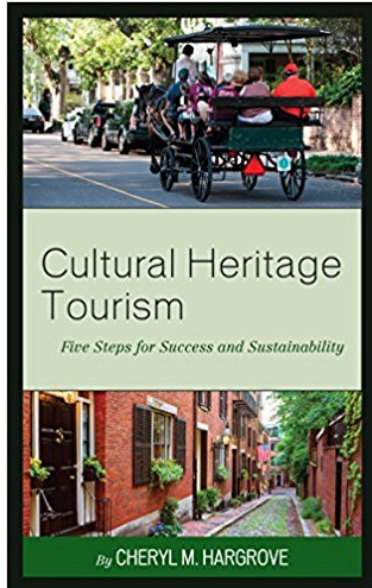


Book Review

***Cultural Heritage Tourism: Five Steps for Success and Sustainability* by Cheryl M. Hargrove (American Association for State and Local History Book Series, Rowman & Littlefield: 2017)**



“Cultural heritage tourism is traveling to experience the places, artifacts, and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present. It includes cultural, historic, and natural resources.”—National Trust for Historic Preservation (2015), <http://www.preservationnation.org>

Like a seasoned tour guide, *Cultural Heritage Tourism: Five Steps for Success and Sustainability* presents a compelling demeanor while demonstrating mastery of the field’s thorniest practicalities. The book will boost the repertoire of any cultural tourism professional.

The guide is a boon to a field that has evolved rapidly, especially over the past three decades. Practitioners looking to reach skeptics about economic development strategy will find statistics, caveats, graphs, financial talking points, plan outlines, and more to make their case. Where the book adds particular value is in demonstrating the need to cultivate understanding and appreciation for cultural heritage tourism as a community effort, from cultural producers to public officials to the tourists themselves.

For those who are new to cultural heritage tourism, the guide offers a clear path to recognizing potential, addressing feasibility, and implementing and managing programs. *Cultural Heritage Tourism* attributes its basic framework to a 1989 framework authored by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, which it cites as a leading pioneer in the field. But in this current guide, the addition of advice for program management and impact evaluation afford the newcomer significant new tools.

Those who are concerned about the potential negative effects of any cultural heritage tourism undertaking will appreciate *Cultural Heritage Tourism’s* emphases on stewardship and sustainability. Specific pathways for ensuring that tourism is not at the expense of preserving and protecting heritage are threaded into an overall emphasis on authenticity and integrity.

Busy professionals too often confronted with jargon-y and/or ponderous compendiums will find relief in *Cultural Heritage Tourism: Fives Steps for Success and Sustainability*. The book’s overall structure is easily accessible without relying heavily on a linear narrative. The writing is clear and to the point and packed with useful information. The tone inspires rather than intimidates. The content and organization should gratify readers who recognize the significance of appealing to diverse learning styles in developing teams and reaching audiences.

Analyze, Plan, Develop, Market, and Manage

In chapters built on the updated National Trust planning process, *Cultural Heritage Tourism* takes the reader deep—as deep as a few hundred pages will allow—into topics from

determining visitor readiness to partnering for success and sustainability. The guide portions of each chapter are complemented by “profiles”—case studies illuminating the featured topics. As is the case with the rest of the book, these profiles are multifaceted and thorough, often giving concise insights into important lessons learned. Topics range from the mundane and practical to the creative and diplomatic; from navigating parking ordinances to preparing ethnic history guides.

Going International

Those interested in working on cultural heritage tourism initiatives outside the United States may find *Cultural Heritage Tourism: Five Steps for Success and Sustainability* useful in starting discussions with potential partners. The book itself suggests that cultural context is critical in virtually every aspect of cultural heritage tourism.

For those who have been disheartened by failed efforts at cultural heritage tourism at home or abroad, surely this book will offer techniques for clearing one’s head and taking another, perhaps harder look.

Anyone who has the opportunity to preserve and share cultural heritage in any form will recognize in this book the extraordinary privilege and responsibility such a job entails.

The rewards of a job well done, the book points out, are rewards that in the end belong to a vast community. Whoever wishes to invest in that community—heart and soul as much as any other resource—will benefit from reading *Cultural Heritage Tourism: Five Steps for Success and Sustainability*.

By Diana Cohen Altman

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