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Blue Tourism



Mónica Morais de Brito¹ and
Luís Ávila da Silveira²

¹University of Évora/CEGOT/CIDEHUS, Évora,
Portugal

²University of Coimbra/CEGOT, Coimbra,
Portugal

All tourism practices developed in aquatic environments constitute blue tourism. It has as its main resource the water in its multiple forms (seas, rivers, lakes, among others), as well as the practices developed in adjacent territories. In these environments, there is an intrinsic concept of wellness, contributing to health and well-being, planned and developed on the basis of a model of sustainability.

Blue tourism moves away from the traditional concept, giving it a more comprehensive and complex dimension. It emerges from a reflexive analysis of the blue space concept and its extrapolation to water territories. Blue spaces are territories where water takes the leading role and combines a set of characteristics to catalyze health and well-being of their inhabitants. They include coastal territories such as seas and inland territories where rivers and lakes take the central stage (Foley and Kistemman 2015; Völker and Kistemann 2011; White et al. 2020).

The notion initially emerges from the blue economy concept, which was introduced by the

United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development as a synonym for maritime and coastal tourism, aggregating all its associated by-products such as nautical tourism, sun and sea tourism, and cruise tourism, all to promote sustainable development (Tonazzini et al. 2019). On the motto assumption of “better places to live, better places to visit” (Barcelona Declaration for Tourism and Cultural Heritage), it is understood that the salutogenic benefits of blue spaces can be enhanced through contributing to the health and well-being of the tourists and, simultaneously, increasing the attractiveness and competitiveness of these spaces through the offers associated with blue tourism.

Blue tourism supports the development of multiple aquatic activities, adding value to the territories and contributing to their economic and social sustainability. Nonetheless, it is not always aligned with the paradigm of sustainability since its by-products tend to constitute forms of mass tourism. Furthermore, blue tourism does not consider the salutogenic effects of water in its multiple forms in making them profitable for tourism development of the territories and the quality of tourists’ experience. In response to these weaknesses and challenges for the planet and society, future research should look at land territories as well as water in its multiple forms so as to further understand its therapeutic potential to promote health and well-being of tourists and residents in a context of sustainability.

See Also

- ▶ [Beach Tourism](#)
- ▶ [Coastal Tourism](#)
- ▶ [Health Tourism](#)
- ▶ [Marine Tourism](#)
- ▶ [Well-Being](#)

References

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