

IN THE SEARCH FOR NEW EXPERIENCES – THE WAY TO CREATIVE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

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Over the last decade, new forms of cultural tourism are being increasingly mentioned as innovative development models of this specific form of tourism. One of these forms is creative tourism which tourism destinations use to innovate their tourism offer. In the Republic of Croatia, this trend is particularly present in summer holiday destinations that aim to reduce their high seasonality with new creative programmes and projects. By introducing a creative offering, tourism destinations can increase their competitiveness in the tourism market and become distinctive by their specific programmes. The paper explores the development in Croatia of both cultural tourism and creative tourism, as an enhancement to a destination's cultural offering. It analyses the current state of creative tourism and looks at the motivations for tourist arrivals to Croatia, with special reference to cultural attractions and events as a travel motivation. The paper also examines the creative offerings of individual destinations as well as target tourist segments, for the purpose of helping to create an innovative cultural offering.

Key words: creative tourism, Croatia, cultural tourism, destination management



INTRODUCTION

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In recent decades, cultural tourism has increasingly gained an important presence in international tourism trends. It has become one of the most important forms of special-interest tourism. The reason for this surely lies in the diverse changes to the lives of modern people, which have brought about changes in travel interests and motivations. First among these changes are various sources of information, the most important being the Internet, which provide potential travellers with insight into the tourism offering the likes of which tourists up to the 1990s could not even have imagined. Another change is the increased educational level of world travellers and their desire to know new things and their constant search for new experiences. Most tourist trips involve some cultural segment, whether it is listening to the songs of local singers while on vacation or at a beach or attending a concert, exhibition or other cultural attraction that requires travelling to a distant venue. Modern tourists have access to information and are constantly looking for new experiences in culture; regardless of whether the cultural and art motivation is incidental or intentional, it is a part of every travel. Each tourist destination offers its own specific cultural and historical heritage and its cultural assets, created within its territory, and seeks to design its own cultural tourism product, making it as attractive, interesting and, most importantly, as competitive as possible on the tourism market.

THEORETICAL DETERMINANTS OF CULTURAL TOURISM

Cultural tourism is a specific form of tourism that is, in all its complexity, determined by various cultural attractions, resources and events. A variety of authors (Pančić Kombol 2006; Vrtiprah 2006; Tomljenović 2007; Jelinčić 2008; 2010; Rudan 2010; Rudan and Stipanović 2014; McKercher and Du Cros 2002; Steneicke 2007) have contributed to the term's definition as well as its distinctiveness and identification in both the scientific and tourism literature and in everyday business activities. This form of tourism is foremost determined by a stay in a



destination motivated by culture and art. Dragičević Šešić and Stojković (2013, 139) see such travels as providing opportunities for getting to know other worlds and cultures as well as opportunities for evaluating one's own culture and personality traits in contact with the different and the unknown. Because the potential for merging the tourism experience with the art experience is huge and limitless, the combination of culture/art and tourism is a source for the design of a variety of cultural tourism attractions. The same authors go on to claim that a great responsibility lies with the cultural sector as well, in particular with public institutions, in designing programmes and offerings to meet special tourist interests and the specific demands of tourists as groups and as individuals. While tourists are motivated by culture and art to different degrees, it can be said that culture and art motivation, whether primary or incidental, is nothing new; it has existed since the beginning of tourism travel. In the past, tourism travel was motivated by Ancient Greece, the desire to see Europe, attend concerts, exhibitions, etc. Today there is an entire array of new motivations (acquiring new knowledge, becoming actively involved in elements of a destination's offering) driving travellers to take trips motivated by culture.

