

# Book review

## Tourismus NEXT (German)

*Edited by Egger Daniel*  
*Published 2021*  
*Pereira & Egger Books:*  
*Innsbruck*  
*143 p.*  
*ISBN: 978-3-9504957-1-3*  
*Review DOI*  
*10.1108/JTF-09-2021-229*

There is a clear call for more diverse voices, participatory and inclusive approaches in tourism research. While understanding the motives and behaviour of (potential) tourists has been the focus of most tourism research, interest in understanding attitudes and perceptions of residents towards tourism development within their place of residence has attracted several tourism researchers in the more recent past. The growing interest in research on residents' perceptions was often driven by the emerging issues related to crowding and resulting tendencies of (perceived) overtourism which particularly impacts the local communities through issues such as noise pollution, price increases or traffic congestion. Another voice that has largely been neglected in tourism research in the context of overtourism is that of tourism practitioners and decision-makers. Additionally, the majority of research on the topic is very localised and often in a city-context. In his book "Tourismus Next" (Engl. Tourism Next), Daniel Egger takes a very original approach and gives 53 tourism actors from South Tyrol and Tyrol a voice through several hours of individual in-depth interviews. The uniqueness of the book is that Egger uses the original quotes and expressions of the 53 participants to compile the storyline. He puts his own perspective into the background, calls his work an "honest book" from the view of his participants and offers a brief overview of his qualitative

methodological approach, which was driven by trust and authenticity. The book is structured in 30 short "Next" sections which smartly create a storyline and take the reader on a smooth journey through tourism's past, present and future. As half of the interviews took place prior to the COVID-19 pandemic and half of the interviews took place in the early stages of the pandemic, it offers a unique opportunity to explore how the COVID-19 pandemic has influenced perspectives. For instance, in the first section, he shares participants' readiness to change and realisation of the much-needed transformation of the tourism industry to escape the rat race of unsustainable growth. In the same section he highlights that participants interviewed during the COVID-19 pandemic became more hesitant regarding such incremental transformation as "old recipes still work too well" and those strategies that contributed to the saturation or even over-saturation remain the first choice. Thus, fears of a return to the old "normal" are shared by practitioners in this book. Although they talk mostly about "others" when referring to the likely return to unsustainable practices, they are also self-critical and demonstrate that they understood their own responsibilities in driving the much-needed positive transformation towards more sustainability. Through the words of his participants, Egger asks for new ideas, courage, less superlatives, more people-centric growth and digitisation, living instead of touristified spaces, generation of positive tourism attitudes through dialogue, regional return to old traditions and real authenticity, a rethinking of the roles of the guests, employees and locals, clearer

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(behavioural) directions for guests and listening to the “next” generation. To me as a reader, there seem to be four common themes and messages of the book which are relevant for the future of tourism the post-COVID-19 pandemic:

- Without changing the tourism monoculture, there will be no tourism value added in the future.
- It is easier to attract and retain (good) guests compared to attracting and retaining (good) employees.
- Residents should not be treated as second-order guests but as “kings and queens”.
- The “escape for reality” will further increase and “*real*” authenticity is needed.

Given that Egger uses the original expressions of participants and writes from an “us-perspective”, the book is written very symbolically, easily to digest and a good evening read as change to heavier text. In saying this, it does not mean that the book is less relevant, but rather an innovative example demonstrating how more diverse voices can be integrated in tourism research and publications. In summary, Egger’s book “Tourismus Next” is suitable for a large audience and can be recommended to anyone interested in tourism development and change – from tourism researcher and

students to tourism practitioners, to politicians, to locals involved in tourism or tourists themselves. The only requirement is to understand German. While the book might not offer too many new insights for experts in the field and rather confirms what has been projected before, the unique approach and future perspectives from the perspective of local tourism actors is more than worth a read.

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