

## <sup>1</sup>A Framework to The Inventory of Culture-based Tourism Products

Cláudia Henriques, Manuela Guerreiro and Júlio Mendes

Research Centre for Spatial and Organizational Dynamics  
University of Algarve, Faro, Portugal

Corresponding author: [jmendes@ualg.pt](mailto:jmendes@ualg.pt)

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### ABSTRACT

Cultural Tourism is a promising market segment with higher growth rates than other niches. World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) data indicate that the proportion of international trips accounted for cultural motivations grew from 37% in 1995 to 40% in 2004. Additionally, UNWTO (2015) considers that this type of tourism could, in the future, increase competitiveness, create employment opportunities, generate income for investment in preservation, and simultaneously contribute to a sense of pride and self-esteem among host communities. In this article the authors propose a reflection on cultural tourism, based on the questioning of concepts such as tourism and culture, experiences and transformations. To this purpose, this paper aims to come up with a framework upon which tourism destinations can develop culture-based tourism products.

Keywords: tourism, culture, cultural tourism, tourism experience

### Introduction

#### Background

In the last couple of decades, tourism has been one of the most important sectors driving the world economy. In 2015, “the total contribution of Travel & Tourism (T&T) to GDP was 9.8% of GDP and 9.5% of total employment (WTTC, 2016:1). Both are forecast to rise, respectively by 4.0% pa (10.8% of GDP) and 11.0% of total, in 2016 (WTTC, 2016). In Europe, in the same year, the total contribution of Travel & Tourism was 9.6% of GDP and it is forecast to rise to 10.5% of GDP in 2026 (WTTC a, 2016).

The outlook for Travel & Tourism in the future remains robust, growth contribution is expected to accelerate. Following the UNWTO/UNESCO World Conference on Tourism and Culture (UNWTO, 2015),

tourism, moving more than one billion people across international borders each year, offers immense present and future possibilities for socio-economic development in destinations around the world.

Cultural Tourism is a promising market segment with a growth rate higher than other segments. Data from the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) show that the amount of international travels in which the cultural motivation stands out grew from 37% in 1995 to 40% in 2004. Also the OECD, (2009) reports that cultural trips increased from 190 million in 1995 to 359 million in 2007, i.e., a growth from 37% (1995) to 49% (2007) in the number of international arrivals. A study by the United States Cultural and Heritage Tourism Marketing Council (2009:33) concluded that 78% of leisure travelers are cultural/ heritage tourists.

Cultural Tourism recognizes tourists as one of the most important market targets for culture, assuming a key role in valorizing and

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preserving heritage, whilst promoting cultural exchange and encouraging the flourishing of cultural diversity. “Carefully managed, tourism can protect and enliven this heritage, generate new opportunities for local communities, and foster tolerance and respect between peoples and nations” (Taleb Rifai, in UNWTO; 2015). In accordance with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (post 2015 development agenda), Bokova (in UNWTO, 2015) point out the importance of “efforts to promote culture as a driver and as an enabler of sustainable development. This has never been so important at this time of change, when countries are shaping a new global sustainable development agenda to follow 2015”. In Europe and in Portugal (Governo de Portugal, 2013) the importance and growth potential of cultural tourism has been acknowledged, as well as the need for further analytical work.

In this context, the present paper aims to put forward a methodology for an inventory of the cultural resources of a Portuguese region- the Algarve - which might be valued from a tourism point of view. This inventory would be followed by a proposal of cultural tourism products. It should be noted that this southern region is important within the national and international tourism industry. It is, mainly, a ‘Sun and Sea’ tourism destination. Culture and its resources are still in an emerging stage.

The recognition of the importance of cultural resources is on the agenda and it is in line with the new trends in tourism, particularly, Cultural Tourism. Within the Tourism Strategy 2027 – Portugal (Laboratório Estratégico de Turismo, 2016), whose goal is to create a vision for the next decade, the ministry of Economy, Manuel Cabral, underlined specifically the importance of “culture”.

### **Research Objectives**

Drawing on these issues this paper presents, in the first part, a theoretical approach to culture and cultural tourism related the experience and transformation economy. Next, in the methodology section, a conceptual model is put forward for the inventory and subsequent development of

cultural tourism products, based on surveys conducted among the sixteen municipalities (‘concelhos’) of the Algarve, the Cultural and Creative Sector Companies (CCS), and Cultural Associations of the Algarve. Additionally, semi-structured interviews were done to creative industries experts (qualified panel), and to regional authorities (Algarve Tourism Region – RTA, Coordination Commission for Regional Development of the Algarve – CCDR, and Regional Direction of Culture of the Algarve – DRCA).