Over the past 15 years or so, overall tourism development in Croatia has focused considerably on boosting various forms of special-interest tourism, cultural tourism in particular, as evidenced by documents providing guidelines at both the national level and the micro destination level. In 2003 the Croatian Ministry of Tourism adopted the *Cultural Tourism Development Strategy*, the first document in Croatia to define this specific form of tourism as special-interest tourism with people travelling outside their usual place of residence motivated entirely or partially by their interest in the history, art, heritage or lifestyle of a locality, region, group or institution. The Ministry of Tourism initiated the development of the strategy with the aim of identifying strategic measures to provide incentive to the private and the public sector to achieve the following objectives: to include the cultural sector in the tourism product of destinations as a way of prolonging the tourist season; to increase secondary spending; to drive greater spending and extend the stay



of guests in a destination; to develop a critical mass of cultural products and attractions; and to use the knowledge and talents of cultural workers in tourism interpretation, promotion and presentation. The 2013 *Strategy of Tourism Development by 2020* brought new elements and directions and identified the major barriers to continued growth as being in the commercialisation system (primarily, in its integration into world-scale systems) and in the destination management system, which should enable cultural facilities/services to be properly integrated in positioning and delivering the overall experience at the destination level. According to the 2013 document, cultural tourism products of particular relevance for Croatia are city tourism, heritage tourism, event tourism, creative tourism and spiritual tourism.

Adopted in 2015 by the Ministry of Tourism, the *Action Plan for Cultural Tourism* identifies five major programme areas for the further development of cultural tourism. These are: *infrastructure for cultural tourism* (aimed at ensuring high-quality infrastructure for the presentation and interpretation of tangible and intangible cultural heritage, and the integration of the products of creative and cultural industries which would provide visitors with opportunities for well-designed, interactive and informal learning about the significance of cultural goods and would enable destinations to identify their unique and authentic features and communicate them to visitors), *the development of cultural tourism products* (aimed at creating a diversified cultural tourism offering to ensure the temporal and geographic dispersion of tourism demand and more-balanced regional development, and improve the quality and, in turn, the competitiveness of the cultural tourism offering. The measures in this programme area refer to the formation of more-complex products and the integration of offerings through cultural theme routes and itineraries at national and regional levels and their networking with European cultural routes, the rejuvenation of destinations using festivals and events, the fostering of the development of complementary products to enrich the experience, and the boosting of small and medium-sized enterprises), *cultural tourism marketing* (aimed at strengthening the image of Croatia in the international market as a country rich in cultural tourism products of



diverse elements and features that contribute to making experiences authentic, and raising awareness in the country concerning the value and potential of cultural and historical heritage for overall economic development), *partnerships for the development of cultural tourism* (aimed at coordinating the creative and innovative management of the process of cultural tourism development through formal and informal partnership networks and stable sources of funding), and *education for cultural tourism*. In recent years, Croatia has made great efforts to improve its cultural tourism offering, in particular in guiding the activities of destination managers, local government and self-government, and all other stakeholders in the value chain in tourism. All links in the value chain of cultural tourism are equally vital, because only through integrated action is it possible to accomplish the strategic commitments adopted in the documentation basis and create a competitive cultural tourism product (through the synergy of culture and tourism).

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Contemporary cultural tourism has a variety of subsets (classified in different ways by different authors) such as city tourism, heritage tourism, food tourism, art tourism and creative tourism. Creative tourism has emerged from the development of tourists' motivations to acquire specific knowledge and skills during their travels and from the desire of tourist destinations to create a specific form of cultural tourism in order to become, and remain, competitive in the discerning tourism market.

CREATIVE TOURISM AS A NEW FORM OF TOURISM

Creative tourism emerged as a subject of interest of practitioners and scholars some 15 years ago when Richards and Raymond (2000, 18) defined it 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'. Cuccia and Rizzo (2015, 180) claim that in parallel to the enlargement of the concept of culture which has been witnessed in industrialized countries in recent decades, it is widely agreed that cultural heritage tourism demand is not confined



to “sites and monuments” but has a wider scope, ranging from cultural events, architecture and design to creative activities and intangible heritage, just to mention some of the most significant items outlining the growing integration of tourism and creativity, leading to “creative tourism”. As a result of cultural tourism development the perceived role of a destination’s cultural offering is changing. Tourists are transformed into active participants in the process of their cultural or artistic advancement in a destination; they cease to be mere observers, becoming instead a part of a destination’s creative activities. As Rudan (2012, 721) points out, in creative tourism development it is essential that destination managers, business managers, local self-governments and non-profit organisations (particularly those in the fields of culture, art and the conservation of native values such as tradition and folklore) possess personal creativity. Stipanović, Rudan and Zadel (2017) argue that tourism of the twenty-first century is growing into an experience industry based on creativity as a key line of development in diversifying a destination from its competitors and satisfying the increasingly discerning needs of tourists. A creative offering, based on cultural preconditions and the creativity and innovativeness of destination managers, small entrepreneurs and all stakeholders involved in the tourism offering, can evolve into a key tourism product and destination brand.

