Check Your Bags and Travel: Dispelling Myths About Hospitality

Presenters
Kona Gray, ASLA, EDSA, Inc.
Jeff Zimmermann, ASLA, Design Workshop
William Campie, ASLA, DTJ Design
William Estes, Il, ASLA, UW -Seattle

ASLA 2015 Annual Meeting and EXPO
Session Statement:

The myth that hospitality design is not a worthy pursuit for LA's is false. Travel and leisure is essential to human survival. People must recharge and reflect on worthy aspects of living. The resort emphasis has shifted to healthy, experiential, and authentic travel; creating a wonderful niche for the LA.

Course Outline:

1. Introduction (Kona Gray, ASLA)
   a. The Metamorphosis of Travel and Leisure
2. The Experiential Traveler (Jeff Zimmerman, ASLA)
   a. Designing through Human Experiences
   b. Day and Night of Resorts
   c. Authentic Places
3. Resort Anatomy (William Campie, ASLA)
   a. Eco-Resorts
   b. Urban Hotels
   c. Destination Experiences
4. The Blue Zones (William Estes, II, ASLA)
   a. Greece
   b. Italy
   c. Health and Wellness
5. Q & A – Lessons Learned

Learning Outcomes:

1. Learn how travel and leisure has evolved over the centuries expressed through the role of the Landscape Architect.

2. Understand the opportunities for experiential travel, hospitality design through human interactions and creating memorable connections.

3. Experience how Landscape Architects are changing hospitality design in several types of resorts including eco-resorts, urban hotels and travel destinations.

4. Gain knowledge of how health is connected to travel and leisure minimizing stress to improve quality of life. Discover the places in the globe known for longevity.
Travel and Leisure 101

Travel and Leisure, Hospitality, Hotels and Resorts all lead to Tourism. Simply stated “the act and process of spending time away from home in pursuit of recreation, relaxation, and pleasure, while making use of the commercial provision of services. As such, tourism is a product of modern social arrangements, beginning in western Europe in the 17th century, although it has antecedents in Classical antiquity.”

(Source: http://www.britannica.com/topic/tourism)

Early Forms of Travel and Types of Journey

“Recreational and educational travel already existed in the classical world and, even earlier, in Egypt under the pharaohs. In the latter, there is evidence of journeys emanating from a luxury lifestyle and the search for amusement, experience and relaxation. The privileged groups of the population cultivated the first journeys for pleasure. Their writings tell us that they visited famous monuments and relics of ancient Egyptian culture, including, for example, the step pyramid of Sakkara, the Sphinx and the great pyramids of Giza – buildings that had been constructed a good thousand years earlier. The Greeks had similar traditions. They travelled to Delphi in order to question the Oracle, participated in the Pythian Games (musical and sporting competitions) or the early Olympic Games. Herodot (485–424 B.C.) the well-travelled writer with an interest in both history and ethnology who visited Egypt, North Africa, the Black Sea, Mesopotamia and Italy, pioneered a new type of research trip.”

The Expansion of Tourism and Globalization

The world “embraces the developments in tourism during the post-war period up to the present. Depending on one’s perspective, this is the apex of tourism or the phase of practice and consolidation. These are justified labels for the period’s combination of infrastructural construction and renovation, streams of tourists and holidaying as a common form of recreation: indeed, over the last few decades, tourism has become an important branch of the global economy and is a defining characteristic of modern industrial nations. Tourism crosses borders: spatial, temporal, social and cultural. This is its common denominator. Various factors brought about this boom, including rising affluence, urbanization, the unprecedented construction of transportation and communication networks and the increase in leisure time as a result of shortening working hours, all of which shaped socialization.”

(Source: www.ieg-ego.eu/en/threads/europe-on-the-road/the-history-of tourism#TourismasaGlobalisedSystem)
Tourism by the Numbers

“In 2014 – Over 1.1 billion tourists travelled internationally. International tourism propelled ahead in 2014 as the number of international tourists (overnight visitors) grew 4.4% with an additional 48 million more than in 2013, to reach a new record total of 1,135 million.

Based on travel arrivals, “the Americas was the best performing region in relative terms with 8% growth, welcoming an additional 14 million international tourists and raising the total to 182 million.”

“Adding up the export earnings generated through international passenger transport services (US$ 221 billion in 2014), total exports from international tourism were up to US$ 1.5 trillion, or US$ 4 billion a day on average in 2014.”

