

CULTURAL TOURISM: FRENCH ATTRACTIONS

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ABSTRACT

This is an article about some famous tourist attractions in France according to the academic subject “cultural tourism”. It is a subject which is a point of interest for us because it is part of a patrimony and culture. It seems that it can be useful for Indonesian people to know a little bit of a French culture. It is hoped it will give the desire to come and visit France. In order to write this article, we first used our personal knowledge of those tourist attractions that we have already visited several times for some of them. To complete those information and adjust some details, we read some press articles and use each tourist attraction official websites. In this article, we will present four famous tourist attractions: two in Paris, one in Normandy and one in Bordeaux. They are The Château Pape Clément, The Mont Saint Michel, The Eiffel Tower, and the Palace of Versailles.

Keywords: cultural tourism, attractions, tourists, French.

INTRODUCTION

France is the world’s most popular tourist destination receiving 82 million foreign tourists annual. Visitors are attracted by historic cities, a beautiful countryside, the castles of the Loire Valley, and Brittany and Normandy. The country concentrates many cultural tourist attractions, not only in the capital, Paris. In this article we chose to present four tourist attractions well-known for several reasons: The Château Pape Clément, The Mont Saint Michel, The Eiffel Tower, and the Palace of Versailles.

METHODS

In order to write this article, we first used our personal knowledge of those tourist attractions that we have already visited several times for some of them. To complete those information and adjust some details, we read some press articles and use each tourist attraction official websites. Some books and researches are also reviewed to strengthen related statements.

DISCUSSION

First of all, we chose one of the most famous tourist attraction in the region of Bordeaux, especially for wine lovers: the Château Pape Clément.

Château Pape Clément is one of the oldest Grands Crus of Bordeaux. His vineyard was implemented in the XIIIth century by Bertrand de Goth, younger of a noble family from Bordeaux region. Bertrand de Got became Pope in 1305 under the name of Clement V. This is where the Château inherited its name from and its wine became an icon.

Located in Pessac, a few kilometers from Bordeaux, the vineyard of 63 ha covers a mixture of gravelly-sandy soils and clay-limestone soils. Separation of berries from their stalks is done entirely by hand. The accuracy of wine-winemaking techniques applied to Château Pape Clément rewarded the area of accreditation and Terra Vitis HVE3.

The Château Pape Clément is a famous French attraction in the region of Bordeaux. Its wine is Classified in AOC Pessac Léognan. The Chateau offers to visitors tasting tours in French and English with visit of the cellars and tasting of wines. Château Pape Clément welcomes also companies for seminars as well as exceptional stays with its five luxury rooms.



Figure 1
The Château Pape Clément in the region of Bordeaux.

The second tourist attraction is the Mont Saint Michel, one of Europe's most unforgettable sights. Its located in Normandy, in North-West of France. From 966, the dukes of Normandy and French kings supported the development of a major abbey on the Mont Saint Michel. The abbey became a renowned center of learning, attracting

some of the greatest minds in Europe. The ramparts at the base of the island were built to keep English forces out. Other fine buildings went up along the steep village street, now they are converted into museums, hotels, restaurants and boutiques for today's tourists. The abbey was turned into a prison during the days of the French Revolution and needed to be restored before the end of the 19th century.

In the year 1966, a religious community moved back perpetuating prayers, and welcome the original vocation of this place. Many pilgrimages have Mont Saint Michel as arrival.

UNESCO has classed the Mont Saint Michel as a world heritage in 1979 and this Mecca of tourism welcomes more than 2,5 million visitors a year. To go there, you can book a special horse-drawn carriage or you can walk all the way from the car parks, contemplating the full magnificence of the Mont Saint Michel as you approach.



Figure 2
The Mont Saint Michel in Normandy, North-West of France.

The third attraction is the Eiffel Tower. The Eiffel tower history represents a part of national heritage. It's as been the symbol of France and Paris for decades. But when Gustave Eiffel, the man who built the Tower, achieved its construction in 1889, the tower was only meant to be temporary in the Parisian landscape and was far from being the Parisians' favorite landmark. In commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the French Revolution, a competition was organized with the aim to "build on the Champ-de-Mars an iron tower with a square base, 125 meters wide and 300 meters high." Out of the 107 proposals submitted, Gustave Eiffel's was chosen. At the time, many were against the building because they found it not beautiful.

When the project came to be built, it had been established that the licensing rights linked to the convention for the tower's construction would last only 20 years, followed by imminent destruction. However, two million people visited the Tower during the Universal Exposition. Following this incredible success, the building became a symbol of French industrial power. The Tower was as equally as successful during the 1900 Universal Exposition. Determined to avoid the Tower's destruction, Gustave Eiffel went to great lengths to prove its scientific utility. Scientific experiments were conducted in the fields of astronomy and physiology but what would really save the Tower in the end was its use as a radio antenna tower, first for military communications and then for permanent, radiotelegraphy communications; in fact, the Tower served many a purpose during the First World War. The Eiffel Tower is part of the French history.

Every year approximately seven million visitors climb the Tower. Its success is such that many countries all over the world have replicated the Tower more or less identically to the original one.



Figure 3
The Eiffel Tower as a symbol of France and Paris.

Finally, the fourth attraction is the Palace of Versailles. It's a royal castle in Versailles, located 20 kilometers from Paris.

Versailles was the seat of political power in the Kingdom of France from 1682, when King Louis XIV moved the royal court from Paris, until the royal family was forced

to return to the capital in October 1789, within three months after the beginning of the French Revolution. Versailles is therefore famous not only as a building, but as a symbol of the system of absolute monarchy of the Old Regime. It's now open as a museum and it's a very popular tourist attraction. The floor area of the palace is about 13,74 acres. There are 700 rooms.

Building the castle and maintaining the court there was phenomenally expensive, but did a good deal to establish the dominance of French style and taste in the whole of Europe, giving French luxury manufacturing advantages that long outlasted the fall of the Old Regime.

Versailles is also the « Grand Trianon », which is the private residence of the king and many gardens with a total area of 830 hectares.

The palace of Versailles is a popular tourist destination, attracting seven million visitors a year. It's the most visited site in France, after the Louvre Museum and before the Eiffel Tower. The palace is on the UNESCO World Heritage List. It's one of the greatest achievement in French 17th century.



Figure 4
The Palace of Versailles in Versailles, Paris.

CLOSING

France is very popular for cultural tourism. The Mont Saint Michel, the Versailles Palace, the Château Pape Clément, and the Eiffel Tower are the most visited sightseeing in the country. The French history made the cultural tourism in France. In every city you can find a monument which symbolize a part of the history.

Don't miss to learn and to understand a bit of French history if you come to visit these places.

There are so many ways to understand what culture means (Mudana, ed, 2003). However, the condition of cultural tourism in France is a bit different from we find in Bali. In France, most of the cultural tourism products are represented by physical cultures. The practices of cultural tourism in Bali are dominated by various products of art, especially traditional music and dances (Mudana, 2000; Mudana and Ardini, 2013). This fact almost always makes the tourists want to repeat their travelling to Bali (Sutama, Mudana, and Astawa, 2017). Formally, this tourism paradigm is initiated by Peraturan Daerah (*Perda* or local decree) Number 3 Year 1974 on Cultural Tourism (Picard, 2006). So that Bali until now has more various tourist attractions, as this province has “a thousand temples” (*seribu pura*), the most popular is Besakih Temple as the Mother Temple, beside a new icon named Garuda Wisnu Kencana statue (*Kompas*, Sunday, 29 July 2018, p. 28) near Politeknik Negeri Bali campus in Jimbaran Hill.

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