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### **A Book Review: The Experiences of Film Location Tourists**

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In the last decade, film tourism has gained momentum with both academics and industry professionals. Research on film tourism appears in academic conferences, published manuscripts, and some course offerings in Hospitality and Tourism programs. While scholars and industry practitioners recognize the economic importance and image factor that films can provide for destinations, there are many lenses to view this fledgling specialization. As Roesch points out in the Introduction, the phenomenon of film production locations attracting tourists has existed for decades. Roesch's interest in capturing the experiences of film tourists began in 2003 with the release of the Lord of the Rings (LOTR) films and the focus on New Zealand. Besides quantifying visitor arrivals, Roesch believes that it is important to understand the emotional connections and sense of place surrounding the traveler, the destination, and the film. As Roesch so aptly writes, "it is the purpose of this book to invite you to accompany film location tourists on some of their journeys in order to understand the impacts films can have on our lives." (p.3).

This book consists of nine chapters, which are divided into three parts: Part One: Film Tourism – An Overview; Part Two: The Experiences of Film Location Tourists; and Part Three: The Conclusion. Part One provides a brief history of film tourism and introduces the topics of destination marketing, product development, and impacts of film tourism on local communities. Important to this chapter is a discussion on forms of film tourism. Roesch attempts to distinguish among different types and purposes of film tourism. Because there are subtle nuances to the location, experience, and consumer, it would be helpful for a clearer

description of these roles and types. For example what is the difference between the various types of focal points?

Part Two is where Roesch's book comes alive. The case studies presented in Chapters five through eight are based on fieldwork spanning a three year period. Additionally, data was collected informally at international conferences, seminars, and through interviews. The case studies are centered on three global case studies with the most attention devoted to the Lord of the Rings (LOTR) locations in New Zealand. Material is also derived from fieldwork at Star Wars locations in Tunisia and the Sound of Music locations in Salzburg, Austria.

When considering the resources available on the topic of film location tourism, it is often appropriate to make parallels. Sue Beeton's (2005) innovative book entitled *Film-Induced Tourism* was the first to present perspectives on film-induced tourism and build a working knowledge of terms and concepts. Beeton provides the foundation and context, as well as specific examples, setting the stage for future research. Both Beeton and Roesch use the Lord of the Rings and New Zealand as a case study for analyzing film tourism. Roesch adds to our knowledge of this topic in several areas. The book includes a chapter on profiling film location tourists that would be appropriate for city officials and tourism leaders to understand. Roesch's goal is to demonstrate the uniqueness of the film tourist. Each particular film can attract a specific group of tourists, which means that there is variety among age, gender, and country of origin (page 106).

Roesch's most significant contribution to film tourism is found in Part Three. Chapter Nine: Implications and Future Directions includes Figure 9.1: Developing a film tourism strategy and management plan. This is a useful tool for both industry professionals and academics. The Figure outlines all of the steps involved in promotion with the release of a

film on a destination. The steps include details in each of the following themes: destination marketing, film tourism products, and film location visitation management (p. 227). From the perspective of a hospitality and tourism educator, the book is comprehensive, mostly clear, and uses in depth case studies. Despite some shortcomings, the book is well-written and adds to the growing literature in a popular field within Tourism studies. Industry professionals, as well as academics with a specific interest in cultural studies, film tourism, and marketing will benefit the most from this contribution.

**The Experiences of Film Location Tourists.** S. Roesch. Aspects of Tourism Series  
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