

# EXPERIENCE TOURISM AND NEW TOURISM DIMENSIONS POST COVID-19



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## Aim & objectives

The aim of this presentation is to:

- Define experience and experiential tourism as tourist themselves perceived it;
- Provide operative indications for the creation of experiences;
- Discuss the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic in the tourism sector;
- Reflect on how COVID-19 pandemic might affect specifically experience tourism.



## What will you learn (Learning outcomes)

At the end of this presentation, you will be able to:

- Understand what experiential tourists are searching for;
- Create experiences and experiential activities;
- Know the main trends that will drive tourism recovery after COVID-19.



# Keywords & terms

Experience Tourism or Experiential tourism

A form of tourism based on experiences tourists live during their vacation.

COVID-19 pandemic

The emergency situation is heavily affecting the tourism sector, enhancing new trends that are expected to drive the recovery.



# Background

“Experience” and “Experiential” have become two widely used words in the tourism sector, but there is no clear definition of what these words mean.

Using a demand side approach, we will understand what experiential tourists are searching for and which are the main features of an experience.

You will know how to create more appealing products and organize experiential activities.

On the other side, we will discuss the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, reflecting on how the changes might affect specifically experience tourism.





# SECTION 1

Experience tourism  
and new dimension  
post COVID



# Tourism and COVID-19:

COVID-19 pandemic is heavily affecting the tourism sector and its consequences will continue to impact tourism in the forthcoming years.

According to UNWTO – World Tourism Organization, 2020 registered:

**-73%**  
International  
tourist arrivals

**-1,3 trillion**  
of export  
tourism revenue

## What can we expect then?

From a **quantitative** point of view, most experts do not see a return for international tourism before 2023.

This will depend on:

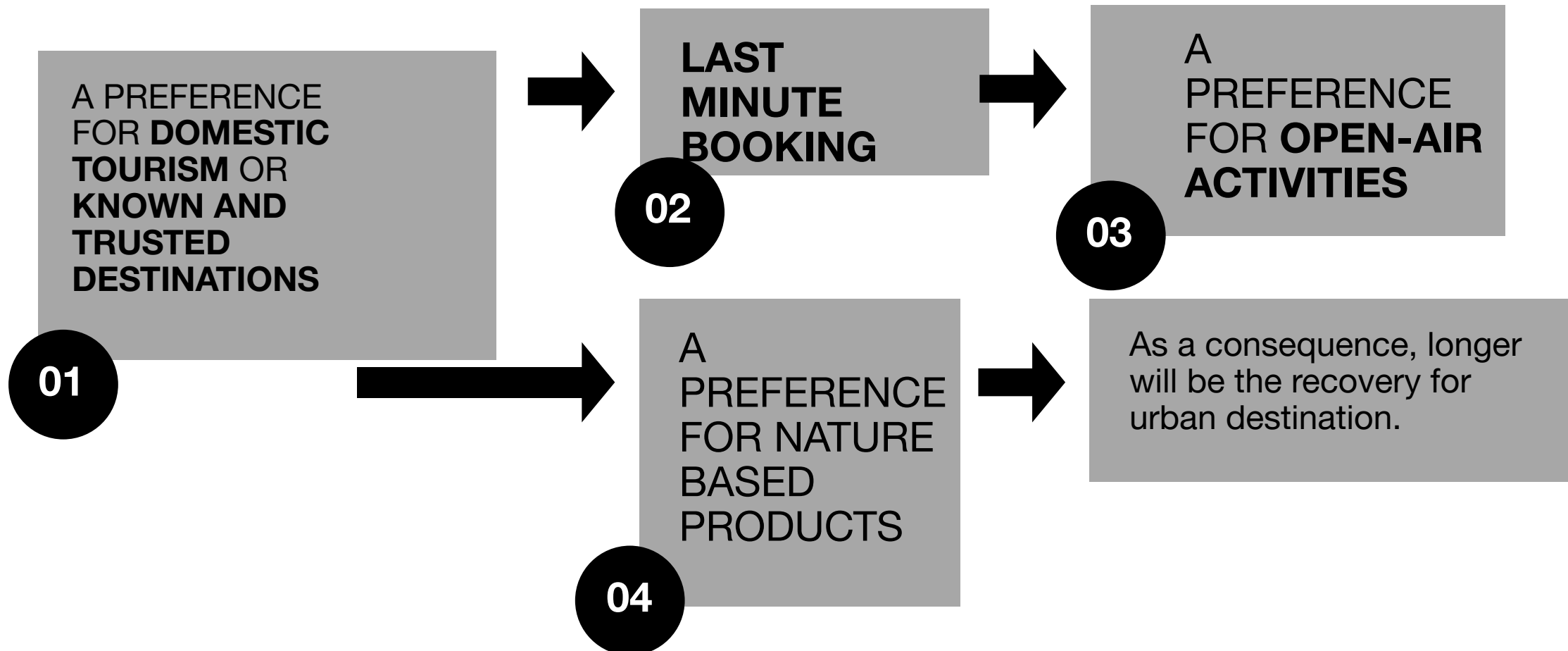
- the pace of the vaccination rollout;
- the coordination among countries on travel procedures;
- the economic consequences of this situation.





