

MASS TOURISM PROBLEMS ARE HERE AGAIN



Barcelona, Venice, and Dubrovnik, cities invaded by tourists, receive millions of visitors every year. As a result, the tourist districts are losing their inhabitants but also their local shops. They are thus transformed into a refuge for tourists. Each city asks that tourists respect the area so that tourists and residents can live together in harmony. The Airbnb platform is a real success and has shaken up the tourist world because the concept seduces travelers. Indeed, it is synonymous with meetings and proximity with the inhabitants.

Immediate consumption

The real problem might not be tourism itself but mass tourism. Every visitor wants to see as much as possible in as short a time as possible without really enjoying the city or its inhabitants.

Simone Venturini, the counselor in charge of tourism in Venice, points out that "you have to stay a few days in Venice" and not arrive in the morning and leave in the evening. In this case, an access tax will be introduced in 2023. It will be applied to each tourist who does not spend at least one night there.

The tourism dilemma

While everyone agrees that mass tourism can destroy tourist sites and nature, some people see tourism as a way to generate money.

Like many inhabitants, Petra Marcinko, a sociologist who has lived in Venice for 25 years, is indignant at the sight of cruise ships invading the port of the Serenissima. She organizes demonstrations against these boats that pollute the city. However, Simone Venturini declares, "cruise tourism is a positive tourism for us, [...] it guarantees an income for the city".

The archipelago of Palau, a very popular place for scuba diving enthusiasts, makes each tourist sign a charter of good conduct. This is even written in their passport. Tourists commit to respecting the ecosystem. In 2018, the archipelago had even banned sunscreens, considered toxic and responsible for the extinction of coral reefs and the destruction of marine environments. The local government has also planned a program that allows eco-friendly travelers to participate in exclusive experiences. Although the archipelago wants to educate its tourists, it needs them to generate revenue.

The proposed solutions

Mayors propose various solutions to protect their cities from the influx of tourists.

Ada Colau, the mayor of Barcelona, has forced Airbnb to remove listings and has also regulated the hotel stock in the city center. A response to the mobilization of Barcelonians against tourist rentals. The Poblenou district was born. For Xavier Marcé, "expanding the tourist map of Barcelona is a way of decentralizing and diversifying the flow of visitors, thus redistributing wealth while arousing new interest such as culture, sport or ecology."

Mato Frankovic, the mayor of Dubrovnik, has decided to regulate tourist activities since the pandemic. He has imposed new rules in order to "limit the influx of visitors." For example, tourists must reserve time slots for visits.

For Petra Marcinko, this is a real logistical challenge: "Either the city becomes an urban center again, or it continues to be like an open-air museum. She is studying different scenarios that would allow the inhabitants to enjoy their city in the future.

What is the future of tourism?

The travel industry remains one of the most lucrative in the world. In 2019, it generated no less than \$1,450 billion. The ideal would be to achieve carbon neutrality. To achieve this, specialists invite each tourist to review their attitude among the solutions proposed: favoring local destinations, preferring quality to quantity, or going away for longer but less often.

More and more companies offer virtual reality experiences. Even if he conceives that this principle could not compensate for the real and physical experience, he believes that it can be a good solution to avoid the overconsumption of tourism and to move tourists away from the main center to help them discover treasures that are hundreds of meters or a few kilometers away. Therefore, virtual and augmented reality is a future technology for the travel industry.

Date: 2022-07-18

Article link: <https://www.tourism-review.com/problems-of-the-mass-tourism-rise-again-news12648>