Finally, the analysis of the results is done in view that the model of development of emerging tourism destinations (as it is the case of the Algarve in terms of cultural tourism product) should consider thoroughly the possibility of development based on a more culture-sensitive model, meeting both the tourism consumption and cultural consumption trends.

### **Literature Review**

#### **Cultural and creative tourism**

The definition of cultural tourism is complex basically because it relates to two equally complex concepts (Richards, 1996) – tourism and culture. Furthermore, within the academic community (Hughes, 1987) and the tourism industry, the definition of cultural tourism is not consensual. However, despite the various definitions it seems undeniable, to both academics and practitioners, the importance and relevance to take full advantage of the unique features of tourism destinations, especially, cultural and historical heritage, as this may be the basis for the development of products able to enhance unique and different tourism experiences (Smith, 2004; Valle *et al.*, 2011).

Cultural Tourism was considered by ICOMOS, (1996) as a form of tourism whose object is the discovery of monuments and sites. In this sense, cultural tourism tends to be associated to travels which, by its nature, fulfils the need for diversification and widening of knowledge to which every human being aspires. The UNESCO Indicator Suite (UNESCO, 2013), for its part, suggests that culture should be considered as: i) Sector of economic activity composed by a “core of arts”, “cultural industries”, “creative

industries”; ii) Set of resources that add value to development interventions and increase their impact; iii) Sustainable framework for social cohesion and peace, essential to human development.

This broad definition entails the potential difficulty to determine comprehensively the cultural resources of a territory. However, and because the culture-based products tend to add value to the tourism destinations they play a critical part in the tourism development planning of the regions (Richards and Bonink, 1995), there is a need for creating sustainable cultural tourism products which would lead to “deeper” tourism experiences. In this context, it is important to underline the main trends regarding Cultural Tourism (Richards and Palmer, 2010): growing number of individuals looking for a “cultural holiday”, as well as the increase of the level of education and the revenue of the contemporary tourist; tendency for short-term holidays; greater use of the internet in the purchase-decision process, particularly for information and booking; greater demand for festivals and cultural events (in a context of increased supply); greater interest in having unique and ‘creative’ experiences.

Whereas the traditional consumer preferred high culture and avoided other kinds, the new “omnivorous” consumer seems to be more open to experience every form of culture (Eriksson, 2011). The cultural consumption has grown and tourism is a fundamental part of this growth fostered at the local, national and international level. In general terms, it can be seen the emergence of new areas of culture, particularly popular and intangible forms of culture. According to the above-mentioned work, the “omnivorous” patterns of cultural consumption have been increasing, i.e. people consume every form of culture combining both popular and high cultural forms.

The rise of the “symbolic” (Zukin, 2010) and of the “experiences” (Pine II and Gilmore, 1999, 2008) in a globalized scenario where the local identity becomes increasingly important, culture has become one of the main consumption goods influencing the tourism demand (Ritzer, 1999) given that creativity is a way of adding distinctiveness, authenticity,

and economic development to places (Zukin, 2010).

Considering the creative potential of culture, as well as being a source of creative experiences, it is easy to understand that the creative tourism is envisaged as an extension of Cultural Tourism (Richards, 2011). Creative Tourism emphasizes the tourist’s engagement in events in which residents take part. In this case, the tourist is a highly motivated individual aiming to broaden their knowledge about the place and way of life of local population (Boyle, 2004). According to UNESCO (2006) “Creative tourism is travel 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”. Richards and Wilson (2006) consider that, in some cases, Cultural Tourism is developing into “Creative Tourism”.

