

Arroyo, Claudia Gil; Knollenberg, Whitney; Barbieri, Carla

## Article

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Annals of Tourism Research Empirical Insights

## Provided in Cooperation with:

Elsevier

*Suggested Citation:* Arroyo, Claudia Gil; Knollenberg, Whitney; Barbieri, Carla (2024) : The craft beverage tourism research agenda: Recommendations to move forward, Annals of Tourism Research Empirical Insights, ISSN 2666-9579, Elsevier, Amsterdam, Vol. 5, Iss. 1, pp. 1-3, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annale.2024.100123>

This Version is available at:

<https://hdl.handle.net/10419/337786>

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## The craft beverage tourism research agenda: Recommendations to move forward

Claudia Gil Arroyo<sup>a,\*</sup>, Whitney Knollenberg<sup>b</sup>, Carla Barbieri<sup>c</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Agriculture and Natural Resources, Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Cape May County, 4 Moore Road, DN 703, Cape May Court House, NJ 08210, USA

<sup>b</sup> Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management, North Carolina State University, 4008J Biltmore Hall, Raleigh, NC 27695, USA

<sup>c</sup> Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management, North Carolina State University, 3028D Biltmore Hall, Raleigh, NC 27695, USA

### ARTICLE INFO

Editor: Kirilova Ksenia

#### Keywords:

Destination image

Destination resources acceleration framework

Niche tourism benefits

Tourists' quest for authentic experiences has driven growth in destinations offering unique food and beverage experiences as primary attractions (World Tourism Organization, 2017). Craft beverages are particularly popular, and an increasing number of tourists travel to taste them and learn about their production (Kline, Slocum, & Cavaliere, 2017). Craft beverage tourism benefits host communities in many ways. It diversifies economic activities and creates jobs (González San José, 2017), strengthens cultural identity and pride (Alonso & Liu, 2012), contributes to cultural and biodiversity conservation, and promotes agricultural literacy (Ellis, Park, Kim, & Yeoman, 2018). Yet, it is difficult for communities to maximize these benefits because of shortcomings in knowledge related to development and promotion of craft beverage tourism (Knollenberg, Barbieri, Gil Arroyo, & Boys, 2021). Knowledge related to marketing of this tourism segment is particularly relevant as it can greatly influence the success of businesses, by connecting them to potential markets. A more robust craft beverage tourism research agenda can help address these shortcomings.

### 1. Knowledge gap 1 – resources to develop craft beverage tourism

Studies have identified the role singular resources (inputs) play in developing craft beverage tourism, emphasizing the importance of cultural (e.g., traditional distilling practices), natural (e.g., quality of ingredients), and social (e.g., strong relationships across stakeholders) capitals for their success (Knollenberg et al., 2021). There has been less

emphasis on understanding how destination leaders can help craft beverage tourism stakeholders garner political (e.g., policy advancement to support the industry) and financial (e.g., securing investments in industry infrastructure) resources to develop craft beverage tourism initiatives (Altenau, 2017).

While existing knowledge is useful in identifying the resources that contribute to craft beverage tourism development, there is limited understanding of how multiple resources can be synthesized to accelerate and sustain craft beverage tourism. For example, while some emphasize integrating natural and cultural resources in its development (Gatrell, Reid, & Steiger, 2018), others stress the need for integrating social and human capitals (Chirakranont & Sakdiyakorn, 2022).

Based on insights of multiple craft beverage tourism stakeholders, Gil Arroyo, Knollenberg, and Barbieri (2021) introduced the Destination Resources Acceleration Framework to conceptualize how creativity and meaning ignite different kinds of resources to advance craft beverage tourism development at three levels. This framework indicates that natural, human, and built capitals are the foundational inputs for craft beverage tourism development (Level 1). The infusion of meaning (individual's ties with an asset) and creativity (symbolic value in an asset) triggers the development of cultural and social capitals (Level 2) and financial and political capitals thereafter (Level 3). This work aligns with other examinations of the creation of meaning around craft beverages which suggests that multiple elements—product, consumers, place, and community—influences the construction of meaning around craft beverages (Ferreira, Carrillo, & Szczytko, 2022).

\* Corresponding author.

E-mail addresses: [claudia.gilarroyo@rutgers.edu](mailto:claudia.gilarroyo@rutgers.edu) (C. Gil Arroyo), [whitney\\_knollenberg@ncsu.edu](mailto:whitney_knollenberg@ncsu.edu) (W. Knollenberg), [carla\\_barbieri@ncsu.edu](mailto:carla_barbieri@ncsu.edu) (C. Barbieri).

While extant studies provide a more nuanced understanding of how destination leaders can leverage multiple resources to advance and sustain craft beverage tourism, there are still shortcomings. First, most works focus on one community with contextual attributes (e.g., cosmopolitan flavour, cultural heritage) that other destinations may not possess. Second, tourist perspectives need greater attention. Third, greater application of theoretical frameworks such as the Destination Resources Acceleration Framework or theory of the Resource-Based View (Alonso, Kok, & O'Shea, 2021), need replication in multiple contexts to confirm their utility. Therefore, the future research agenda of craft beverage tourism should build upon collective theoretical models to:

- Recommendation 1: Validate existing models among craft beverage tourism destinations with different contexts.
- Recommendation 2: Incorporate tourists' perceptions of community capitals, resource meaning and creativity in craft beverage tourism experiences.
- Recommendation 3: Investigate the role of political and financial resources needed for craft beverage tourism development.

