Chapter 14
Portuguese Lighthouses: A Way to Diversify Tourism in the Coastal Territories

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ABSTRACT
The tourist competitiveness of coastal areas is directly related to their ability to innovate in the different ways of using them and with the creativity that allows them to make a difference in the face of global competition and reduce seasonality. It is in this context that the Portuguese lighthouses and their innumerable potentialities arise, without neglecting their primary function related to the safety of navigation, to become tourist accommodation, taking advantage of its heritage value, its history, and its stories, and its privileged geographical location, or in places of visitation, in the scope of Coastal Tourism and Cultural Tourism. This chapter analyzes Portuguese lighthouses, identifying those with the greatest potential as accommodation units and/or places of visitation. The author proposes strategies, although brief and subject to future development, aiming at the tourist production of these public infrastructures and the diversification of the offer in terms of Coastal Tourism.

INTRODUCTION
The tourism dynamics profile shows that the tourism competitiveness on the territories is directly proportional to their creativity and capacity to reinvent and innovate. The innovation concern is vital to global competition and usually connected with technological leaps, and its other dimensions, playing a major role in tourism. The increase in innovative tourism is increasingly related to the tourist monetization of equipment, infrastructure and activities that primarily was not established as tourism resource, resulting in a differentiated and sometimes exclusive offer of touristic products or services related to this system.

This behavior of the tourism on territories can significantly contribute to the implementation of a model of sustainable tourism development, as it promotes interdependence between products as an efficient way to mitigate seasonality. On the other hand, an exclusive and differentiated offer is increasingly

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are attractive to tourists, who have more and more a profile that favors this type of experience, through the search of creative and differentiated tourist destinations.

The Portuguese lighthouses arise with a great potential in this context. Without neglecting their primary function related to the safety of navigation, they should be transformed in an attractive place to tourism taking advantage of its heritage value, its history and its stories, its privileged geographical location.

The use of lighthouses for tourist purposes is an example of successful innovation since these public facilities also have great potential to be used as local accommodation units within a perspective of Sustainable Tourism. This idea is already in place in several coastal countries with very positive results, some of them being among the most sought-after places in the accommodation industry worldwide.

Regarding Portuguese lighthouses, these are among the most emblematic constructions of the coast, serving as an aid to maritime navigation for many years. Due to its privileged location, that allows a panoramic view over vast sea areas and the connection to the fascinating and immense ocean, these structures have incited great admiration for both local population and foreign visitors.

There is also a more pragmatic issue related to lighthouse conservation and maintenance. These are public infrastructures, with a significant cost to the public purse, that in some cases require deep and costly interventions. The tourism purposes can be a practical way to eliminate or minimize these costs, ensuring their conservation and even investment in some elements of heritage valuation. Lighthouses can not fail to fulfill their primary function related, as said, with maritime safety but they can be explored for tourism purposes like, among others, accommodation.

In Portugal, the aim of the REVIVE Programme is to promote and make possible the rehabilitation of public buildings for tourism purposes, making them accessible to the public, through the concession to privates who will take charge of the investment. This Programme has already used in many situations to valorize public heritage and well shows the Portuguese Government willingness to establish partnerships with privates in order to take advantage of this public heritage in tourism. Therefore, those who have responsibility for the lighthouses should seek for financing to put in place ideas like these here presented.

This work aims to look at the Portuguese lighthouses through a perspective of touristic use, identifying ones with the greatest potential as accommodation units and/or places of visit. We also undertake a benchmarking study on lighthouses used for tourist purposes in some coastal countries and finally we propose a set of strategies, although brief and subject to future development, aiming at the tourist production of these remarkable public infrastructures.

BETWEEN THEORY AND PRACTICE: CONCEPTS AND REALITY

The analysis of lighthouses as a touristic resource prompts a conceptual framework based on concepts of innovation and creativity. A brief look at the tourism offer on a global scale, in its multiple dimensions, allows us to see that these factors are relevant in destinations positioning, in a strongly competitive and constantly changing context, on a sector where imponderables, natural and human behaviour, make this context difficult to prospect.

In this perspective, and because there are natural and cultural resources that are conventionally perceived as touristic resources regardless of geography, the geographical distinction of territories is based on the ability to manage the patrimony whose association with tourism is not entirely direct, coming only from creative and open minds. This is a behavior that meets the characteristics of tourist demand, since the tourist of the present days incessantly searches for differentiated, multisensory experiences