

# Research: The Potential of Film-induced Tourism

"Film-induced tourism is one of the fast growing sectors of the tourism industry," stated Dr Walaiporn Rewtrakunphaiboon who is the author of a study called Film-induced Tourism: Inventing a Vacation to a Location. Film-induced tourism is the act of basing a vacation decision on what has been seen in the movies rather than a traditional brochure. It is a wake-call and a potential challenge for Destination Marketing Organizations but there are many advantages to acknowledging and embracing this field of tourism and many ways to do so.



## Potential of Film-based Tourism

Images play an important role in how we, as tourists, choose our holiday destinations. As the author of the study states, the "explicit beauty of the setting of the film locations can have a powerful impact on potential tourists" and she goes on to talk about the connections between these images and locations and the increased desire to visit them – an effect that can be seen with the prioritization and success of a number of establishments featured in movies.

The more the images are replayed the greater the influence they can have – especially if they are released globally – and this is why there are so many must-see attractions based on television shows. This essentially provides a more sustainable and long lasting advertising campaign than many countries can currently produce and one that could be more cost effective and accessible to areas struggling to promote themselves. Films have a short term financial benefit during filming but also a potentially long-term one if they are used to promote tourism effectively. The effects on the destination can last for many years after the film is released.

Impact of Film on Visitor Number

Film	Location	Impact of visitor number
Braveheart	Wallace Monument, Scotland	300% increase a year after release
Captain Corelli's Mandolin	Cephalonia, Greece	80% increase
Field of Dreams	Iowa	25,000 visits in 1991 and steady increase every year
Four Weddings and a Funeral	The Crown Hotel, Amersham, England	Fully booked for at least 3 years
Harry Potter	Various locations in UK	Increase of 50% or more in all filmed locations
Mission Impossible 2	National Park, Sydney	200% increase in 2000
Notting Hill	Kenwood House, England	10% increase in one month
Pride and Prejudice	Lythe Park, England	150% increase
Sense and Sensibility	Sutton House, England	35% increase
The Beach	Thailand	22% increase in youth market in 2000
Troy	Canakkale, Turkey	73% increase

DMOs also need to look at the emotive element of films and how these stronger connections to the stories and landscapes can enhance the desire to be there. Films provide more than photographs in

brochures when it comes to showing off the culture and possibilities of a location, they are a form of escapism into another world and another person's life and this means people not only want to experience these factors for themselves, they also feel the need to recreate scenes in the exact locations and connect with characters.

### **Strategies for Attracting Visitors**

Countries such as the UK, US and Australia have all experienced success in using movie maps to promote a series of interesting landmarks and features to cinema fans – this map being VisitBritain's most successful printed product – but a step further is the organization of tours that deliberately take visitors to the destinations. Alternatively, Destination Marketing Organizations can work on promoting specific hotels and restaurants with a focus on their role in certain films or there could be websites dedicated to the topic and informing prospective travelers on possible destinations.



New Zealand is a good example of the great potential film-induced tourism has. This country has seen a dramatic rise in tourism thanks to Lord of the Rings and they are acknowledging this appeal and using the franchise in their promotion. The film series proves that repeated viewing and the right marketing can turn a destination into a profitable film-based tourist attraction for years after the movie was released.

### **The Future of the Industry**

Film-induced tourism has a lot of potential if it is handled correctly with the right strategies and if it is fully understood by the tourist boards and DMOs. The problem is that this is a new phenomenon to many and numerous countries are either only just getting to grips with the concept or lacking the required understanding.

Destinations need to gain a better understanding of the tourism potential of their location and work with film industries in a more productive and extensive way to ensure that every aspect of the location is portrayed effectively on screen. Then, once the footage has been viewed by a worldwide audience, they can work on the long-term revenue by adopting numerous strategies to promote the destination.

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