## 2. Knowledge gap 2 – elements to promote craft beverage tourism

Tourism destination leaders also need more knowledge on which elements of craft beverages should be promoted in tourism experiences to improve destination competitiveness (Marques, Vinhas da Silva, & Antova, 2021). Destination image should be built upon unique—iconic—resources (Becken, 2005) or conveying authenticity (Lin & Liu, 2018), and portray elements of local culture (Campelo, Aitken, Thyne, & Gnoth, 2014). Except for authenticity (Xu et al., 2023), examinations of all destination image elements have not been translated to the context of craft beverage tourism destinations.

Informing craft beverage tourism marketing strategies requires evaluating the destination inventory (supply) and the potential tourists' perceptions (demand) using methods that can elicit elements to compose a collective image, such as the Zaltman Metaphor Elicitation Technique (Ji & King, 2018). This multi-stage image-based technique proved suitable to understand how resources associated with moonshine can form the cognitive, unique, and affective elements of destination image (Gil Arroyo, 2022). Innovative methods can also be used to evaluate the influence of craft beverage-related resources in consumer-focused (demand) promotion efforts, which is particularly important given the growth of neocalism and its influence in the tourism industry (Norris, Taylor Jr, & Taylor, 2022). In response, Gil Arroyo (2022) used a quasi-experimental design to examine the role of a traditional Peruvian spirit (pisco) in forming elements of Peru's destination image. They determined that built and social resources can serve as the authentic, unique, and representative promotional elements to influence potential visitors' image of a craft beverage tourism destination.

Limited efforts have integrated the supply and demand perspectives. Multi-stakeholder integration is critical to help destination leaders align their unique craft beverage-related resources (supply) with tourists' needs and wants (demand) and to inform destination marketing (Line & Wang, 2017). Marketing can help suppliers increase the demand of their products and services, hence aiding in the overall growth of the industry. Building upon existing knowledge to address the gap identified, the future research agenda of the craft beverage tourism should:

- Recommendation 4: Upon theoretical validation, develop a performance evaluation tool for destination marketing.
- Recommendation 5: Validate findings about the promotion of craft beverage tourism from supply and demand across different sub-segments to identify commonalities and differences.
- Recommendation 6: Expand the evaluation of contextual attributes to actual tourists in a craft beverage tourism destination.

- Recommendation 7: Contrast the perceptions of destination image between the supply and demand stakeholders.

## 3. Moving forward: addressing research gaps through lessons learned

In response to the growth of craft beverage tourism and its potential to benefit host communities, this research letter outlined existing information that destination leaders can use when developing and promoting their craft beverages and related offerings. Such information along knowledge gaps identified, yield seven recommendations for future craft beverage tourism research that will benefit destinations and their leaders. It is advisable that future researchers incorporate two lessons learned when moving forward the craft beverage tourism research agenda. First, the extant literature indicates a specialized research ontology focused on craft beverage tourism sub-segments (e.g., moonshine tourism), which may be associated to their unique set of context elements (Gil Arroyo et al., 2021). Yet, such fragmentation is limiting the overall utility of research findings as the context (e.g., level of tourism development, cultural craft beverage resources) can't be replicated across settings. Moving forward, researchers should develop a consistent protocol to evaluate differences and similarities that destination leaders encounter in craft beverage tourism development and promotional endeavours.

Secondly, the complexity of craft beverage tourism in which multiple stakeholders have specific, yet converging roles calls for a mix of methodological approaches. Qualitative methods are suitable to explore participants' perceptions, thoughts, and feelings (Morris, 2018) and to identify new meanings of a particular topic within a specific context (Ji & King, 2018). The use of such methods has been instrumental to identify the set of resources involved in craft beverage tourism development and how they interplay within a community from multiple stakeholders' perspectives (Gil Arroyo et al., 2021; Knollenberg et al., 2021). However, quantitative methods are also needed to assess the generalizability of craft beverage tourism development efforts. Generalizable information allows the recommendation of frameworks and development approaches and the application of findings in tourism planning and development across destinations (Kelle, 2006). Future research should adopt a mixed methods approach to optimize the utility for destination leaders and other stakeholders (Khoo-Lattimore, Mura, & Yung, 2019).

Advancing the proposed research agenda has the potential to help destination leaders successfully develop, promote, and sustain craft beverage tourism. The creation of a thriving craft beverage tourism destination can bring benefits to the many stakeholders involved in both development and promotion of craft beverages, and the residents of craft beverage tourism destination communities.

## CRedit authorship contribution statement

**Claudia Gil Arroyo:** Writing – original draft, Formal analysis, Conceptualization. **Whitney Knollenberg:** Writing – review & editing, Supervision, Conceptualization. **Carla Barbieri:** Writing – review & editing, Supervision, Conceptualization.

## Declaration of competing interest

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

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**Claudia Gil Arroyo** is an Extension Agent. Her research focuses on sustainable community development and destination image through craft beverage tourism, and agritourism.

**Carla Barbieri** is a Professor in Equitable and Sustainable Tourism. She investigates the impacts of agritourism at the farm household and society levels, and niche tourism sustainability.

**Whitney Knollenberg** is an Associate Professor. Her research focuses on tourism leadership and the influence of policy, planning, and partnerships in sustainable tourism development.