

The Potential for Tourism Development in the Greater Chinhoyi Area in Zimbabwe: A Systems Approach in an Appetizer Destination

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Abstract : Tourism development tends to follow anchor attractions, including cities and their surroundings, while marginalizing small towns and their environs. This is even though the small towns and their hinterlands can also offer competitive tourism products. The Zimbabwe Tourism Authority (ZTA) gathers visitor statistics of major tourist destinations only thereby sidelining the density of tourist traffic that either passes through or visits the small towns in the country. Unless this problem is addressed, the tourism potential of small towns and their hinterlands will not be fully tapped for economic development. Using qualitative research methodology, this study investigated the opportunities for tourism development in the Greater Chinhoyi Area. The study revealed that the Greater Chinhoyi area had potential for heritage tourism, village tourism, urban tourism, educational tourism, dark tourism, recreational tourism, agrotourism, and nature tourism. There is a need to link the various tourism resources in the Greater Chinhoyi area to anchor attractions in dominant resorts, then develop and present the tourism products in transit towns as 'appetisers' or 'appetisser attractions' before one gets to the main destination.

Keywords : anchor attractions, appetisers, heritage tourism, agrotourism, small towns, tourism corridor, systems approach, hidden treasures

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