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Going Localthentic



Who are we?

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Storytime!

- Castelsardo, Sardinia
- Mekong River, Cambodia

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Moving away from this reality...

- UNWTO (2018): unprecedented growth of (inter)national tourism in, with 1.4 billion international arrivals – two years ahead of its forecasts.
- Tourism 'crisis':
 - Overtourism
 - Displaced locals
 - Undesired gentrification of neighbourhoods
 - Loss of liveability
 - Loss of destination attractiveness
 - McDisneyfication and the tourist bubble
 - Etc.

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The notion of locals

- Defining a “*local*” local
- Why do they matter?
 - Ambassadors
 - The ‘DNA’ and beating heartbeat of a place
 - Hostmanship
 - Changing patterns: Tourist vs. Traveller

Can we readjust our definitions of successful interactions between locals and tourists, a so-clearly important symbiotic partnership of a destination?

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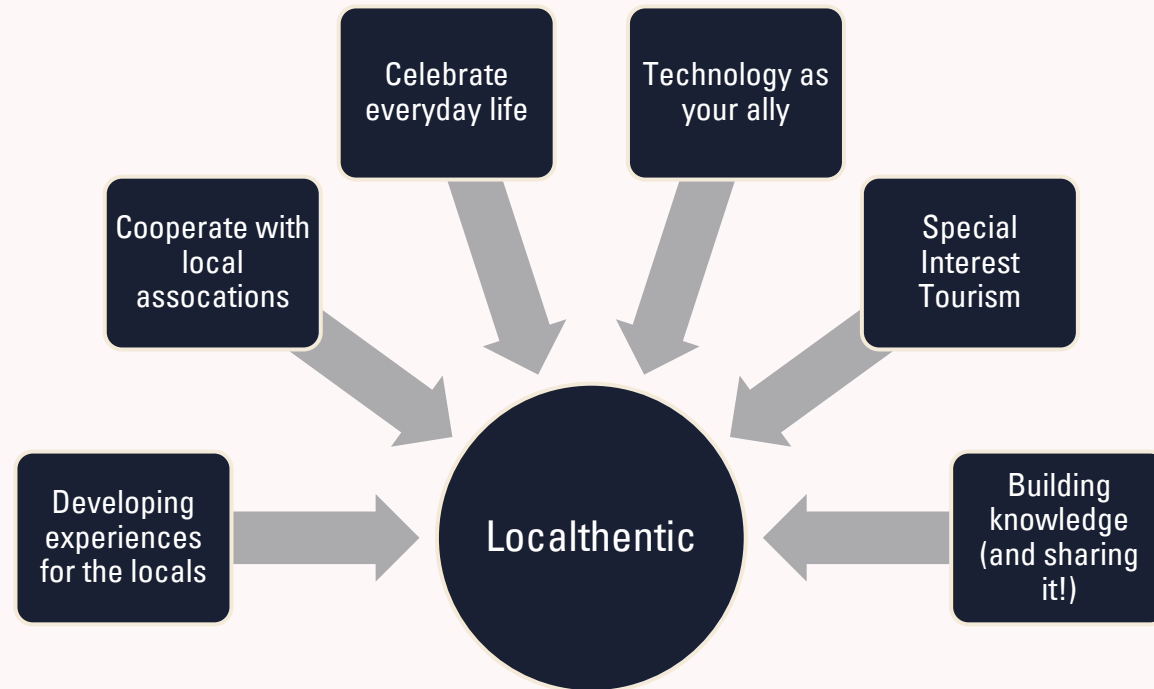


How we went about it...

- Literature review (61 articles) about relationships between locals and tourists
- Interviews with relevant DMO managers in Denmark
- 6 focus groups consisting of locals from different regions across Denmark (2020-21)
- Output: Inspirational Catalogue for DMO's on how to better work with locals ([link](#))

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Going Localthentic



“If locals don’t want to experience it, then would tourists not also hesitate to join in?”



Developing experiences for the locals

- Locals are better at gauging whether places and experiences are authentic than tourists. So...
- Design events and places for locals first
- Design creative places and experiences where locals and tourists want to partake
- Creative tourism (Richards & Marques, 2012)

Cooperate with local associations

- What's more local, than a local association?
- Bottom-up approach (Grass-roots approach)
- People tend to find (sub)cultures relevant to their interests and passion
- DMO should map out associations for tourists (make it easy to contact them!)

“Local associations are essential stitches in the fabric of any community or society.”



“When in Rome, do as the Romans do – but can tourists do this in tourist zones?”



Celebrate everyday life

- The attraction of everyday life and conviviality
- DMO's: The art of doing nothing
- Killing off tourist zones, tourist bubble, McDisneyfied areas
- Wayfinding = A potential enemy of localthentic?

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Technology as your ally

- Develop and use digital tools which can help facilitate tourists meeting locals in their own natural 'habitat'!
 - Food and culture
 - Local guiding/walks
 - Nightlife and festivities
 - Building relations (locals who want to meet 'out-of-towners')
- DMO role: Doing nothing, mapping existing apps/websites for incoming tourists?





Special Interest Tourism

- SIT: When the traveler's motivation and decision making are primarily determined by a particular special interest with a focus either on activity/ies and/or destinations and settings
- Examples: agri-tourism, gastro tourism, spiritual/wellness tourism, rural tourism, and adventure tourism
- Can contribute to
 - Enhancing the image of a destination and providing a distinct and unique destination brand
 - Enriching a tourist's experience
 - Being profitable to a wider range of providers
 - Local resident's happiness (as it a result of peoples' desire for a good quality of life)

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Building knowledge (and sharing it!)

- Where are we now vs. Where we want to go
- For tourists: Better segmentation and distinguishing of locals in surveys
- Gauging and gathering resident support

"It's no longer just a matter of economics and tourism tax revenues, as residents expect the industry to benefit their quality of life and to grow in a responsible, sustainable way"

- Use information to tailor make better PLACES (not destinations)



Thank you!

Questions?