



Educational Tourism for Sustainable Rural Communities

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RURAL STUDIES PHD PROGRAM



This research project is at the conceptual/exploratory stage.

1. What is rural educational tourism?
2. What are some Canadian and International examples of rural educational tourism products?
3. What are the opportunities?
4. Next Steps

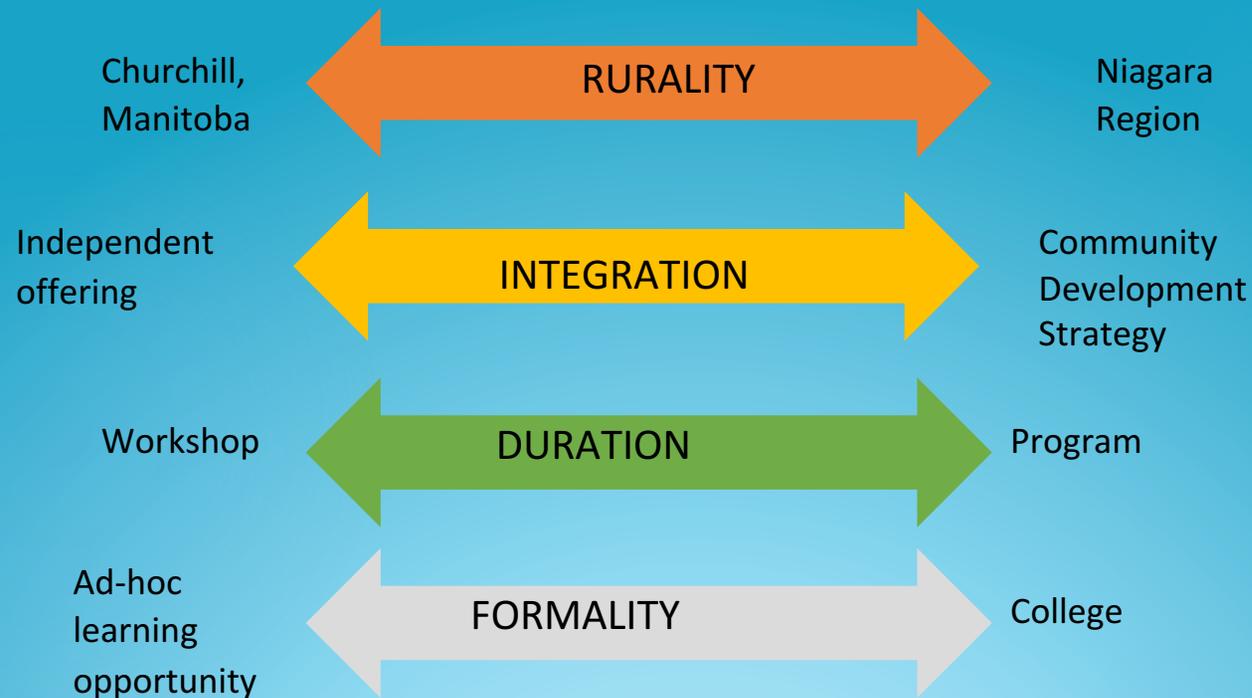
Please help me ask valuable questions, and connect with suitable people and projects to explore the possibilities for bringing learning and tourism together for sustainable rural communities.

1. What is rural educational tourism?

Rural Educational tourism (educational travel and learning vacations):

- ▶ "Tourist activity [in a 'rural' setting] by those who are undertaking an overnight vacation and those who are undertaking an excursion for whom education and learning is a primary or secondary part of their trip. This can include general educational tourism and adult study tours, international and domestic university and school students' travel, including language schools, school excursions and exchange programmes. Educational tourism can be independently or formally organised and can be undertaken in a variety of natural or human-made settings." (Richie, Carr & Cooper, 2003, p. 18)

Examples: farm-to-table culinary workshop,
yoga retreat, artisan craft week long
program, university credit educational
travel



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2. What are some Canadian and International examples of rural educational tourism products?

- ▶ Haliburton (Flemming College) weeklong courses

<https://flemmingcollege.ca/continuing-education/courses/in-haliburton/week-long>

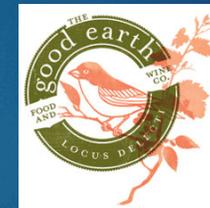
- ▶ University of Guelph cheese making short course

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/foodscience/industry-outreach/cheese-making-technology-short-course>

- ▶ The Great Spirit Circle Trail, Manatoulin Island – Sagamok
<http://circletrail.com/tour-packages/>



- ▶ The Good Earth, Lincoln -
<https://goodearthfoodandwine.com/classes-events/>



- ▶ Whistler and Tofino - strategic community planning to advance and evaluate educational tourism opportunities

- ▶ UBC Go Global – Rural Sustainability course in Italy

http://students.ok.ubc.ca/global/outgoing/gsp/current-programs/urban_italy.html

- ▶ Culinary Institute of America in St. Helena, Napa - <https://enthusiasts.ciachef.edu/>
- ▶ The Clearing in Wisconsin - <https://theclearing.org/>
- ▶ The School of Artisan Foods in UK - <https://www.schoolofartisanfood.org/>



3. What are the opportunities?



- ▶ **DEMAND** - People want to learn when they are on holiday.
- ▶ **SUPPLY** - Rural communities can differentiate with educational offerings that reflect their culture/place-based knowledge and skills.
- ▶ **SUSTAINABILITY** - Rural educational tourism may be particularly suited to sustaining (environmental, economic, social, cultural) rural communities.

DEMAND - People want to learn when they are on holiday.

- Increased interest in life-long learning
- Increased participation in cultural and creative tourism

(Falk & Dierking, 2002; Ritchie, Carr & Cooper, 2003; Carneiro, Lima, & Silva, 2015; Lane and Kastenholz, 2015)

SUPPLY - Rural communities can differentiate with educational offerings that reflect their culture/place-based knowledge and skills.

- ▶ Most of the existing examples of 'creative tourism' are to be found in rural areas where tourists actively participate in courses and learning experiences which are unique to the destination where they are undertaken. This includes activities related to learning local skills, and traditional practices that are place-based

(Richards & Wilson, 2007; George, Mair, & Reid, 2009; Morgan, 2010)

SUSTAINABILITY - Rural educational tourism may be particularly suited to sustaining rural communities.

- Visitor numbers limited by specific program schedule
- Attracts high priority niche
- Sustain local culture/place-based knowledge and skills
- Build local capacity and inter-sector collaboration (tourism, education)
- Improve urban/rural interconnections
- Increase environmentally sustainable behaviour

(Richards and Wilson, 2007)



What are the economic, social, cultural and environmental impacts of rural educational tourism?

How can rural educational tourism maximize the benefits and mitigate the risks of rural tourism development?

- ▶ There is little existing research that brings together rural development, sustainability and educational tourism in a Canadian context.
- ▶ I expect my research will use mixed-methods comparative case studies. I hope to include educational tourism activities in rural Aboriginal communities, pending consultation.

Sub questions with particular relevance to rural development policy and planning include:

- How was rural educational tourism integrated within a greater economic and learning development strategy?
- What new roles and competencies did stakeholders require and how were they developed?
- What changes from traditional forms of policy development were required?
- How were issues of sustainability, environmental impact, and conservation addressed?
- How did the quality and quantity of various interconnections change?



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Thank you.

References

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