Within the Creative Tourism it is possible to develop multiple co-creation activities with the objective of adding value to the tourism product and to the tourism experience. Richards and Wilson, (2006) present some examples of the relationship between tourism and creativity: workshops, food tasting, landscape and routes, shopping. (Binkhorst and den Dekker, 2009:313) consider co-creation as “the process through which customers interact with the company and generate their own experience”. Richards and Raymond (2000) note that some segments travel in search of tourism experiences which can contribute to personal development (Valle *et al.*, 2011) and, therefore, they are particularly receptive to proposals of Creative

Tourism and available to engage in co-creation experiences (Binkhorst, 2007). Given this, creativity and Creative Tourism are more than a growing strategy adopted by cities and regions; it is also a strategy towards innovation and personal development. Within the field of Creative Tourism the emphasis shifts from tangible to intangible culture and the fundamental experience is the exchange of knowledge and expertise between residents, as hosts, and tourists, in the role of invitees (European Commission, 2010) Customer participates actively in building their own experiences in a personal and interactive

process of co-creation of value (Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2003) and, as co-creator of the environment in which the experience takes place, contributes to assign a new meaning to the place (Grupta & Vajic, 2000).

In a system of co-creation the links between local actors and organizations managing the destination become vital as these facilitate the co-creation process (Richards, 2011). These linkages depend not just on the information flows, but also on the content of the information. Richards (2011) argues that building narratives around a place is a way to make it more attractive.

In the particular field of Cultural Tourism this option can be seen, for example, in museums and monuments in which the development of more interactive and intangible experiences contributing to place-making (Richards, 2011). In this sense, Cultural Tourism and creativity are becoming increasingly integrated (Frey, 2009, in Richards, 2011) since “the cultural capital and creative resources of places are a resource for attracting cultural tourists”.

The relevance of Cultural Tourism is also linked to its potential to reduce seasonality since it can have a positive effect in the development of tourism at a regional level (European Commission, 2010; in Bonet, 2003). As Valle *et al.* (2011) point out the cultural offer may have a growing impact in the tourists' satisfaction, particularly regarding coastal destinations. Several studies show the preference for coastal destinations with an additional cultural offer to the traditional ‘Sun and Sea’ (Hughes, 1987; Valle *et al.*, 2011). In a globalized world where the “serial reproduction of culture” is growing, the unique and authentic features of each place have become critical to its differentiation (Richards and Wilson, 2006; Richards, 2011). The development of cultural tourism implies, on the one hand, a clear identification of the tourism demand, and the actual and potential market segments and, on the other hand, the inventory of the existing cultural resources in the territory with potential to become part of a theme which will complement the anchor product.

Including culture as a core element in a sustainable tourism strategy enables the

socioeconomic development and, at the same time, increases the attractiveness of regions, while protecting local communities. Culture is part of the regional identity which may become a territory-based element of competitiveness (OMC, 2010).

Additionally, as UNWTO and UNESCO (UNWTO, 2015) point out that there is a raising awareness about the strong links between tourism and culture. Consequently, it is important to emphasize the need for mutually beneficial partnership models. “Success will require engaging culture and tourism stakeholders at all levels to address cross cutting responsibilities in areas such as governance, community engagement, innovation and technology and corporate social responsibility” (UNWTO, 2015).

The Siem Reap Declaration on Tourism and Culture – Building a New Partnership Model, reaffirm the commitment to:

1. Build new partnership models between tourism and culture,
2. Promote and protect cultural heritage,
3. Link people and foster sustainable development through cultural routes,
4. Promote closer linkages between tourism, living cultures and creative industries,
5. Support the contribution of cultural tourism to urban development (UNESCO/UNWTO, 2015).

The focus is enhancing effective partnership models and governance structures within government at the national, regional and local levels, to develop, coordinate and implement tourism and culture policies and practices in a more integrated manner. As UNESCO/UNWTO (2015) points out it is important to encourage tourism activities that contribute to increase public awareness and support for the protection and conservation of cultural heritage; in particular, by communicating heritage characteristics and values through the tourism experience chain”.

### **Living memorable experiences**

The need for differentiation, on the part of supply, and the search for innovative and exotic experiences, on the part of demand, contribute to the development of the concept of tourism experience. According to Pine II

and Gilmore (1999: 4) in 'The Experience Economy' "even the most mundane transactions can be turned into memorable experiences".

The emergence of a new meaning of tourism experience leads to the recognition of the role of all elements of supply which are characterized by cultural content and offer participatory and sensory experiences throughout the journey. Tourism experiences which are intended to be "transformational" leading to self-development or to "transformation" (Pine II and Gilmore, 1999). In this sense, the act of consumption is not passive, it entails some action on the part of the consumers aiming personal development.

