

Chapter 11

Literary Tourism as a Good Practice to Promote Inland Tourism: The Case of the Eça de Queiroz Foundation in Portugal

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ABSTRACT

This study is carried out within the scope of the topic “innovative projects and good practices in inland tourism,” and it will present the case of the Portuguese project Eça de Queiroz Foundation. The Eça de Queiroz Foundation was founded in 1990 on some of the properties left by the 19th-century Portuguese writer, Eça de Queiroz: the Vila Nova farm and house in Santa Cruz do Douro (Tormes/Baião/Portugal), a small inland village in the Douro, a Portuguese region whose landscape is classified as World Heritage. Currently, the organization has several areas of activity, such as cultural, agricultural, and commercial intervention. The foundation also offers numerous products and services that enhance the promotion of Tourism in the Northern Portugal Inland Region.

INTRODUCTION

The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO, 2018) defends the comprehensive and multidimensional character of Tourism, drawing attention to its importance at the most diverse levels, such as cultural preservation, protection of the environment, economic growth and development.

The UNWTO also presents operational definitions on tourism types and says that

Cultural tourism is a type of tourism activity in which the visitor's essential motivation is to learn, discover, experience and consume the tangible and intangible cultural attractions/products in a tourism destination.

These attractions/products relate to a set of distinctive material, intellectual, spiritual and emotional features of a society that encompasses arts and architecture, historical and cultural heritage, culinary heritage, literature, music, creative industries and the living cultures with their lifestyles, value systems, beliefs and traditions (2019, p. 30).

Bearing in mind that literary tourism can be placed in the realm of cultural and heritage tourism and that Culture is also a factor of economic development that produces wealth, generates investment, creates employment, sustainable development and internationalization, this chapter revisits the phenomenon of literary tourism and explores the means by which an inland region of Portugal benefits from it in the form of destination branding, based on the life and work of a national writer.

Thus, this study will present the case of the Portuguese project Fundação Eça de Queiroz / 'Eça de Queiroz Foundation', showing how this organization, starting from the personal patrimony and the work of a renowned Portuguese writer from the last half of the 19th century, managed to preserve part of his patrimonial assets, as well as his recognized literary work, for the pursuit of lasting and socially relevant ends. Those constitute, in the present case, projects of a cultural, commercial and tourism nature that contribute to the development of the Portuguese statistical sub-region (NUTS III¹), Tâmega e Sousa, included in the statistical North, a territory close to the internationally recognized Alto Douro Wine Region, whose landscape has been a World Heritage Site by UNESCO since 2001.

The methodology was founded firstly on a bibliographic review, in order to provide contextualization and theoretical foundation of the concept of Literary Tourism, based on recent studies. Afterwards, the contents of the Eça de Queiroz Foundation Web Portal (<https://feq.pt>) were analyzed, namely its curriculum and management reports, the activities and accounts for 2018 and 2019 (2020 not yet available). Therefore, in this chapter, after presenting the necessary theoretical framework regarding the concept of Literary tourism and its typologies, the issue of marketing literary destinations, as well as tourism products and experiences, is addressed, albeit briefly, followed by the concept of literary tourism in Portugal.

Before proceeding to the presentation and characterization of the Eça de Queiroz Foundation, and because it started as a house museum, the relationship between this typology of museums and literature is analyzed, based on those that are the house museums of writers and poets in Portugal.

In the last part of the chapter, the Eça de Queiroz Foundation is introduced, starting with its location and characterization, and then attempting to illustrate how its different intervention areas (Culture, Education, Agriculture and Trade) and the various services and products it offers are relevant for regional development and for the promotion of Tourism in areas of inland Portugal, in this case, in the Northern region of Portugal.

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