

# Community Tourism News

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## Successful Tourism: How Can Communities Do It?

What makes for successful tourism in a community? Successful tourism accomplishes at least three things. First, it generates positive experiences for visitors – ones that are unique and fulfil or surpass trip expectations. Second, it provides economic and social benefits to the host community. Third, it is sustainable; the carrying capacity of the destination is not breached and it does not consume its commons.

According to the classic Tourist Destination Life Cycle Model, tourism communities and destinations move through a progression of development stages over time. At first there will be a discovery and launch stage (“Paradise Found”). A small number of visitors arrive seeking unsullied destinations. The social and environmental impacts at this stage are small and resident attitudes are positive towards tourists.

This early stage is followed by a long period of growth and development with increasing numbers of tourists until saturation and stagnation set in (“Paradise Lost”). Tourists have become bored with the destination and facilities are showing their age. At this point one of two futures is possible: rejuvenation or continued decline until tourism ceases altogether.

**Incentives** and **regulation** may be applied with differing emphasis by local governments at each

stage of this life cycle to spur or control development. Incentives could be used to attract and reattract investment in the destination, whereas regulations might be used to impose development controls so as to flatten or do away with “boom-and-bust” patterns, help conserve the local environment, or to discourage obnoxious and rowdy behaviour.

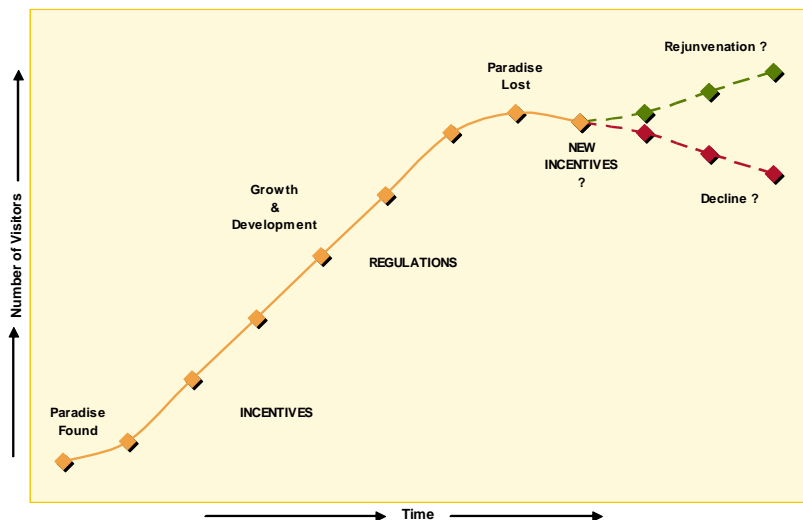
New models of destination growth and development have emerged in recent years that are imbued with the notion of sustainability. Sustainable tourism, or tourism that optimizes the interests and benefits of all those involved—hosts, guests, developers, and the environment—over the long term, is the result of proactive local government **leadership** and deliberate **policy choices**. Some of the policy choices that can lead to either sustainable over conventional tour-

ism development include:

- choosing concept over project driven planning;
- choosing compact over sprawling tourism development;
- choosing local over imported developers;
- choosing developer borne over community borne social and environmental costs; and
- choosing optimization over maximization of investment returns.

Excerpted from Yikes, *There's a Tourist In Town: Guidance for Local Planners* by Michael Kelly, Sept/Oct 2009, American Planning Association, PAS Memo.

Tourist Destination Life Cycle Model



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## Beginnings of Modern Tourism

Have you ever wondered where and how modern day tourism came to be? A sidebar in a recent travel magazine article tells all.

“For more than 200 years, from roughly 1700 to 1900, something called the Grand Tour occupied the youthful coming-of-age of the British aristocracy and gentry. Tradition deemed that no education was complete without an extended foray of the Continent, where young men and - later - young women could indulge in the linguistic, cultural, and artistic (not to mention illicit) opportunities that Europe provided. One went to Paris, to Nice, to Geneva, to Florence, to Venice ... and polished the brass of attitude that marked a person of class.

“By the 19<sup>th</sup> century, elegant spas had opened in Switzerland, catering to the well-heeled and indulgent. Alpine mountaineering was invented. The world’s first major resort town grew up around Nice, and soon English strollers were inhaling Mediterranean air on its beachfront walkway, still called

today *la Promenade des Anglais*. Ocean swimming, a new concept, soon followed. Celebrated English Romantic poets such as Lord Byron and Bysshe Shelley sought freedom - both artistic and erotic - in Europe, and found, instead, early death. [Mary Shelley however wrote *Frankenstein* while in Switzerland and lived to the respectable age of 53 years.] The Grand Tour was all the rage.

“By the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, British entrepreneur Thomas Cook had come to realize there was, thanks to a growing middle-class, a market for mass travel to the Continent. In 1863 he led 60 adventurers on the first organized group trip through Switzerland - in the process creating another concept in travel: The Grand (package) Tour. The move helped define two then-new English words: tourism and tourist.

“Having found edification and classic culture in southern Europe [and likely in destinations becoming overrun by Cook’s middle-class tourists], the more adventurous looked across the Mediterranean and took heart in stories emanating from North Africa and the Middle East. There, the exotic and forbidden existed. There

were muezzins’ haunting calls from minarets and sirocco winds out of Africa. There were turbaned men who rode camels across the Saharan dunes to Timbuktu. There were extraordinary pharoanic pyramids and temples along the Egyptian Nile. There was the discovery in Turkey of ancient Troy, linking the great Homeric legends to history. There were tales of Ottoman harems and Christian saints. So this vanguard of adventurous travellers [like Agatha Christie] sailed to the then-distant outposts of myth and mystery, extending the Grand Tour across the eastern Mediterranean and into what is now Egypt, Tunisia, and Turkey.”

Today jets have replaced the steamships and trains of earlier times, but be sure, the Grand Tour lives on, only now it’s called the RTW (Round The World) ticket!

[www.airtreks.com/tools/triplannerv5/triplanner.php?](http://www.airtreks.com/tools/triplannerv5/triplanner.php?)

Excerpted from *Desert Dreams* by Daniel Wood, Fall 2009. *Westworld*.

[www.myvirtualpaper.com/doc/Westworld-magazine/WWBC\\_Fall09\\_CWM52043/2009090401/](http://www.myvirtualpaper.com/doc/Westworld-magazine/WWBC_Fall09_CWM52043/2009090401/)

“ The economy is a wholly owned subsidiary of the environment, not the other way around.”

– Senator Gaylord Nelson, 2002, *Beyond Earth Day: Fulfilling the Promise*.

Community Tourism News is edited and published four times a year by Michael E. Kelly, AICP, MCIP in Duncan, British Columbia. The newsletter may be freely copied and distributed to others with due credit and contact information provided to recipients. Contact [newsletters@community-tourism.net](mailto:newsletters@community-tourism.net) to be added to or deleted from our distribution list, for further information, or to make contributions to future issues.

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