The shift from the industrial society to the network society has put the emphasis on relationships, on customization, on individualization, on creativity, on authenticity, on knowledge, on qualified consumption, among other aspects, which manifest in the tourism practices. More and more people use their leisure time to acquire or develop skills while experiencing the local culture.

Pine II and Gilmore (1999:12) define experiences as "events that engage individuals in a personal way". Each experience is subjective and it engages the individual personally on a physical, emotional, spiritual and intellectual level (Tung and Ritchie, 2011).

In conceptual terms, the tourism experience has been considered a change from routine in which the bizarre and the novelty are key elements (Quinlan Cutler and Carmichael, 2010), and the act of tourism gives a set of experiences, memories and emotions related to the places visited and influenced by the tourist, the set (destination), and by the residents (Nickerson, 2006, in Quinlan Cutler and Carmichael, 2010). Each tourist is surrounded, at every moment, by unique "tourism experiences networks" (Binkhorst, den Dekker and Melkert, 2010: 41-42).

The creation of cultural experiences is rooted on two major assumptions. Firstly, the individual is the chief creator of their own cultural experience. Secondly, any cultural experience needs time to consolidate. These two assumptions, in the context of the cultural

tourism experience, lead us to the question of how should the tourist be involved in the co-creation of their experiences. It is of note that these experiences can be designed both by the cultural producers and by the consumers, given rise to terms such as 'prosumer', a consumer actively engaged in the production of experiences (Richards and Wilson, 2006), blurring the boundaries between production and consumption.

The experience is affected by a wide range of factors, many of which are not directly related to the consumption of specific services and products in the destination. It is the blend of factors within the context, and the satisfaction regarding each of the services purchased and consumed throughout the development of the experience, holistic in nature, that will determine the overall level of satisfaction of tourists. A more proactive attitude of tourists, searching for authentic and different experiences, has resulted in the offer of learning and transformational experiences by the destinations (Richards and Wilson, 2006).

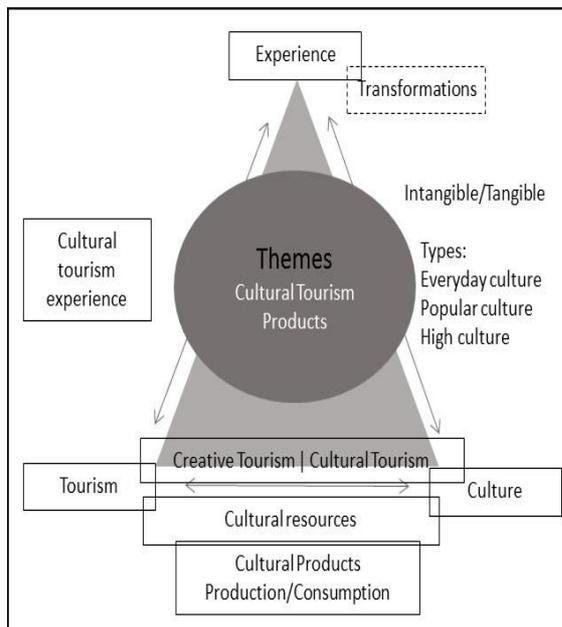
Following Till (2003: 63; in Chronis, 2012: 1798) the tourism places are made of imagination and reality. Therefore, admitting that tourism draws on narratives, the tourism experience depends on the communication of stories (Chronis, 2012: 1799) built around resources. According to Gibbs and Ritchie, (2010) it is fundamental to focus the tourism offer in themes since these contribute to structure the experience. Also Pine II and Gilmore (2008) state that a service becomes an experience when this develops around a theme.

In Csapó, (2012) perspective a tourism offer anchored on a theme brings benefits, namely, it enables the use of less explored resources, which require a lower initial investment, and, at the same time, it contributes to develop tourism in spatial and temporal terms, thus reducing seasonality. Furthermore, it attracts specific target segments, increases the multiplier effects of tourism and job creation enhancing the creation of a network of relationships between local communities, local culture, and the tourism industry.

## Methodology

With the objective of presenting a methodological framework to put up culture-based tourism products, preferably in emerging destinations, three key elements were considered (Figure 1): Tourism, Culture, and Experience. The interconnection between these elements creates products in the context of a theme.

In the scope of the relationship between tourism and culture, the cultural resources are the foundation, thus occupying the base of the pyramid (Figure 1). This position is intentional since resources are the raw material for tourism and cultural resources the raw material for cultural tourism.



