

COLOUR CODING TOURISM

Understanding the New Colour of Travel

Most travellers may be familiar with green tourism and its broad reference to sustainability in tourism, and there are a multiplicity of tourism colour references that dare to entice niche market travellers across the world. From green to black, white, blue, pink, red, and yellow; colour steps in to change the game.

As the international travel industry becomes more segmented, niche travel solutions are increasingly sought after. *Signature* unpacks the meaning of colour coding in tourism for a better understanding of the bespoke experiences on offer in South Africa and beyond.

GREEN TOURISM (SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL)

It is often said that green is the new black. While this phrase can be accurate for industries such as fashion and infrastructure, it is unfortunately not so in the tourism sector, as both colours refer to entirely different things. In this context, green tourism refers to sustainable tourism. It is often used as an overarching theme to refer to the two main branches of green travel. Firstly, it can refer to the adaptation of responsible tourism travel that considers the environment as well as sustainability practices. Secondly, it deals with eco-tourism, which is also hinged on responsible travel that is associated with natural areas. South Africa is blessed to

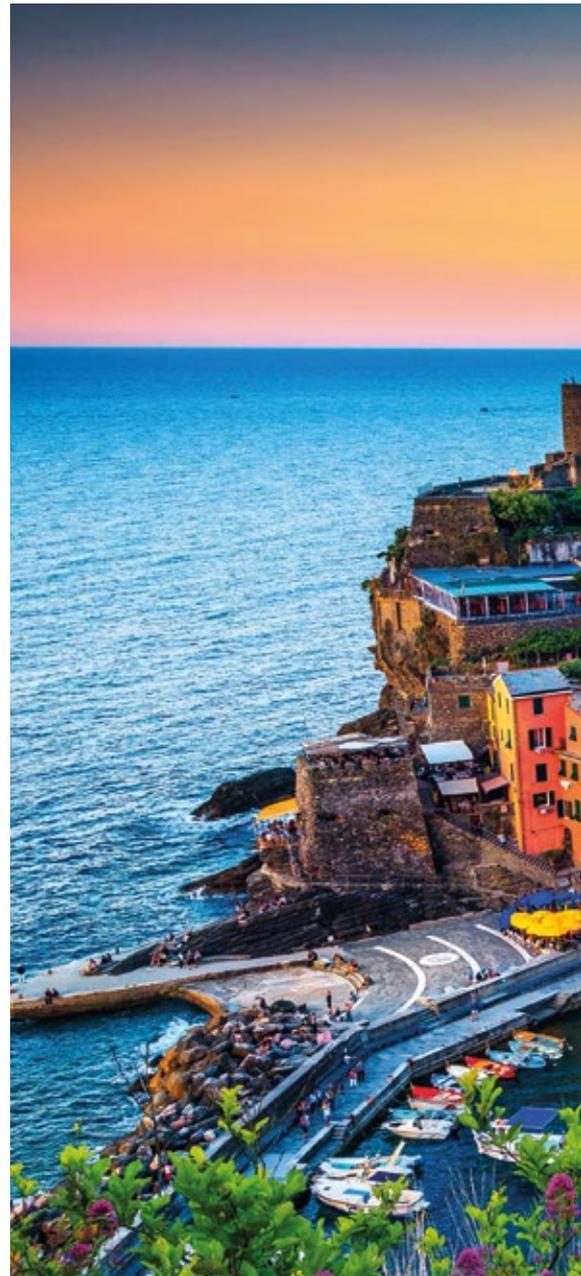
have multiple green tourism destinations, which is one of the country's defining attractions for international tourists.

WHITE TOURISM (MOUNTAIN TOURISM)

White tourism, also known as mountain tourism, is gaining particular traction in Europe. It is a drawcard for tourists wishing to experience snow-capped mountains and their associated green valleys. It is worth noting that white tourism is popular among interns and various professionals within the European hotel and catering industries, who want an opportunity to work (and perhaps play) on the continent's snowy mountains. Kenya and Tanzania for its Mount Kenya and Kilimanjaro peaks, the Mountain Kingdom of Lesotho, and South Africa's Drakensberg and Drakenstein mountains are also of interest to adventurers seeking this unique travel experience.

BLUE TOURISM (MARITIME TOURISM)

The popularity of the first Blue Tourism Forum at the *l'Agence Française de Développement's* (AFD) offices in





Paris in 2019, reaffirmed that blue tourism should not be overlooked as an attraction for maritime aficionados across the globe. The forum was titled: “Sustainable Blue Tourism: towards a sustainable coastal and maritime tourism in regional seas” and assembled thought leaders from across the world to discuss all things relating to maritime and coastal tourism, and the protection of our oceans. Blue tourism is of particular importance to countries

with accessible coastlines that market themselves as coastal attractions. Cruises, water resorts, and various eco-tourism offerings also form part of this niche.

PINK TOURISM (LGBTQI+ TOURISM)

Pink tourism, also colloquially known as gay or LGBTQI+ tourism, pertains to tourism that is explicitly marketed to the LGBTQI+ community. Destinations are

often handpicked to ensure they have liberal attitudes towards community members, or for their historical significance to the LGBTQI+ community. It is also essential to verify that it is permissive, in terms of the laws of countries, and that travellers will be safe and free at all times. In places like South Africa, where gender-based violence is often a reality, it is imperative to book all pink travel with a well reputable pink



travel consultant firm to assure maximum enjoyment and safety at all times. Also closely related to pink tourism is what industry has coined the “pink dollar” – the phrase for the soaring profits often generated by this niche market.

BLACK TOURISM (‘DARK’ OR GRIEF TOURISM)

While black can refer to the standard, luxury or economic groupings in other sectors; black tourism refers to a specific dark tourism niche. It is also widely known as grief tourism, disaster tourism or slum tourism. Black

tourism is generally defined as tourism that pertains to travelling to places that are historically hinged on death and tragedy. Tourists flock to such sights because of their historical value, rather than their emotive associations with mortality.

YELLOW TOURISM

Claimed to be the first “International Conference on Tourism and Crime (Yellow Tourism)”, this event took place at Ionian University (Ionian Academy) in 2007. At the core of yellow tourism is tourism that is related to crime in some way. It is generally accepted that the concept of “yellow tourism” draws on Dostoevsky’s novel *Crime & Punishment*, in which the colour yellow was symbolically associated with corruption and decay. What sets yellow tourism apart is that it is spearheaded by a scientific community (along with a corresponding body of knowledge). Yellow tourism strives for the creation of sustainable tourism development strategies, guidelines and policies that promote more responsible industry standards for all people and communities involved in the tourism sector.

Understanding the different colours of tourism – albeit black, white, blue, pink, red, or yellow – can make all the difference in navigating the niche tourism industry.



colours of tourism – albeit black, white, blue, pink, red, or yellow – can make all the difference in navigating the niche tourism industry. These are not merely sensational colour interpretations, but a globally accepted and negotiated kaleidoscope of colourful for associated tourism. This sector also represents a globalised business industry that affects the livelihood of many; so the importance of understanding and capitalising on such niche markets is vital. 11



Understanding the different

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