## Main tourism trends post COVID-19: short-medium term implication

According to expert, some trends can be expected in the short-medium period to drive the recovery, like:



## Main tourism trends post COVID-19: longer term impact

Different studies and markets analyses point out some trends that will have a longer term impact. The majority were there even before the pandemic, even if are expected to be accelerated by it:

### DIGITALISATION



### ECONOMIC GAPS



### SUSTAINABILITY



### HEALTH AND SAFETY



A top-down view of a wooden desk. On the left, there is a small potted succulent. In the center, a laptop is open, displaying a grid of travel-related images. To the right of the laptop, a white camera is visible. In the background, a map is partially visible. The desk is cluttered with various items, suggesting a workspace for travel planning or digital marketing.

## **DIGITIZATION**

Virtual tours, chatbot, self check-in/check-out have been implemented by firms to create safer services for consumer and this trend is expected to continue with a more pervasive use of automation, contactless payments and services.

## **SAFETY AND HYGIENE**

These will be the first priorities in selecting destination and activities. People are likely to prefer 'private solution' to limit physical contact with strangers and feel safer.

## **ECONOMICS GAPS**

This situation will bring to an increasing inequality between consumers: employees who were able to work from home, maintained jobs and income and accumulated savings. On the contrary, others lost their jobs an income.



# Experience and experiential tourism

As seen, “experience” and “experiential” are two words widely used in the tourism sector, but there is no a clear and shared definition of what these words mean.

Using a demand side approach (**asking directly to tourist**) Ciset conducted a **research** trying to understand what tourists themselves perceive as being experiential.

## HOW?

- ❖ Through an online survey;
- ❖ Distributed mainly through social networks;
- ❖ Almost 200 answers collected.

Starting from the survey results, we will define the main features for setting up experiential activities.



## Survey results

Uniqueness, discovering local tradition and doing something emotional have been evaluated as the most relevant items for choosing an experience.

Different studies underline how people do not want to act and feel like a tourist while on vacation, they want to live the place **like a local** or **like an insider**.

For this reason, they search for places **out off the beaten tracks** – that means place not completely modified by tourists nor adapted for tourists' need.

The contact with the local community is also important, as tourists perceived to have a **direct experience with local culture**.



- Discover hidden places
- Making something unique
- Discovering the local traditions
- Doing something emotional
- Meet local community
- Doing something new
- Sustaining local economy