(Source: UNWTO 2014 Annual Report)

These statistics validate the need for travel and leisure destinations. It also calls for connectivity to places domestic and international. Yet questions still remain.

1. Why are so many resort experiences themed and generic?
2. Are we as a society truly taking the time to relax and recharge?
3. How many of us are actually seeing the great landscapes of the world?

Notes:
People go to resorts/destinations to recreate what’s missing from their everyday lives. They look for the following four things: Beauty, Comfort, Time with Family and Time for Self-Reflection. The Role of the LA in each of these areas are described below:

**Beauty** – integrating nature into the built environment by carefully placing our work into the natural setting.

**Comfort** – adapting our designs into the environment. Example: looking for the sun pockets in winter destinations and providing refuge.

**Time with Family** – designing amenities for all ages and abilities to bring the family together and also provide them things to experience individually.

**Time for Self-Reflection** – Create places to enjoy nature, beauty, take a deep breath and rejuvenate.
Day and Night of Resorts

Resorts and hospitality can take on the belief that its unaffordable to most people to stay at or even recreate at these amazing destinations which are of course usually located along an ocean or within some mountain destination.

Whether you are wealthy, middle-class, or come from the lower incomes the feelings and experiential experiences can affect all of us in the same way. Create positive experiences through design and be a part of the repeat clientele mentality. Although it doesn’t hurt, it’s not always just about the beauty.

Give people the opportunity to engage with nature and the environment. Also, see and live within the many amazing cultures around the world, most of the time this stuff is free.

Design and build price-point and flexibility into the product.

Authentic Places

The 5 Senses – see (sight), hear, smell, touch, taste. Good experiences create long lasting memories and brings people back. Breaking down the human senses.

Is the pool temperature just right? Are the chlorine levels balanced?

It’s in the details – landscape, hardscape, lighting, water, composition of architecture and the landscape, art, natural setting

How can you place a number on the importance of what it means to leave the grid, recharge, unwind, and submerge one’s self into nature and an experience that is never replicated during an average week at home and work?
Resort Anatomy

• Eco Resorts
  – Cultural Sharing
  – Education
  – Environment
  – Economics

• Urban Hotels
  – Every Space Counts.
  – What are the needs of the guest?
  – How are you integrated with other professionals?
• Destination Experiences
  – How does the place reflect the experience?
  – How does the landscape architect lead/support program?
  – How are you unique in your destination market and amongst the choices throughout the world?

Notes:
"The Blue Zones" by Dan Buettner is based on 10 years of National Geographic studies into areas of the world where people live measurably longer lives and people live to 100 at a high frequency.

One of the best ways to learn about healthy living is to study individuals and lifestyles of those that have lived long productive lives. The Blue Zone studies do just that and prove that a healthy lifestyle is just as important as genetics in determining our capacity to live healthy active lives later into our years.

To conclude, the lessons learned in the Blue Zones are all part of what Nikos Afianes, the Ikarian wine maker, referred to as a “system of health”. Our system of health should include our mind, body, and spirit. Eating better, exercising more, enjoying our family and friends, and living with a purpose are all things that we can do on a daily basis. We then have to teach those principles to our children because creating a culture of health can start with us, but it will take generations to establish, just as it has in the Blue Zones.
LESSONS LEARNED

1) **Food and Food Production:** provide the opportunity for healthy, local cuisine while also creating jobs and educational opportunities. To appreciate a region or culture, eating and drinking local is a must.

2) **Walking and Movement:** Adding pedestrian connectivity to a project is a primary component, but just as important is HOW you get there.

3) **Stress Reduction:** Americans take less and less vacation. We must prioritize time away from our daily routines to rejuvenate.

4) **Connectedness:** Taking time out of our busy schedules to reconnect with family and friends.

5) **Disconnect:** The limited wifi forced me to maintain boundaries of work and leisure, freeing me to enjoy myself.

6) **Authenticity:** I wasn’t catered too, the experiences were real and not staged.

Travel and Leisure supports the healthy attributes above and leads to longer, happier, meaningful lives.

Travel, eating better, exercising more, enjoying our family and friends, and living with a purpose are all things that we can do on a daily basis. We then have to teach those principles to our children because creating a culture of health can start with us, but it will take generations to establish, just as it has in the Blue Zones.

Notes: