

# 6 NICHE TOURISM

## UNIT MENU

**Grammar:** verb + infinitive or *-ing* form

**Vocabulary:** sectors in niche tourism

**Professional skills:** dealing with figures

**Case study:** improve client security

## Aims and objectives

In this lesson students will:

- discuss the differences between niche tourism and mass tourism
- listen to a talk about opportunities in niche tourism
- read about a developing niche tourism sector in South Africa

## Speaking

### NICHE TOURISM VS MASS TOURISM

#### EXTRA ACTIVITY

Students work in pairs or small groups and answer the following questions on South Africa.

- 1 What is the name of the administrative capital city of South Africa?
- 2 How many official languages are there in South Africa: 2, 6 or 11?
- 3 Can you name the most famous safari park in South Africa?
- 4 Name the first black president of South African.
- 5 Which famous person was in prison on Robben Island?

#### Answers

- 1 Pretoria – although SA is unusual in that it actually has three capital cities: Cape Town is the legislative capital and Bloemfontein is the judicial capital.
- 2 11
- 3 Kruger National Park
- 4 Nelson Mandela
- 5 Nelson Mandela

### Exercise 1, page 52

Ask students if they have ever been to South Africa and find out what they know about it. If they have been to South Africa, ask them what they liked most about their trip. Then focus students' attention on the photos on page 52 before asking what they show and the type of tourism they represent. Go through the example characteristic given for niche tourism, before leaving students to complete the table, discussing answers with a partner before class feedback.

Niche tourism	Mass tourism
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>potential high profit margins</i></li> <li>• high spenders</li> <li>• small businesses</li> <li>• small-scale operations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• cheap package tours</li> <li>• economies of scale</li> <li>• international hotel chains</li> <li>• large tourist resorts</li> </ul>

## Listening

### NICHE OPPORTUNITIES

#### Exercise 2, page 52

Tell students they are going to listen to a talk about niche tourism, noting how it differs to mass tourism. Allow time for students to discuss ideas with a partner before you go through answers with the class. Check vocabulary, e.g. *clientele*, *pilgrimage*.

Mass tourism:

Specializes in cheap package tours, huge tourist resorts, international hotel chains and attractions like Disneyland. They create economies of scale through the sale of standardized leisure packages to a mass clientele. Mass tourism has low margins in this competitive market.

Niche tourism:

Caters for small groups of people who have a shared special interest. Because it's small-scale, small firms can exploit areas of business that the major tour operators aren't able to. It can offer one-to-one service and high levels of product knowledge. It tends to attract high spenders and so has the potential for quite high profit margins.

### Exercise 3, page 52

Students listen a second time, completing the descriptions before checking answers as a class. Alternatively, students listen to the recording to check their answers. Round up by asking which type they are or would be most interested in and why.

- 1 religious, sacred
- 2 music
- 3 battle
- 4 medical
- 5 foreign language

**Audio script Track 6.1, Exercises 2 and 3, page 52**

The idea of niche tourism has become more and more popular, partly as a reaction to mass tourism. We're all familiar with mass tourism products such as cheap package tours, huge tourist resorts, international hotel chains and built attractions like Disneyland. They have been very successful in creating economies of scale through the sale of standardized leisure packages to a mass clientele. Niche tourism takes the opposite approach. It says 'small is beautiful' and caters for small groups of people – perhaps no more than a dozen – who have a shared special interest, for example photography, steam engines, bird-watching or gastronomy. And it's precisely because niche tourism is, by its very nature, small-scale, that it offers such a good opportunity for people who want to set up small independent businesses. A lot of small firms have been able to exploit areas of business that the major tour operators aren't able to. Only the small business model can offer one-to-one service and high levels of product knowledge. If you look at the list of Independent Tour Operators in Britain, you can see the range of niche products on offer, for example religious tourism such as pilgrimages and visits to sacred sites, travel to music festivals, visits to battlefields, medical tourism, where people travel abroad for health reasons, and the very big niche market in courses aimed at people who want to learn a foreign language. Another interesting aspect of niche tourism is that it tends to attract high spenders, or at least people who see themselves as different from your ordinary tourist. This means that instead of the low margins in the competitive mass tourism business, niche tourism has the potential for quite high profit margins.

**EXTRA ACTIVITIES**

- 1 Students, in pairs or small groups, discuss which niche tourism types (of those mentioned) exist in their own countries.
- 2 Students discuss which type of tourism they work/have worked in or holidays they have been on.

**Vocabulary****NICHE TOURISM EXPERIENCES****Exercise 4, page 53**

Students decide which sector matches each text. Then complete the texts.

- 1 battlefield: 1 tunnel 2 soldier 3 military 4 trenches
- 2 religious: 5 language 6 pilgrimage 7 university 8 holy
- 3 health and wellness: 9 spa 10 massages 11 stress 12 low-calorie

**Exercise 5, page 53**

Students compare answers in pairs, deciding who is speaking in each case before class feedback.

- 1 a guide
- 2 a tourist
- 3 a marketing and promotions executive

**EXTRA ACTIVITY**

Students work in pairs, taking turns to read out the texts. Remind them to use intonation to create interest and to remember who is speaking in each case.

**Reading****NICHE TOURISM IN SOUTH AFRICA****FACT FILE**

After years of political unrest and racial tension, *South Africa* now attracts a great number of tourists from around the world. The many safari parks, varied landscape, beautiful beaches, warm weather and opportunities for adventure holidays are the main attractions. The most important cities in South Africa are Cape Town, the number one tourist destination, Johannesburg, the financial and commercial heartland of the country, and Durban.