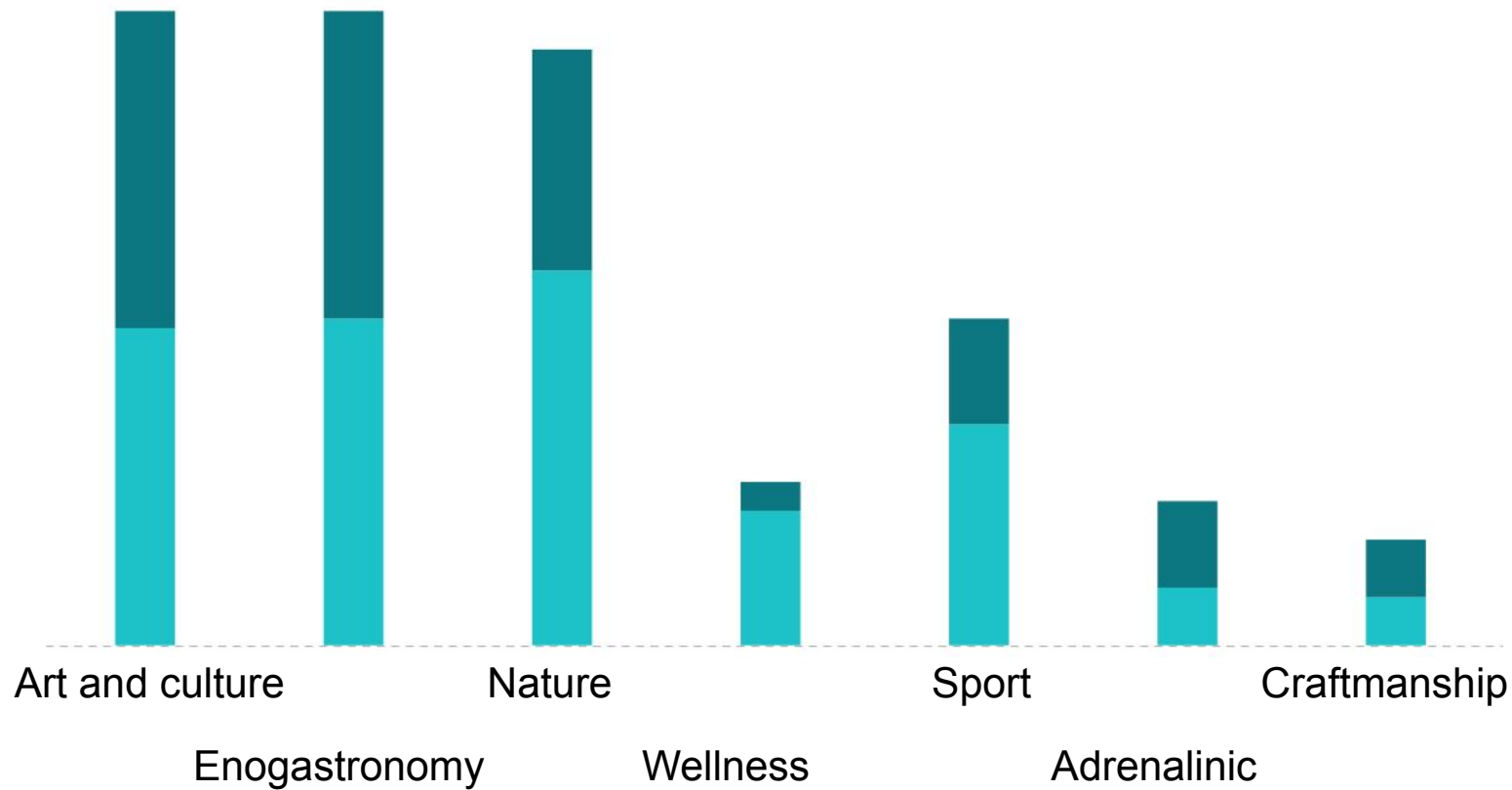
## Survey results

**EXPERIENTIAL  
WAS  
DESCRIBED  
AS:**

make something ***UNIQUE***,  
in a ***NON-TOURISTIC PLACE***  
with ***LOCAL PEOPLE***



## Survey results: the experiences more requested



Experiences related to **art and culture**, **enogastronomy** and **nature** are the most requested, as Airbnb and Tripadvisor's insights also confirm.

## Some examples of the experiences mentioned:

**CULTURAL MAORI  
PERFORMANCE IN  
AUSTRALIA**

**DANCE CLASS IN ARGENTINA**

**CARVING WORKSHOP  
IN BALI**

**MUSIC WORKSHOP IN A PUB IN IRELAND**

**OLD CELTIC CRAFTS WORKSHOP (WOOD  
AND WOOL) IN IRELAND**

**VISITED THE 9/11  
MEMORIAL OF NEW YORK**

## Experiences and emotion

### VISITED THE 9/11 MEMORIAL OF NEW YORK



**A HIGH EMOTIONAL EXPERIENCES:**  
it underlines the importance of the emotional dimension,  
as recognized also by the survey result (see slide 12).



**EMOTION CREATE MEMORY:**  
Different researchers underline how “memory” is the added value that differ an experience from a more traditional “activities” or touristic services.



## Experiences were based on:

Taking the experiences  
previously mentioned,  
we can see they are  
based on:

**HIGH LEVEL**

OF CONSUMERS' PARTICIPATION

**MEDIUM-HIGH LEVEL**

OF CONTACT WITH  
THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

## How COVID-19 will impact on experiential travel:

Each of the 4 mega-trends introduced in the first part of this presentation is expected to affect experiential tourism:

### DIGITALISATION



Experiential tourists are used to search information and book their travel and experiences online so this will not have a negative impact but will instead be reinforced: probably, also the less technological tourists will have become more familiar with it.

### ECONOMIC GAPS



On one hand, the recovery will depend on older and richer segments and the most motivated experiential tourists are mature, educated and high-income people. On the other side Millennials, who in some countries have a more precarious job situation, represent the major market share for experiential tourism and this could unbalance the situation.

### SUSTAINABILITY



Experiential tourists are already inclined to visit less-known destinations and places out of the beaten track. Furthermore, they prefer using local services in line with sustainable tourism trends even though this is due more to searching for "authentic" experience rather than for ideological reason.

### HEALTH AND SAFETY



On one hand, experiential tourists prefer private solution and personalized experience, so this will not impact so much. On the other hand, human contact play an important role in the emotional dimension and the creation of a memorable experiences.