Source: Own work

Figure 1. Identification of the main themes under study

An “inventory” of the cultural resources aiming the development of culture-based tourism products presupposes the identification of the most appealing cultural typologies to tourists. A set of typologies were examined: associated to high culture or to the consumption of cultural goods (according the list of the European Centre for Traditional and

Regional Cultures – ECTARC, 1989<sup>1</sup>); or associated to the participation in cultural processes (as proposed by Richards, 2005<sup>2</sup>); or, even, proposals putting forward a broader conception of culture, in which (Smith, 2004) and UNESCO (2009) stand out.

This (UNESCO, 2009) is based on a hierarchical model that is comprised by cultural domains and related cultural domains. The former include activities, goods and cultural services present in all of the phases of the cultural cycle. The latter includes social and recreational activities. The six domains (A to F) plus the intangible cultural heritage (transversal domain) are considered the core cultural sector. The model encompasses also three transversal domains applicable to all cultural domains and related: education and training, archiving and preserving, equipment and supporting materials.

Considering the first three domains for their predominance, we have:

- A. Cultural and Natural Heritage. It includes museums, archeological and historical places (including archeological sites and buildings), cultural landscapes and natural heritage.
- B. Performance and celebration. It includes all expressions of live cultural events, such as professional and amateur performing arts (theatre, dance, opera and

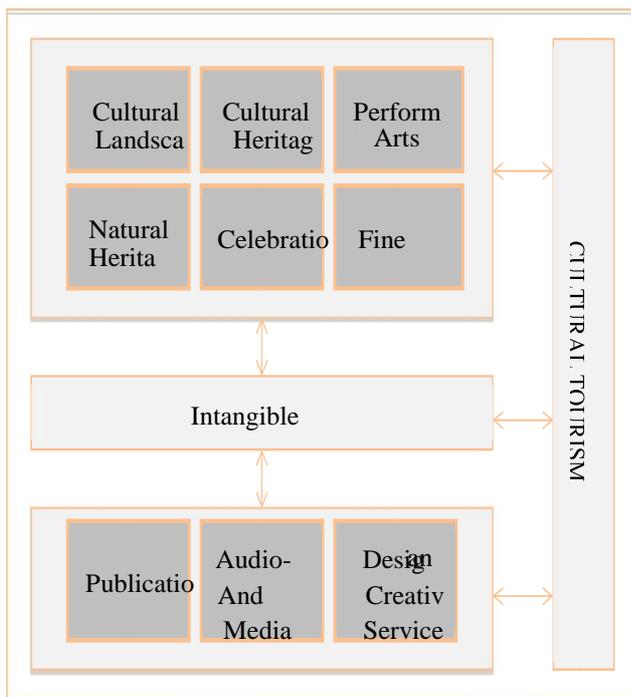
<sup>1</sup> It includes the identification of sites which traditionally are more appealing to tourists, namely: Archeological sites and museums; Architecture (ruins, famous buildings, cities); Art, sculpture, crafts, galleries, festivals, events; Music and dance (classical, popular, contemporary); Drama (theatre, cinema, playwrights); Language and literature study, tours, events; Religious festivals, pilgrimages; Complete Culture (folk or primitive) and subcultures (ECTARC, 1989).

<sup>2</sup> The author presented a list of typologies of cultural resources for tourism purposes divided into two major categories: Attractions (monuments, museums, routes, theme parks) and Events (cultural-historic events, art events, events and attractions).

puppetry) and cultural events, such as festivals, feasts and fairs. Music includes live and recorded music performance regardless the format, downloads and uploads, as well as musical instruments.

- C. Visual arts and crafts. Art forms that focus on the creation of works such as paintings, drawings, and sculptures, crafts and photography, or art galleries. Craft comprises artisanal products whose distinctive features, which can be utilitarian, aesthetic, artistic, creative, culturally attached, decorative, functional, traditional, and religiously and socially symbolic and significant.

Following the methodology suggested by UNESCO (2009), the present paper puts forward a methodological framework to the inventory of the cultural resources as shown below:



Source: Adapted from UNESCO (2009)

Figure 2. Conceptual model

The domains included in Natural Heritage, Cultural Heritage, Cultural Landscapes, Performing Arts, Celebration, and Fine Arts are, according to UNESCO, (2009) the core and have a direct and strong influence

on Cultural Tourism. The creative industries, which encompass the domains related to Publications, Audio-visual and Interactive Media, and Design and Creative Services, have a weaker and more indirect influence on Cultural Tourism.