Creative development is a segment of the entire cultural tourism offering which, given its potential for rapid implementation with low costs for the resource base, is capable of delivering good results in a short time for the cultural and creative industries, small entrepreneurs, and tradespeople, while also enhancing the overall competitiveness of a destination. By introducing a creative offering, tourist destinations can add new value to their competitive ability in the tourism market and build their “creative identity”. In the development of the tangible and intangible cultural heritage, Mišković (2013, 136) highlights the following indicators signalling the existence of a market focused on cultural attractions and events: growing hobby-based interest in history, cultural heritage and history/art publications; growing tourism industry; tourism product diversification; growing



interest in authentic agricultural/food products; and changes in the perception of quality. These indicators are the basis for developing creative tourism. Richards (2011, 1245) observes that creativity may well play an important part in mainstream tourism experiences by adding to the atmosphere of places, forming part of the “buzz” apparently so important to attracting the creative class. In view of this complexity perhaps creative tourism is not a coherent “niche” at all, but rather a series of creative practices linking production, consumption and place.

Richards (2002) states that because creativity is a process it is sustainable. While physical cultural resources such as museums and monuments can deteriorate over time, creative resources are continuously renewable (for example, various types of cultural and art festivals). He goes on to say that creativity is mobile, meaning that while cultural consumption depends upon the concentration of cultural resources, creativity can be distinctly mobile (for example, artistic performances can be staged anywhere, without the need for new, additional infrastructure). The construction of new infrastructure in culture (for example, a museum or art gallery) requires a certain amount of funding, and while such infrastructure is not needed in creative tourism, it can be used in designing a creative offering (various courses, workshops, etc.).

Creative tourism drives the economic development of a community. It is the outcome of the assets (resource base) that a destination possesses, particularly in recent years with the development of the cultural and creative industries (film, publishing, design, fashion, etc.). Cultural and creative industries stimulate and enable the development of creative tourism in the international tourism market. Statistics concerning the cultural and creative industries have been poorly kept in Croatia. Mapping of Creative and Cultural Industries in Croatia, the first important study in Croatia dealing with the cultural and creative industries, was conducted by the Institute of Economics of Zagreb in 2015. The study identified 12 sectors within the creative and cultural industries. These are museums; libraries and heritage; art; music and the performing arts; design; film; photography; trades (artistic crafts); architecture; computer software, games



and new media; electronic media; publishing; and advertising and market communication. In Croatia the cultural and creative industries account for 2.3% of the overall GDP and 3% of the country's workforce. In 2014, a total of 42,212 people were employed in the cultural and creative industries, mostly in publishing, advertising and market communication, electronic media, museums, etc. In any case, the level of development of the cultural and creative industries is such that it provides opportunities for developing all forms of cultural tourism (ranging from forms focused on the cultural and historical heritage to those focused on modern art) as well as creative tourism.

CREATIVE TOURISTS AND NEW EXPERIENCES

Creative tourists seek new experiences and are keen to acquire new knowledge to enrich their daily routines. The reason behind “creative trips” can be explained by the desire for self-actualisation through creative work. Urošević (2012, 69) argues that the new, postmodern tourist is integrated into creative tourism, a new generation of tourism, which involves an authentic experience and engagement in the real cultural life of the community in a destination. Creative tourism is based on the expression of an individual's creative potential and the self-creation of the tourist experience, and it involves greater educational, emotional, social and participative interaction with a place, its culture of life and its residents. Vuleković (2009, 26) points out that today's *Homo turisticus* is a traveller with particular interests, primarily motivated by a desire to learn new things and have real and authentic experiences. For creative tourists, culture is the primary element of travelling to a destination and their need for new experiences is the basis on which the destination's offering is geared toward the new creative tourist. The question is who are creative tourists? Long and Morpeth (2016, 18) suggest that a focus on creative tourist practice requires attention to the capacity of individuals (travelling and experiencing the world as tourists) to act independently and autonomously through their possession and desire to acquire, develop and deploy reflexive knowledge about creative (artistic) expressions and practice.



Richards and Wilson (2006, 1220) argue that one of the keys to developing creative experiences is to allow the participants to develop their own narratives and draw upon their own imaginative potential, rather than providing ready-made storylines for them. They believe it is therefore increasingly important to provide tourists with the raw materials from which to construct their own narratives.

According to UNESCO (2006), creative tourism involves more interaction, in which visitors have an educational, emotional, social, and participative interaction with the place, its living culture, and the people who live there. They feel like a citizen. Creative tourism is capable of giving a new dimension to a destination's stagnant cultural offering, which can satisfy the need of modern travellers to engage in creative work during their stay in a destination and participate in various workshops, educational programmes and other creative activities (in art, heritage, nature, special features of the destination), thus enabling them to experience the true atmosphere of the area in which they are staying (Rudan 2012).

Creative tourism can be developed within a variety of forms, creative activities and programmes, such as cooking workshops; art colonies; traditional crafts lessons; singing, dancing and music classes; Glagolitic alphabet classes; traditional fishing classes; toy-making workshops; photography classes and photography workshops. The creative offering in destinations can be focused on a variety of age groups, ranging from the youngest to the oldest tourists. When the creative offering is differentiated to include children (Glagolitic alphabet classes, folklore classes, music courses, etc.), young people (dry stone wall building workshops, art workshops, art colonies, photography workshops, singing and dancing classes, etc.) and adults (food and wine workshops, trades and traditional crafts workshops, art colonies, poetry colonies, design workshops, dancing schools, photo and video workshops, various hobbies, etc.), it can indeed be highly diverse. The diversity of the creative offering is also affected by the creativity of managers (of destinations, enterprises or craft trades), the space in which creativity is produced and the end service – the creative product.



DEVELOPMENT OF CREATIVE TOURISM IN CROATIA

12 | Many Croatian tourist destinations are seeking to develop cultural tourism, a trend that is particularly present in summer leisure destinations which are looking to diminish their marked seasonality through new creative programmes and projects. In recent years, towns possessing the resource base needed for the creation of new products have also become increasingly active in this respect. While some destinations have been very successful in developing cultural tourism (especially destinations with a rich cultural and historical heritage), others have not fared so well (due to a lack of cultural resources and creative managers). Only in a small number of destinations in Croatia is creative activity recognised and developed as a potential supplementary tourism-product offering, but even there it has not been organised into a joint offering. To develop, creative tourism needs a creative environment. Such an environment will be capable of designing a creative cultural product through the engagement of all destination stakeholders, destination managers in particular. The integrated action of all destination stakeholders (businesses, associations, artists, local self-government, tourist boards, etc.) is needed to ensure success as well as continuity in building a creative destination geared to the new demands and travel motivations of tourists.

According to the TOMAS 2017 (2018) survey of the Institute for Tourism, “rest and recreation – passive recreation” (54.9%) was the dominating motivation for travelling to Croatia (Table 1). The motivations, which include potential motivations for cultural tourism and creative tourism as its subset, show a steady upward trend in the observed period 2001 – 2017. In 2001, “cultural attractions and events” was a travel motivation for only 7.50% of tourists arriving in Croatia but in 2017 this share grew to 12.30%. “New experiences”, another motivation significant for this form of tourism, also saw a steady increase from 20.20% in 2001 to 31.10% in 2017.



Table 1: Motivations for tourist arrivals in Croatia

Motivations	2001	2004	2007	2010	2014	2017
Rest and recreation – passive recreation	91.10%	66.70%	61.60%	75.10%	75%	54.90%
Fun	36.10%	42.50%	43.30%	44.10%	43%	24.20%
Seeing nature	32.50%	24.40%	26.10%	20.90%	20%	26.20%
New experiences	20.20%	24.60%	25.50%	25.30%	30%	31.10%
Cultural attractions and events	7.50%	6.00%	9.80%	7.10%	7.00%	12.30%
Sport and recreation	7.10%	8.80%	10.20%	8.30%	6.80%	19.80%
Visiting friends and family	6.20%	6.00%	8.30%	8.60%	6.10%	9.80%
Health reasons	4.20%	5.10%	5.00%	4.70%	5.00%	6.90%
Diving	3.10%	3.00%	6.30%	3.60%	3.20%	6.10%
Business	1.10%	1.30%	1.20%	0.80%	0.90%	2.50%
Shopping	0.60%	1.50%	2.50%	2.30%	1.10%	3.20%
Gastronomy	-	19.40%	19.60%	21.90%	26.00%	29.00%
Religion	-	0.20%	0.70%	0.30%	0.20%	1.00%
Other motivations	1.60%	2.10%	0.90%	3.20%	0.50%	0.60%