# SECTION 3

Open questions  
& hints



## Open questions & reflections

Think about what are you searching for, while on vacation. Which activities would you prefer?

Think about your last vacation. Which activities or experiences were the most significant for you? Why?

What did that activity/experience unique?





## Tips

Pay attention to what your friends or relatives tell you about their vacation.

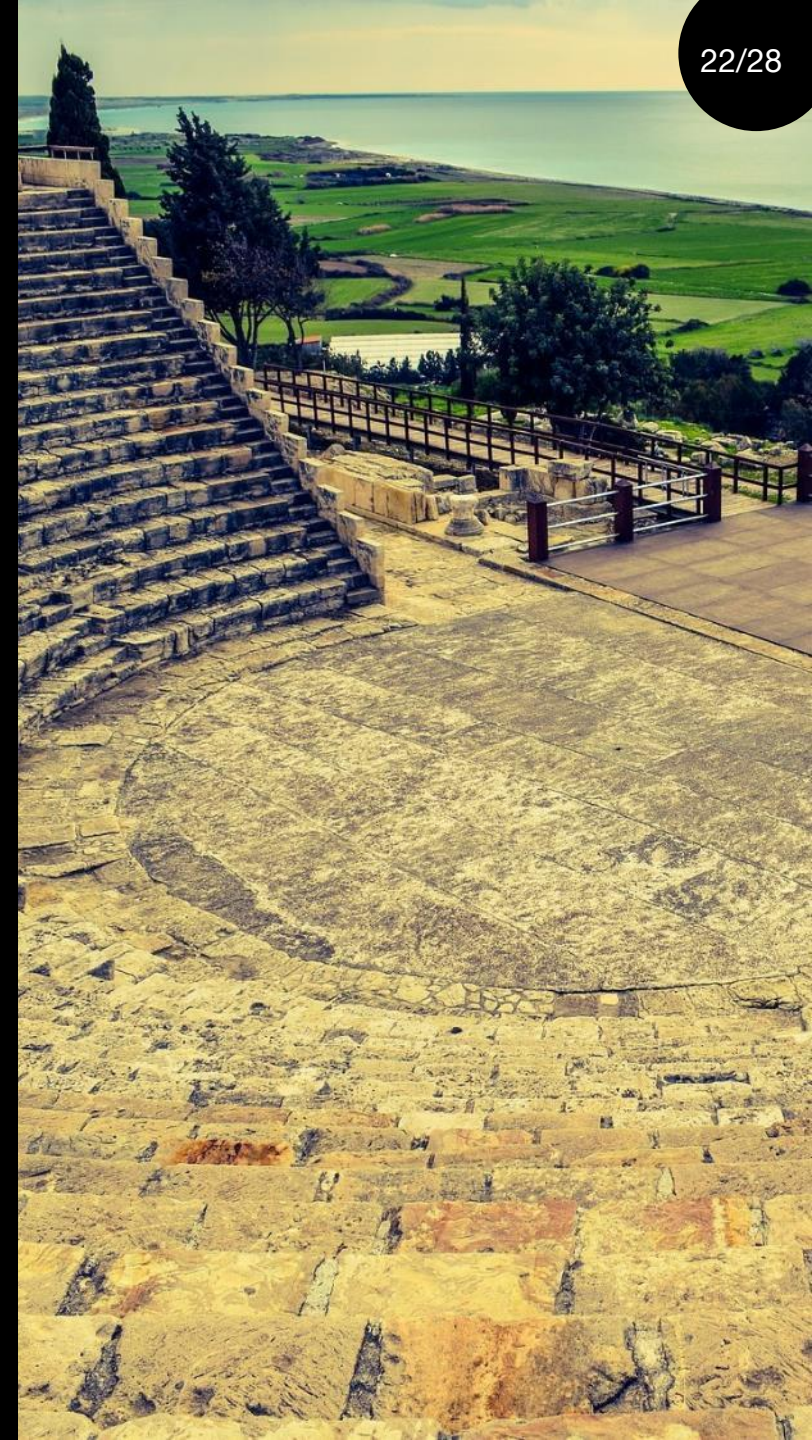
What did they tell you?

Which activities/experiences they tell you?

How relevant was the emotional dimension?

Pay attention, when your friends or relative ask you for vacation's suggestion, what are they searching for?

Is the price so relevant for their choice?





## Key takeaways

This presentation was about experience, experiential travel and COVID-19 pandemic effects on tourism.

Now that you finished watching it, you should be able to:

- Know what experiential tourists are searching for;
- Create experiences and experiential activities;
- Know the main trends that will drive tourism recovery after COVID-19.



**Closing section**

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