance as people volunteer for a number of conservation projects such as laying new pathways, planting trees, monitoring bird numbers, and pest control measures (Department of Conservation 2021b). The period of COVID-19 has seen the rise of the first-time volunteer, according to Volunteering New Zealand:

> Some people learned about the importance of volunteering during the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic. They realized they needed to do more and help their communities more. This resulted in a wave of new volunteers to enter the volunteering landscape in order to assist their communities. Traditionally, many first-time volunteers have been newly retired individuals or older people. This seems to be changing with more people across different age groups becoming first-time volunteers. (2021, 2)

Trend 10: Sense of Community

McMillan describes sense of community as follows:

> a spirit of belonging together, a feeling that there is an authority structure that can be trusted, an awareness that trade, and mutual benefit come from being together, and a spirit that comes from shared experiences that are preserved as art. (1996, 315)

This sense of community, belonging, and participation are the main factors that can affect processes of tourism development. The sense of community plays an important role in fostering community support for tourism development, and may enhance its long-term sustainability as a broad basis for tourism development planning (Aref 2011). Developing a sense of community contributes to participation by enabling people to feel connected and motivated to live in harmony and work together toward common goals. Sense of community can be seen as the capacity of the local people to participate in development activities (Joppe 1996). Alberti has commentated on the impact of COVID-19 on "community":

> Something quite profound is . . . happening in terms of our relationships with people we don't know. Despite negativity about the societal impacts of COVID-19—from increased levels of loneliness to the limitations of social media—we are seeing some positive and unexpected results, including widespread outpourings of charity, togetherness and empathy for complete strangers. We might even be seeing a grassroots redefinition of what "community" means in the 21st century. (2020)

This rallying cry can be seen at the centre of community tourism: here tourism is owned by the people through a bottom-up approach (Butler and Pearce 1999; Jamal and Stronza 2009; Aref 2011). Fundamentally, small communities are taking ownership and developing their own tourism experience that is fit for purpose (Sheldon 2021). This can be seen especially among Indigenous groups (Ryan 1997; Yeoman et al. 2015; Howison, Higgins-Desbiolles, and Sun 2017). For example, in Mexico, communities in the Yucatan Peninsula have had to rethink their model of tourism because of COVID-19. There has been a transformation to more nature- and farm-based experiences, given that tourists want less commercial engagement, something more human-centred and imbued with the stories of the local people (Noorashid and Chin 2021). Another notable example is Quebrada Verde, Peru, a small rural community in the Andes Mountains (Gabriel-Campos et al. 2021) with a nature-based tourism offering that, in response to COVID-19 and climate change, has developed a rural ecotourism tool in order to protect the ecosystem in the hills.

Conclusion: A New Landscape

COVID-19 has hugely impacted tourism, without doubt. Many small communities that were dependent on tourism have been brought to a halt. For example, the Small Island Development States such as Fiji in the Pacific or Mauritius in the Indian Ocean have seen little or no tourism while at the same time having to deal with the health impacts of COVID-19. As Carr points out,

> Balancing the future industry so that tourism activities directly enhance the health and education of Indigenous peoples and communities is essential. Slow Tourism or degrowth that is locally focussed and grass roots driven are compatible ways forward

> for Indigenous Small and Medium Tourism Enterprises (ISMTEs), Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities. (2020, 491)

Beyond COVID-19 there is the big issue of climate change and the debates about the future of tourism as a consequence big tourism (i.e., over-tourism). In order to find an alternative, maybe the future is about smallness, regeneration, and communities (Cave and Dredge 2020; Dredge and Jenkins 2007; Sheldon 2021) so that tourism can be part of the solution rather than part of the problem, and changing the debate in which the negative impacts of tourism are highlighted. Small tourism allows communities to address issues of social inequality, to create a sense of place, to gain ownership of the tourism-development process, and, most importantly of all, to allow the development of entrepreneurship and innovation. This chapter has identified ten micro-trends, the foundation trends of small tourism that, taken together, can provide a useful framework for those involved in small tourism and who are creating tourism experiences for a better world. Understanding the values, behaviours, and motivations of the tourist will result in the creation of suitable tourism products and experiences for that tourist to consume. We predict that, in the future, small tourism will become the venue in which the interests of ecotourists and destination communities will merge.

NOTES

1 https://www.toastmartinborough.co.nz/.

2 https://www.exploreworldwide.co.nz/.

3 https://www.intrepidtravel.com/.

4 https://www.exodustravels.com/.

5 https://www.foresightfactory.co/.

6 http://www.bluffoysterfest.co.nz/.

7 https://wildfoods.co.nz.

8 https://www.airbnb.com/experiences.

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