* multiple responses allowed

Source: Processed by the authors after *Attitudes and Expenditure of Tourists in Croatia* (TOMAS 2001, TOMAS 2004, TOMAS 2007, TOMAS 2010, TOMAS 2014 and TOMAS 2017).

When considering motivations by county, as surveyed in TOMAS 2017 (Table 2), it can be concluded that there are considerable differences in motivations for travelling to individual counties. Those counties possessing considerable cultural resources have been able to develop a strong cultural tourism offering. Although the TOMAS survey did not explore travel motivations linked to



the creative offering (desire to attend workshops, courses, etc.), the motivation “visiting cultural attractions and events” and the percentages per county are an important indicator of the development of the creative offering.

Table 2: *Motivations for visiting the destination, by county (multiple responses)(%)*

Motivations	Total	County of Istria	County of Primorje-Gorski Kotar	County of Lika-Senj	County of Zadar	County of Šibenik-Knin	County of Split-Dalmatia	County of Dubrovnik-Neretva
Passive rest and relaxation	54.9	38.8	50.8	78.1	70.2	60.00	62.5	69.2
Visiting cultural attractions and events	12.3	13.0	7.8	7.1	16.8	11.2	12.9	15.0

Source: Processed by the authors, after Attitudes and Expenditure of Tourists in Croatia (TOMAS 2017).

According to the TOMAS survey, respondents are the least satisfied with the so-called bad weather programme. Out of 34 elements of the offering (which affect the opportunity of developing a creative offering), diversity of cultural events (59.6%) is one of the five elements that received the lowest scores. This fact indicates there is untapped potential for tourist destinations to develop new creative offerings. The elements of the offering with the highest score are scenic and natural beauty (84.6%), friendliness of staff in the accommodation facility (83.4%), personal safety (82.6%), suitability for a family holiday (80.7%) and atmosphere, mood (80.4%). While 76% of respondents expressed satisfaction with their overall vacation, 61.4% were less satisfied with the presentation of cultural heritage. These indicators suggest that additional improvements are essential in cultural tourism, particularly in creative tourism. To ensure a well-designed



cultural as well as creative offering, it is necessary to make innovations, add new elements and gear the existing offering to the needs of modern tourists. Destination management plays a vital role in this respect. The lack of interest in both the cultural and creative sector and the tourism sector for joint and synergistic action has been identified as a major problem situation in Croatian tourism. Little research has been conducted concerning the motivations of creative tourists and the development of a creative offering, indicating the need for more studies in that direction. A recent study of the creative offering by Stipanović, Rudan and Zadel (2017) focuses on the small entrepreneurs of Krk Island, the largest island in Croatia. The study concluded that the creative offering is based on the individual initiatives of entrepreneurs, associations and artists and that, despite the island's rich resource base, there is not enough joint action in developing an integrated creative offering in the destination.

Croatia lacks a common and distinctive Internet platform that would unite the creative offerings of Croatian destinations, compelling tourists motivated by a creative offering to find different ways to learn more about it. Namely, in Croatian tourism there are individual examples of creative tourist destinations or, rather, creative programmes (for example, international art colonies and open-air activities such as at Mandrač in Opatija and Mošćenički Pinel in Mošćenice; workshops about dry stone wall heritage and construction organised by the Dragodid Association; folklore workshops; Glagolitic classes; sculpture colonies; etc.), with the initiative always being launched from within the local community (by associations, small entrepreneurs, craftspeople, tourist boards, artists, etc.). The County of Primorje-Gorski Kotar is among the lowest-rated counties with regard to cultural events and attractions as a tourist motivation and has no internationally distinctive cultural resources. It could, however, gain a competitive advantage based on the development of a creative offering in all its micro destinations but only through the integrated actions of all stakeholders, thus making it distinctive as a destination of creative tourism (all the more so knowing that Rijeka, the county capital will be a European Capital of Culture in 2020). Destination managers



need to be aware that creative programmes depend not only on the creativity of local communities but also on the support of all stakeholders (foremost, destination management) in the value chain of tourism demand.