After the definition of the domains, it followed the systematization to put up the inventory of cultural resources. The data collection grid consider the following topics: Identification, Classification, Location, State of Conservation, Public opening, Timetable, Supervisory/Contact, and Potential of tourist attraction.

The Resources Inventory Matrix collected data through questionnaires administered to the 16 municipalities of the Algarve, being the questionnaire the main tool to limit the inventory.

Data collection was done using an online survey created and managed on DigitQuest, a web platform for online research questionnaires. However, and given the complexity that an inventory of cultural resources entails, other methods were applied. The objective was to consider all stakeholders related to tourism and culture, in order to create sustainable cultural tourism products. We have:

- Survey by questionnaire to Cultural and Creative Sector companies (CCS) and Cultural Associations from the Algarve.
- Interviews to creative industries experts (qualified panel).
- Interviews to regional authorities responsible for the political framework and coordination of cultural events in the region, in order to gather expert opinions on the subject (Algarve Tourism Region – RTA, Coordination Commission for Regional Development of the Algarve – CCDR, and Regional Direction of Culture of the Algarve – DRCA).

Regarding the CCS companies, these are classified societies based on the SCIE – System of Integrated Account of Companies, of NUT II Algarve. The list of companies comprises a total of 183. Cultural Associations were also interviewed. In total, there were 79 responses from the entities. The response rate was 21.6%. Data analysis of questionnaires was done, firstly, through descriptive statistical analysis of each question and complemented by cross of variables considered pertinent given the goals of this study.

Data analysis of the open-ended questions of the survey to the municipalities, and to the CCS companies, was done with IBM Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), version 20.0, IBM SPSS Text Analytics for Surveys (STAS) and with the word cloud generator Wordle27.

## Results and Discussion

### The Algarve and the emergence of cultural tourism products

The Algarve is the cradle of the tourism in Portugal and its economic activity strongly relies on coastal tourism. In the 1960s, the Algarve received its first tourist in search of *sun and beach*. Recognizing this growing tendency, the region specialized in this product during the 1970s and 1980s, attracting an increasing number of tourists. Even today, for many tourists, *sun and beach* still represent the most important underlying motivation for traveling to the Algarve. However, recent studies focusing on the tourist profile reveal that new market opportunities are being detected (Cruz, 2010).

Actually, new products are considered strategic variables for the Algarve, helping the destination to surpass the seasonality problem. These products are the following: golf, other sport activities (for leisure, competitive sport, and training; with water sports attracting increased interest with the construction of

marinas, piers, and recreational docks); conferences and other similar initiatives (so accommodation establishments can maintain an acceptable occupancy rate especially during the low season); cultural tourism; and health and nature. These represent diversified products with significant potential for the tourism region, counterbalancing, to some extent, the economic effects associated with low seasons. Since the 1960s, the Algarve brand has been managed and promoted as a tourist destination. Up until the 1990s, the brand operated in an isolated manner, focusing only on the *sun and beach* product.

A recent study by Valle, Mendes and Guerreiro (2013) show that, in the Algarve, the majority of tourists (77%) who visited the region the previous year, 87% looked for experiences besides the beach. Natural and rural landscapes, food, city tours and monuments (respectively 78%, 57% and 60%) were referred as the main tourism attractions of the region. The above-mentioned study points to the structuring of cultural products and justifies the importance of an inventory of the resources upon which those products are based.

The survey to the municipalities shows 1506 cultural resources and their respective type of tourist attractiveness (Table 1). Among these resources, the municipalities highlighted 472, from the various domains, with strong attraction potential. In descending order of importance the domains highlighted were: Cultural Heritage (219), Celebration (116), Natural Heritage (86), Cultural Landscape (21), Fine Arts (20) and Performing Arts (10).

