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## CREATIVE TOURISM IN DESTINATION BRAND IDENTITY

### Abstract:

This paper analyses the emerging trends in creative tourism, as well as the possibilities of developing creative offer as a means of sustainable development (protection of resources, socio-cultural elements, natural elements and improving the local population's standard of living) of small historic towns on the Opatija Riviera (Volosko, Kastav, Lovran, Veprinac, Mošćenice, Brseč). It further analyses the current state of creative offer, sets the goals and suggests some possible strategies for developing creative tourism (educational workshops, creative workshops, etc.) as both the basic and additional element of the tourist offer based on

sustainable principles, and for creating a recognizable destination brand identity through a valorisation of uniqueness and diversity. The paper also answers the key questions of creative tourism offer enrichment and enhancement, and defines the means to innovate the promotional strategy with the goal of repositioning. The reconception of development in small historic towns and, ultimately, attracting future tourists, requires a synergy of all offer stakeholders, local communities and indigenous residents in forming new elements of creative initiatives through a valorisation of the past and the present.

### Keywords:

sustainable tourism development, creative tourism, small historic towns, Mošćenička Draga, Pinel

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## Introduction

Through valorisation of tradition and indigenous values, small historic towns need to attract modern tourist interests and reposition themselves on the turbulent tourism market as distinctive oases of cultural and creative tourism. The affirmation of selective forms of tourism, especially those based on cultural and historical heritage, creativity and innovation, can enable a sustainable creation of attractive contents for both tourists and the local population (quality of life, encouraging entrepreneurial activity, retaining young population, etc.)

The relevance of this research arises from the hypothesis that small historic towns can position themselves on an increasingly demanding tourism market solely on the basis of an indigenous offer and creative tourism in terms of sustainable development. In developing a creative destination brand, the research relies on the situation analysis. The analysis of the current situation provides a critical overview of small historic towns and their position on the tourism market, pointing to the unfortunate lack of awareness about the possibilities of creative tourism development and the lack of research on the topic. The paper defines the goals of development and the specific concrete ways of innovating strategies in the affirmation of creative tourism in creating the destination brand. Local residents and businesses need to evolve into key creators of a new tourism offer and a new, personalized view of tourists as active co-creators and promoters of an indigenous offer and a unique experience.

## Theoretical Determinants of Creative Tourism

Cultural tourism is an important element in the consideration of the special forms of tourism, and is defined as a form of tourism in which travel is motivated by cultural events, cultural and

historical heritage and history. Cultural tourism has a number of sub-forms which have developed, i.e. become recognizable as a special form of tourism with a special type of offer, and with specifically motivated tourists. This variety of forms, including heritage tourism, art, history, gastronomy, etc., can provide guidance or features which, when combined, create a distinctive cultural offer of the tourist destination. Fifteen years ago, Richards and Raymond [1] were the first to define creative tourism as “tourism which offers visitors the opportunity to develop their creative potential through active participation in courses and learning experiences which are characteristic of the holiday destination where they are undertaken”. Creative tourism [2] can be further defined as a form of cultural tourism that provides a new dynamic dimension that satisfies the modern traveller’s need for creativity. In the development of this selective form of tourism, the offer is created through the initiative at the local level and, as such, promotes economic and tourism development and enables the development of each destination in its own indigenouslyness. Furthermore, Richards [3] states that creative tourism can potentially address some of the pitfalls of contemporary cultural tourism models and can help to make places more distinctive and engaging for residents and visitors alike. UNESCO defines creative tourism as tourism in which “travel is directed toward an engaged and authentic experience, with participative learning in the arts, heritage, or special character of a place, and it provides a connection with those who reside in this place and create this living culture.” [4]

In Croatia, creative tourism has not been sufficiently recognized, and is present only in certain tourism destinations that are trying to achieve recognition and differentiation with new, creative offers. The Croatian Tourism Development

Strategy until 2020 [5], a document issued by the Croatian Ministry of Tourism, is the first to predict the growth of creative tourism as a form of cultural tourism that enables active involvement of visitors in the local culture. According to Rudan [6], Croatia could, with its individual creative offers, strive toward a joint cooperation, the creation of a joint offer, and the creation of clusters and branding, all under the syntagm “Croatia - the Country for a Creative Holiday”. Lindroth, Ritalahti and Soisalon-Soininen [7] suggest that creative elements could also be brought into the destination development and management work in order to guarantee success in the ever increasing competition between destinations. Creative programs that are or will be offered by a destination may be both the primary motive for visiting a destination, and the secondary, i.e. the programs can be a part of the destination’s additional offer which can result in a prolonged stay of tourists in the area, greater satisfaction and, finally, increased spending in the destination. In the development of creative tourism, the destinations need to create such an offer that will result in a distinctive and competitive integral tourism product on the turbulent contemporary tourism market. The lack of initiative for action at the local level results in the lack of recognition of small historic towns in creative tourism offer. Creative tourism in small historic towns would represent a novel, innovative product developed on sustainable principles. The aim should be the transformation of small historic towns into modern centres of economic development.

### **Creative Tourism in the Development of Small Historic Towns**

As tourist destinations, cities, especially those with interesting historical sites and valuable cultural and historical heritage or events, have

always been interesting to tourists. Many cities are trying to transform into creative cities and encourage their creative industries. Unlike in small historic towns, this is fairly easy to achieve in larger cities (due to creative industries, cultural institutions, events, etc.). The importance of creative cities at the global level is further emphasized by the UNESCO Creative Cities Network (individual cities are identified and classified among different fields of creative industries: literature, film, music, gastronomy, etc.). [8] The creativity of a small historic town depends on the creativity of space, i.e. its cultural surrounding (authenticity), the creativity of its people and the creativity of its offer. According to Đelov [9], creative cities are more than just places intended for artists and cultural activities. As the author points out, creativity is of great importance as an economic factor and, in the future, cities will reorient toward attracting new population, which would stimulate the interest of investors. In the study of possible generators of development of small towns, Dumbović Bilušić [10] points out various forms of tourism (cultural, eco- and other selective forms of tourism), which, when relying on the specificities of space, its ambient and architectural features and other forms of intangible heritage, can create new values. Furthermore, Turner [11] states that the identities of small towns attract tourism and affect investors and decision makers looking for a comfortable space for their businesses. By developing and promoting creativity, small historic towns can lay foundations for a new form of economic development.

Today, the conditions of Croatian small historic towns are very different. Some are well preserved; others are inadequately preserved, while some are devastated by various upgrades or changed by various embellishments. Without adequate investment in maintenance and

infrastructure, and with no strategic plans for economic and tourism development, or plans for restoration, protection and revitalization, it is impossible to imagine the tourism development of these authentic historical values. [12] The development of a tourism offer based on cultural and historical heritage of urban areas can bring a new quality of life to the local population and, in particular, the development of entrepreneurial activities. In the document issued by the Croatian Ministry of Culture [13], entrepreneurship based on cultural heritage is defined as a group of those activities whose products and services' commercial value depends on creative work based on the knowledge of history, art and culture. Stimulating creative activities and creativity-based entrepreneurship certainly opens up new possibilities for a systematic development of small historic towns as tourism destinations. Their tourism offer must be developed in a way that does not violate the harmony of life and the value of their heritage. [14] The history and culture of small historic towns is an important link in the survival of Croatian identity. The development of creative tourism in small historic towns can be shown on the example of Mošćenička Draga.

### Analysis of the Current State of Tourism in Mošćenička Draga

Mošćenička Draga [1] is part of the known tourist destination the Opatija Riviera. In the last fifty years, Opatija has developed a summer holiday form of tourism, with a tourism offer based mainly on sun, sea and swimming. Although there are other forms of tourism present on the Opatija Riviera (such as health, congress, cultural, culinary, event etc.), Mošćenička Draga strives to develop cultural and culinary tourism alongside summer holiday tourism. Destination management is creative tourism, has not yet been systematically viewed nor studied, and this form of

tourism is not even recognized as a possible solution to the insufficient recognition of both the destination and its cultural tourism. The existing cultural tourism offer requires development and innovation. Table 1 shows the SWOT analysis of the tourist destination Mošćenička Draga.

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Geographical location (vicinity of emissive markets)</li> <li>• Unique natural and cultural environment</li> <li>• Cultural- historical heritage</li> <li>• Hospitable local population</li> <li>• Cultural manifestations</li> <li>• Clean and preserved environment</li> <li>• Tradition in tourism</li> <li>• Safety</li> <li>• Gastronomic offer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pronounced seasonality and focus on summer holiday tourism</li> <li>• Accommodation facilities</li> <li>• Poor catering offer</li> <li>• Undeveloped offer of selective forms of tourism</li> <li>• Undeveloped offer for the young</li> <li>• Insufficient funding</li> <li>• Insufficient promotional activities</li> <li>• Local population's lack of interest for entrepreneurship in tourism</li> </ul>
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The tourists' desire for active holidays, new contents and the acquisition of new knowledge</li> <li>• Stagnation of rival destinations</li> <li>• Incentive measures in spatial planning and projects of revitalization of historical areas</li> <li>• EU funds</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recession and crisis</li> <li>• Non-stimulative legislation</li> <li>• Rival activities</li> <li>• Failure to consider new trends in tourism</li> <li>• Changes in tourists' preferences</li> <li>• Unfavourable climate for realization of creative programs</li> <li>• Monetary and fiscal policy</li> </ul>

Table 1.: SWOT analysis of the tourist destination Mošćenička Draga, source: authors' interpretation

Mošćenička Draga has a valuable cultural and historical heritage (two old medieval towns - Mošćenice and Brseč, churches, the mythical-historical path Trebišće - Perun, fisheries and maritime heritage, ethnographic museum collection), and offers an array of events to both local residents and tourists: fishermen's nights, international literary evenings "Sipar", Municipality Days ("Marinina"), burning the

carnival mascot - Pust, traditional boat regatta, walking tours on the mythical-historical path Trebišće - Perun, Blues Festival, art festival "Mufić", traditional Easter event "picanje jaja", Kandalora, etc. These events are not being sufficiently recognized, which is confirmed by the results of the surveys conducted in the tourist destinations of the Opatija Riviera and shown in table 2.[2]

Tourism offer elements at the OPATIJA RIVIERA sub-region level	Ičići	Lovran	Mošćenička Draga	Matulji	Opatija	sub-region
Events	4.50	4.98	4.03	4.68	5.11	4.66
Historical and cultural heritage	4.13	5.17	5.00	4.95	5.30	4.90
Contents for children	4.42	4.98	4.71	4.84	5.08	4.80
Accommodation facilities	4.38	5.33	5.32	5.25	5.56	5.15
Catering facilities	4.38	5.33	5.38	5.17	5.53	5.16
Cultural contents	4.25	4.73	4.48	4.71	5.22	4.67
Entertainment contents	5.25	5.25	5.06	5.32	5.35	5.25
Sports contents	4.38	4.92	3.90	4.85	4.95	4.54
Meeting and congresses	3.79	4.47	3.46	4.13	4.88	4.15
Health tourism contents	4.17	4.70	3.70	4.65	5.31	4.47
Nautical offer	4.58	4.97	4.65	4.95	5.17	4.84
Excursion offer	4.71	5.20	4.76	5.25	5.34	5.00
Local gastronomy	4.79	5.12	5.39	5.35	5.68	5.25
Price-quality ratio	4.63	4.68	5.15	5.12	5.19	4.91
	4.72	5.15	5.07	5.32	5.31	5.06

Table 2.: Tourists' satisfaction with the Opatija Riviera tourism offer elements in 2012., source: Blažević, B., Peršić, M. (Ed.): "Istraživanje turizma destinacije" ("Tourism Destination Research"), Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management in Opatija, Opatija, 2012, pp. 39-40.