THE FUTURE OF CREATIVE TOURISM IN CROATIA

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A focus on authentic values combined with the innovative elements of the cultural and creative industries (fashion, design, advertising, film, etc.) is the key to developing the creative tourism in Croatia. The cultural and creative industries drive the development of new cultural attractions but are also a vital element in the innovation of the destination's existing cultural product. It is crucial to design a well thought-out creative offering based on the authentic values of each tourist destination and on the involvement of both the cultural sector and the tourism sector. A diverse offering based on creative and artistic endeavours (with special emphasis on the entrepreneurial initiatives of residents, a major link in this type of offering) will not only help to multiply the satisfaction of tourists and motivate them to spend more but will also make Croatia a distinctive destination of creative tourism. Through the development of creative tourism, destination managers can focus on resolving the problem situations of Croatian tourism. For example, the creative offering could be a vital element in reducing the seasonality of Croatian destinations (resulting from the predominant focus of Croatian tourism on summer leisure tourism) as well as in expanding the offering to include geographical areas that were previously not included in the tourism offering (in particular, the rural regions of Croatia with a rich resource base for developing a creative tourism offering). The support given to the creative initiatives of residents by the authorities opens up opportunities for small entrepreneurs and tradespeople. The creative offering could make use of existing infrastructure (museums, castles, theatres, etc.) to organise workshops, classes, courses and other similar activities.

According to Rudan (2012, 722), tourism can only be as creative as the tourism managers involved in developing a creative



offering and only to the extent to which creative activities are possible in a given destination. The creativity of destination managers will drive the creativity of tourist destinations. Such development, however, must be based on the needs of tourists for this type of tourism product. A strong and complete value chain in creative tourism can result in gaining a competitive advantage and creating an innovative tourism product. In designing a creative tourism product, care should be taken to ensure the quality of life of the local community is not disrupted (sustainability of the creative offering). Otherwise, such development will have a negative impact, resulting in the failure of the tourism product, the dissatisfaction of the local community and, ultimately, the dissatisfaction of tourists. The local community can be either the driver of or a constraint to developing creative tourism and other cultural tourism products of a destination, in particular heritage-based products. Destination managers must be capable of recognising the potential and the resource base (human resources, in the first place) a destination possesses as a platform for developing creative tourism. The efforts of individuals and organisations in the local community, focused on developing creative tourism, need to be joined, through synergistic action, with the efforts of organisations in the tourism sector working towards the same goal.

CONCLUSION

Previous cultural tourism development in Croatia has centred on cultural and historical heritage as a cultural attraction and on cultural events. Destinations as well as organisations in the tourism sector typically developed a static cultural offering (involving, for example, visits to museums, historical town cores, exhibitions, concerts, etc.). By focusing heavily on conventional cultural tourism, destinations failed to make innovations to the offering that would target tourists looking for new knowledge and new experiences.

Croatia is a country with a rich resource base for developing creative tourism, a specific form of cultural tourism. Unfortunately, both the cultural sector and the cultural and



creative industries are inadequately involved in the development of a creative tourism offering. Even when collaborating with destination managers they fail to recognise the potential lines of development of this type of offering. There is also little joint involvement of destination managers, small entrepreneurs, craftspeople, independent artists and associations in the value chain of the cultural tourism offerings of destinations. The synergistic action of the cultural sector and the tourism sector is crucial if positive results are to be obtained. A creative offering can only be developed through the active participation of all stakeholders launching such initiatives and by focusing on markets showing an interest for this type of offering. Joint efforts and continuous improvements to the value chain of creative tourism are essential to ensure the desired development and results of the creative offering.

Future research should focus on tourists, staying in Croatian destinations, who are primarily motivated by a creative offering. By analysing the current situation of creative tourism (in particular, disadvantages), it could drive consideration of potential new lines of creative tourism development in Croatia.

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