Table 1. Cultural Resources with attraction potential, by location

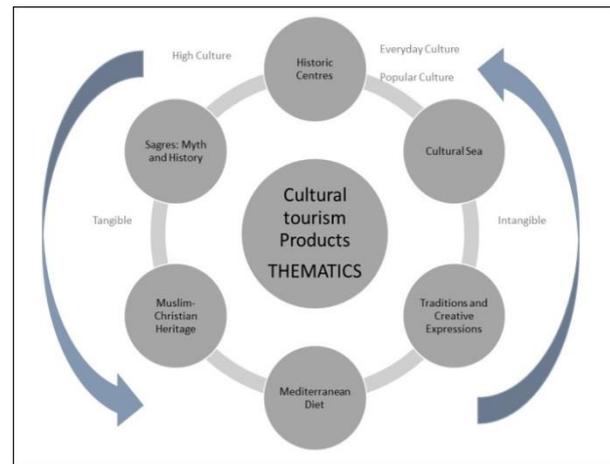
Municipalities	Resources	Municipalities	Resources
Albufeira		Monchique	42
Alcoutim	12	Olhão	0
Aljezur	51	Portimão	11
Castro Marim	6	São Brás de Alportel	34
Faro	39	Silves	20
Lagoa	13	Tavira	52
Lagos	7	Vila do Bispo	51
Loulé	37	Vila Real de Santo António	24

Source: own work

Besides this information from the municipalities, the survey to the cultural and creative sector companies, with the objective to include their perception and vision in this inventory, showed that Cultural Heritage (78.9%), Cultural Landscapes (76.3%), and Natural Heritage (77.6%) are the more important domains (Mendes, J, Henriques and Guerreiro, 2015)

For their part, the interviews to the panel of experts aimed to identify the themes around which the cultural tourism products of the Algarve, unique and differentiating, should be developed. The categories originating from the most mentioned words gave rise to the following themes: Tourism; Gastronomy; Nature; Routes and Music; Heritage; Fishing; Landscapes and, at last, Almond trees, Ria Formosa lagoon, Events, Legends, Intangible Heritage and Slopes. These themes have reinforced the parameters for the selection of resources.

Data collection and analysis led to the definition of six core themes all of them an expression of the local identity (figure 3).



Source: own work

Figure 3 - Themes for the development of culturally based tourism products

After the identification of the anchor themes, it was possible to forward 20 sub-themes for the development of cultural tourism in the Algarve (Table 2).

Table 2 – Themes for the development of cultural products

Theme	Sub-theme
Sagres: Myth and History	Fortress of Sagres: Nautical School – fiction and reality The beginning of the Portuguese Discoveries
Muslim-Christian Heritage	Military Architecture Religious Architecture Al'mutamid Legends of Moorish Maidens Folkdance. The remaining of muslim-christian elements
Historic Centres	Historic centres of cities Towns and villages of the Algarve
Traditions and Creative Expressions	Folk Culture – oral and written tradition and folkdance Handicraft Usages, customs and products Feast, Festivals and Events Fine Arts
Cultural Sea	Cultural underwater heritage From West to East: perspective of the coastline Fishing and salt ponds culture Traditional fishing and salting
Mediterranean Diet	Sea and land cuisine Food

Source: own work

## Conclusion

The above-mentioned objectives of research have determined the course of action which, based on a solid theoretical framework, is focused on the definition of the methodology of empirical research aiming the inventory of the cultural resources of a region. And finally, based on this inventory, the themes and sub-themes for cultural products will be put forward.

The literature review was made based on academic sources and on publications from national and international public organizations related to Cultural Tourism. It was a key step in this research since it clarified concepts, and identified the methodologies and approaches used in similar contexts.

The definition of the themes to the development of culture-based tourism products results from the interaction between fundamental concepts (namely tourism experience and transformation, tourism and culture). These interact in a context marked by the continuum between the tangible and intangible resources and resources associated to high and popular/everyday culture, as well as the intensification of the relationship between culture and nature. The themes are important to structure the experiences, leading to a model resulting from the adaptation of the literature review made.

The model herein proposed lacks empirical support which would improve aspects related to its feasibility but also to achieve consensus regarding the dimensions considered in the data collection grid. Within the themes proposed for the development of culture-based products in the Algarve, cultural icons stand out, such as Sagres and its fortress as well as the tangible heritage related to the Muslim-Christian past and the cities' historic centres. However, the themes related to the intangible heritage should be acknowledged, namely cultural traditions such as the

Mediterranean diet (UNESCO's list of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity). It is noteworthy the relationship, intended to be reinforced, between natural and cultural heritages, namely through the "cultural sea".

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