It is evident that the cultural events (4.03) and cultural contents (4.48) in Mošćenička Draga are given lower marks compared to the average marks for the sub-region of the Opatija Riviera. In the development of cultural tourism, there is a gap between the destination management's wishes and the perception of the tourists staying in the destination. Mošćenice, as one of the old historical towns (within the Municipality of Mošćenička

Draga) wants to achieve its recognition through creative projects and programs. One such manifestation is the international art colony "Mošćenički Pinel", held every year (for the last six years) in the last week of August and attended by eight to ten artists from different European countries. The art colony opens with an initial exhibition of the participants' previous art works by which the artists present themselves to the

audience (tourists, local residents, experts). During this 7-days event in Mošćenice, the artists. After a week, the new works are displayed at the exhibition that will remain open for the next twenty days. During the seven days of the colony, the artists visit the historical sites and the whole event is organized in a way to encourage and create sharing and communication both between the artists themselves, and between the artists and the environment in which they create. In addition, children's creative workshops "Mošćenički Pinelići" are organized for both tourists and the local children, led by the artists- colony participants, where children work in different techniques adapted to their age, creating works on specific topics related to the landscape in which they are staying or living.

The analysis of the current state of tourism proves that Mošćenička Draga needs to innovate and qualitatively enrich its uniform, stereotypical offer by putting special emphasis on creative contents.

### **The Goals and Development Scenario Analysis of Creative Tourism in the Transformation of Mošćenička Draga into a Distinctive, Recognizable Tourism Destination**

Each small historic town of the Opatija Riviera needs to build its creative tourism product on its own, authentic and recognizable basis, emphasize its cultural resources and heritage, and integrate its indigenous values into the development of its creative offer, for example: Lovran can develop as a creative gastronomic destination (cooking schools - indigenous ingredients such as marun (sweet chestnut), cherries, asparagus, etc.), Brseč (Glagolitic alphabet school, art colonies and workshops, etc.), Volosko (art workshops, colonies, etc.), Kastav (traditional crafts workshops,

create their artworks in the open (on Kosnica, squares, stone steps, in front of the church, etc.). culinary workshops, creative workshops related to the events Bela Nedeja and Kastafsko kulturno leto -Kastav Cultural Summer Festival, etc.), Veprinac (art and music workshops, authentic gastronomy, etc.). The qualitative development of the creative offers will also multiply the quantitative results (profit increase).

The most important goal of tourism development is the transformation of Mošćenička Draga, and especially Mošćenice, into the most distinctive and recognizable creative destination on the Opatija Riviera. Quantitatively, it is necessary to increase the number of creative events and visitors. In the development of creative tourism, is necessary to create the image of Mošćenice as the town of creative initiatives. Mošćenički Pinel needs to be transformed into a recognizable brand of the creative destination, i.e. it needs to encourage: the participation of tourists and their children in the creative elements of the event; the strengthening of Croatian art scene at the international level; the exchange of experiences and contacts between the artists from Croatia and abroad; children's creative work and initiatives that would allow them to become cultural connoisseurs and consumers; the initiatives for new projects for cooperation and exchange between artists, and establishing contacts and communication of the artists and the local residents.

In the future, it is necessary to encourage the synergy and innovation of operational strategies in Mošćenička Draga, in other words, find a way to develop a distinctive creative offer oasis that will result in the creation of a creative destination brand. As Karabag, Yavuz and Berggren [15] state, festivals and events, which create an interactive, relational, and experience-based atmosphere, can

become the key promotion and communication tools for cities.

Using the R&D strategy, it is necessary to obtain quality information about the changes in tourists' preferences and the rivals' activities, and to implement the findings into concrete offer enhancement.

In the supply strategy, it is necessary to bring innovation to the Mošćenice tourism product and direct it toward the creative offer. Some possible ways to improve the creative offers of Mošćenički Pinel and Mošćenički Pinelić are the following: rewarding the participation of visitors and tourists in the event with, for example, photographs of the most interesting moments of Mošćenički Pinel etc.; various workshops (art, music, sculpting) for both children and adults; cooking schools using indigenous ingredients and preparing food in traditional ways; traditional music evenings; Glagolitic alphabet schools; integration of mythical-historical paths into creative artwork, and rewarding the best work in children's creative workshops.

In addition to painting workshops and artistic creation in the open, it is necessary to include other events in the offer, such as evenings of traditional music, concerts, authentic gastronomy, literary evenings and other cultural and historical heritage. Each new event in the offer should be in harmony with the identity of the small historic town in which it takes place.

