

EXPERIENCES OF INTIMACY IN TOURISM

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Dr XAVIER MATTEUCCI



What people are looking for through recreational travel is a privileged time during which they can share experiences and connect with loved ones

'The quality of the holiday experience depends upon the degrees of intimacy that exist between travellers'

Trauer & Ryan (2005, p. 490)



The four realms of intimate experience (Trauer & Ryan, 2005)

Intimacy as physical contact, verbal communication, spiritual connection with others and as intellectual exchange with others

- as a highly emotional and authentic bond with a significant companion
- as an insightful, poignant, situated experience by interactions with the host population

Intimate socialities are facilitated by the social, spatial and atmospheric qualities of some holiday and leisure spaces

EXAMPLES

Intimacy of spaces

*So, that lodge is like a **small temple** of what we needed at that time, that **we shared**. It [the lodge] was very **small** and very basic, like we had a terrace with awning. There is a fence on one side so that neighbours **won't see you**. That's why we don't even see anyone. One big room. You are two minutes to the beach but you are in the wood. Simple interior... (in Matteucci, 2022)*

Intimacy as a space of hospitality and conviviality

*We really loved getting to know Chikako and **spending time with her**. It was really special to be in Chikako's studio, surrounded by her and her mother's artwork. We loved **meeting her mother**, who is herself a calligraphy master and lovely, warm teacher. Having **lunch** with Chikako everyday and **trading stories** was delightful and a highlight of our time in Kyoto. Chikako also recommended some spots in Kyoto, and prepared **delicious teas and snacks** for us everyday. (in Matteucci & Smith, 2024)*

EXAMPLES (2)

Intimacy through talks (disclosure)

*I would say that during our vacation we had an opportunity to **get to know each other, emotionally**. We were friends before as well, but we never had an opportunity to be by ourselves and to **talk about things** that really **matter**. A relationship becomes less banal when you are away from home and when you know nobody. So, we were on the same boat in that sense. It just happened, like **falling in love**, that holiday has brought us **closer** together in every way.... (in Matteucci et al., 2022)*

Intimacy as physical closeness, moments of togetherness

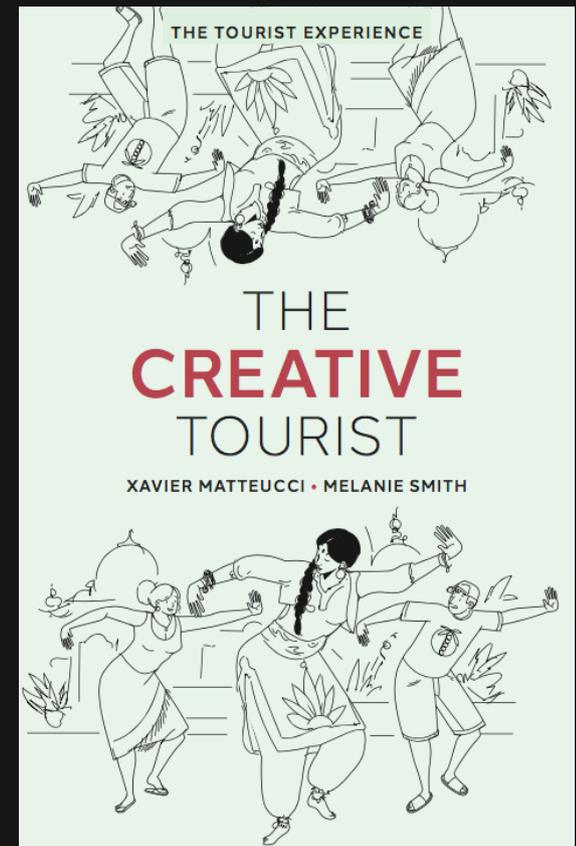
*When they know you are there, they come home in the morning, in the afternoon, in the evening. We **eat together**. They cook, we eat together. We sit down and **talk a lot of things**. Like old things like when you went to school together, what happened? You bring all these **stories** up. **You laugh and laugh and laugh**. You grew up with each other. Oh, you remember when we were in sixth form and all that kind of thing. What we used to do. It helps them. It makes them feel happy, it makes me feel happy.. (in Matteucci et al., 2024)*

INTIMACY AS RESISTANCE

Intimacy through moments of idleness
together (Farkic et al., 2022, Matteucci et al., 2022)

Intimacy as an intense sense
of being-in-relation (Törnqvist, 2018)

Some tourism spaces afford experiences of transitory, playful, collective intimacy that resonate with Michel Foucault's notion of heterotopias as counter-sites in which utopian ideals of social life can be enacted.



MY WORK ON INTIMACY

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