



Tired of typical sight-seeing? Had enough of monuments, statues, and cathedrals? Read about the new and innovative types of tourism emerging around the globe and discover ways to spice up your itinerary.

## Gastronomic Tourism

Why not just eat your way through your travels? A comparatively new kind of tourism, what may be called gastronomic tourism, is gaining popularity across the world. In gastronomic tourism, food and beverages are the main factors that motivate a person to travel to a particular destination. Combining food, drink and culture, this type of travel provides for an authentic experience, the food and restaurants reflecting the local and unique flavors of a particular region or country. Studies conducted into this travel phenomenon have shown that food plays, consciously or unconsciously, an important part in the vacations of a good number of travelers. "Gastronomic tourists" are looking for a more participatory style of holiday experience. Analysts have noticed a shift from 'passive observation' to 'interaction and involvement' in tourists, whereby the visitor comes into close contact with locals and their way of life rather than remaining a mere spectator. Tourism authorities around the world are now recognizing the potential of gastronomic tourism as a powerful instrument to identify and promote places, regions, or even entire countries.



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## Experimental Tourism

Experimental travel is a novel approach to tourism in which visitors do not visit the ordinary tourist attractions in traditional fashion. Rather, they let their whims be their guides! In experimental tourism, destinations are chosen not on their standard touristic merit but on the basis of an idea or experiment often involving elements of humor, serendipity, and chance. One example of experimental travel is known as Monopoly-travel. Participants armed with the local version of a Monopoly game board explore a city at the whim of a dice roll, shuttling between elegant shopping areas and the local water plant – with the occasional visit to jail. Another example is Counter-travel, which requires you to take snapshots with your back turned to landmarks like the Eiffel Tower or Big Ben. Joël Henry, the French founder of the Laboratory of Experimental Tourism (Latourex), has developed dozens of similar ideas since coming up with the concept in 1990. The traveler must increase his or her receptiveness, 48-year-old Henry explains. "You work out a set of constraints and you stick to it, and that is your sole purpose for the period you decide to devote to the experience. You are open to all the surprises that will pop up along the way." In this way, no trip is ever planned or predictable. Henry's most unusual invention is known as "Ero-travel", where a couple heads to the same town but travels there separately. The challenge is to find one another abroad. He and his wife have engaged in the erotic pursuit in five cities and have managed to hook up every time. "Each time we were convinced that this time, we wouldn't find each other, and each time we did," he said. Some of his ideas are legally dubious, like Kleptotourism, the theft of fragments of monuments like Rome's Colosseum or the Great Wall of China. Others sound plain boring, although Henry maintains there is no such thing as an inferior destination. "A fundamental condition for taking part in experimental travel is to refute the idea of banality itself," he explains, "because we consider that nothing is mundane."

## Agritourism

Agritourism involves any agriculturally-based operation or activity that brings visitors to a farm or ranch. It has recently become widespread in America, and agritourists can choose from a wide range of activities that include picking fruits and vegetables, riding horses, tasting honey, learning about wine and cheese making, or shopping in farm gift shops for local and regional produce or handicrafts.



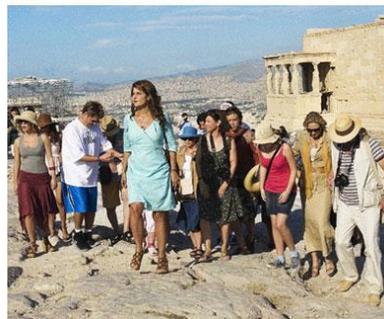
For rural economies struggling to stay afloat in this age of industrial agriculture, agritourism has become an important and marketable opportunity for improving the incomes and potential economic viability of small farms and rural communities. In western North Carolina, the organization HandMade in America is using agritourism to develop their local economy and craft trades, and to educate visitors about agriculture practices. On their website, agritourism is described as a “... niche market that not only assists communities with solutions to help diversify our economic base, but it also helps our regional urban centers and increasingly suburban populations to understand the important role that farming and rural life plays in our history by highlighting the need for it in our contemporary society.” As people are becoming more interested in the ecological importance of local food production, agritourism projects reinforce the need to support local growers and allow visitors to experience the relationship between food and our natural environment.

### Set-jetting

Set-jetting is the trend of traveling to destinations that are first seen in movies, for instance, touring London in a high-speed boat like James Bond or visiting the stately homes that are seen in Jane Austin films. The term was first coined in the US press in the New York Post by journalist Gretchen Kelly, who wrote a 2007 article entitled “The sexiest film locations from 2007 to visit now.”



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Currently, summer blockbuster movies are being used as set-jetting marketing tools by companies like Expedia and Fandango, who are promoting set-jetting trips to the new Steven Spielberg film, Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull. Corporations as well as convention and tourism boards are exploiting the trend, creating their own set-jetting travel maps, like the Elizabeth: The Golden Age movie map published by VisitBritain, Britain's official travel and tourism guide. Other travel itineraries have been created by tourism boards for movies including The Da Vinci Code (France), In Bruges (Belgium), and P.S. I Love You (Ireland). Although set-jetting is a new concept, it's fast becoming a major factor in the choices travelers make in an increasingly tight economic climate. If a traveler has seen a site in a major motion picture, its media exposure makes it a compelling choice for a family vacation or honeymoon.

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