The marketing strategy, based on market research, defining target segments, positioning and innovating the marketing mix, should adjust the creative offer to any particular segment of tourists who are all, to a greater or lesser degree, potential creative tourists. The colony itself should attract tourists motivated by culture, especially families with children who will be actively involved in mastering the painting skill and who will interact with local residents and artists alike. The

colony should become a meeting place for both Croatian and international artists, and the actual content solutions need to involve as many other artists as possible (exchange of experiences, making new business contacts, etc.). By providing a creative environment during these seven days, the event can become a destination brand. Mošćenice, and the destination as a whole, need to be integrated into promotional activities. Mošćenički Pinel needs to become a part of tourism packages of accommodation providers in Mošćenička Draga and the Opatija Riviera alike. Web pages are especially important; Kolb [16] states that one of the main advantages of a website is that it can communicate to more than one market segment of tourists at the same time by having different content pages. In addition, a website can be more easily and inexpensively updated than a brochure. In the overall promotion of the event, an extremely important role is that of the exhibitions that are held throughout Europe and that show artworks created in previous colonies (e.g. Mošćenički Pinel Exhibition that was held in Gelsenkirchen in Germany, and the United Nations Office in Vienna, used for presentation and promotion of Mošćenička Draga). In the future, more such exhibitions should be planned, with the goal of promoting Mošćenička Draga as a creative tourism destination. Mošćenički Pinel should become a symbol of Mošćenice and be used as a promotional tool that will present this historical town as a town of creative initiatives. As part of the future Ecomuseum Mošćenička Draga, the distinctive visual identity of Mošćenice must be in harmony with its cultural characteristics in order to differentiate this small historic town among its competitors in the region. Mošćenička Draga can, in accordance with the development of its offers, create a promotional message that will contain the word creative (e.g. "Mošćenička Draga -

destination for creative holiday”, “Be creative - come to Mošćenička Draga” etc.).

Human resource strategy should encourage and educate the employees, but also include the local residents and tourists in the development of creative activities. In order to maximize the quality, certain programs and projects will require the involvement and hiring of experts. It is necessary to strive for self-realization in entrepreneurial ventures (souvenir shops, local delicacies, galleries, cooking schools, painting schools, traditional crafts workshops, olive growing and olive oil production, etc.). The local population should become the basis of the destination’s creative programs development.

Using the financial strategy, the creative programs need to be applied for funding competitions by the EU, ministries and counties that support such initiatives in typical urban environments. It is necessary to find supporters and sponsors for Mošćenički Pinel, who would further support the development of creative programs.

Through continuous innovation and reconception of development based on the totality of cultural and historical heritage and its indigenous, small historic towns need a quality answer to the challenges of a turbulent 21st century environment in achieving sustainable development and building their own distinctiveness.

### Conclusion

Each small historic town, with its specific elements and landscape, tries to respond, in its own unique way, to the demands of local residents, visitors and tourists alike. The tourism development of small historic towns must be based on their unique and rich heritage; most importantly the cultural and creative offer that will not cause adverse effects on the existing values

and quality of life in the destination. Furthermore, the small historic towns need to strive toward cooperation and the creation of a joint offer (the Opatija Riviera destination) on the market, emphasizing each micro-destination’s distinctiveness.

In the event offer of Mošćenička Draga the art colony Mošćenički Pinel and children’s creative workshops Mošćenički Pinelići are especially prominent. Based on the situational analysis (key advantage: cultural and historical heritage, key disadvantages: insufficiently profiled tourism offer and promotion) it is necessary to redefine the objectives and innovate the operational strategies, providing concrete solutions for promotional innovation and a qualitative transformation of events, in order to transform Mošćenički Pinel into a brand, a symbol and the brightest tourism story of Mošćenička Draga.

This work creates the foundation for new research, with the goal of defining new trends in creative events, researching stakeholder attitudes and achieving offer- and promotional innovation in each Kvarner micro-destination, emphasizing their own uniqueness and distinctiveness based primarily on sustainable development and natural, cultural and traditional values.

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**PHOTO 4.**

**Diplomanti | Graduates**

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