**Exercise 6, page 53**

Ask students what kind of niche tourism would be suitable in South Africa before asking them to read the text. Allow time for students to discuss ideas with a partner before the discussion is opened to the class.

The article talks about avi-tourism. There is a wide diversity of bird species and many rare species. Both domestic and international visitors generally have a preference for nature-based experiences.

### Homework suggestions

- Students choose two sectors of niche tourism that they feel there are opportunities for in their own country. Students then write a proposal (200–250 words) explaining their ideas and why they feel these sectors could work. In a subsequent lesson, students could share their ideas in groups.
- Students write two short texts (75–100 words each) describing two different niche tourism experiences they have had or would like to have.

## NICHE SECTORS

### Aims and objectives

#### In this lesson students will:

- consider different types of niche tourism
- write a description of a niche tourism product
- study verbs which are followed by the infinitive or *-ing* form

### Speaking

#### SECTORS IN NICHE TOURISM

##### FACT FILE

*Genealogy* is the study of the history of *families*.

A *slum* is a house or an area of a city that is in very bad condition, where very poor people live.

#### Exercise 1, page 54

Focus students' attention on the photos and ask what they show. Ask students to match the photos to the different types of niche tourism. Elicit answers from the class and check students understand what is meant by *genealogy* and *slum*.

A genealogy   B space   C slum   D wildlife  
E extreme   F culinary

##### EXTRA ACTIVITY

Students work in small groups and discuss which type of holiday they would be most interested in and which the least, and why.

### Vocabulary

#### DESCRIBING SECTORS IN NICHE TOURISM

##### FACT FILE

*Borneo*, the world's third largest island, is situated north of Java and divided among three countries: Malaysia, Indonesia and Brunei.

The *Dharavi slum* in Mumbai is home to over 600,000 people. Located in a prime property area for the financial district of the city, some of its buildings are now being knocked down and replaced by high-rise flats, built for middle-class commuters.

#### Exercise 2, page 54

Explain to students they are going to read and match descriptions with the types of niche tourism from Exercise 1. Encourage them to underline key words that helped them. Students compare answers with a partner before you go through them with the class. Check vocabulary, e.g. *ancestral*, *canopy*, *extensive*, *undertake*.

1 Space 2 Wildlife 3 Culinary 4 Genealogy  
5 Slum 6 Extreme

### EXTRA ACTIVITIES

Students choose five to eight new words from the text and write their own sentences using them. They can then compare their sentences with a partner.

If your students are thinking of taking the LCCI Level 2 Certificate in Spoken English for Tourism, encourage them to discuss and describe (in pairs or small groups) the different types of travellers and tourists and their reasons for travelling, particularly focusing on niche tourism.

### Writing

#### DESCRIBING A NICHE TOURISM PRODUCT

##### Exercise 3, page 55

Refer students to the Grammar box and allow time for them to read the information. They then underline examples in the text. Ask them to compare answers with a partner before going through them with the class.

Verb + infinitive with *to*:

Text 1: afford to pay

Text 3: Learn to cook

Text 4: plan to travel

Text 5: promises to show, undertake to support

Verb + *-ing* form:

Text 1: involves training

Text 2: mean hiking ... and travelling

Text 3: like experimenting, enjoy eating

Text 4: recommend taking

Text 6: enjoy diving, avoid taking

##### Exercise 4, page 55

Students complete the sentences with the correct form of each verb given. Allow them to discuss answers with a partner before you go through them with the class.

1 enrol 2 going 3 paying 4 to increase  
5 to reduce 6 enrolling 7 sleeping

### EXTRA ACTIVITY

Students write ten sentences of their own using five verbs given in the Grammar box which are followed by *-ing* and five which are followed by the infinitive.

### Exercise 5, page 55

Ask students to write a description for a promotional website for a niche tourism product of their choice. Refer them to the models in Exercise 2 and remind them of the word limit. Monitor and help as needed. This could be set as homework.

### RESEARCH

#### NICHE TOURISM OPPORTUNITIES IN YOUR AREA

Students evaluate the potential for niche tourism in their local area and share some of their ideas with the class. They could then vote for the best suggestion.

### EXTRA ACTIVITY

Refer students to Part 4 of the EFIT Intermediate level DVD material for extra listening and vocabulary activities relating to Antarctica.

Although students are encouraged to view the complete programme on the DVD there is also an option so that they can watch in smaller segments, as is denoted by the worksheet timings.

Alternatively, the DVD-related worksheet can be undertaken as self-study.

At the end of the worksheet, there is an optional task, which can be completed in groups in class or set as homework.

#### Model answer for DVD worksheet optional writing task

Antarctica Cruise

Have you ever wanted to go to Antarctica? Well, now you can! This unique seven-day cruise of Antarctica takes you to the northwestern part of the region. Transportation is by a small ship that is approved by the International Association of Antarctic Tour Operators.

On this tour you will see the beautiful landscape of Antarctica, including its impressive icebergs and glaciers. Enjoy spotting penguins, seals and other wildlife from a dinghy. We will also go on a whale watching trip and take a ride through the snow with Antarctic huskies.

Accommodation included: basic but comfortable ship's cabins. We also provide tour guides who are wildlife experts.

Cost: from US \$5,000 for sharing a two-person cabin. (Flights *not* included.)

Bring suitable clothes for extreme weather conditions. We also strongly recommend a quality camera and anti-sea-sickness pills for this unforgettable voyage.

### Homework suggestions

- Students write a blog entry, explaining which type of niche tourism most attracts them and why. (100–150 words)
- Students write an article for a national travel and tourism website presenting two or three niche tourism products that they feel could work in different areas of their country. Students explain what each product would entail and how they would benefit the areas where they were available. (200–250 words)

Photocopiable notes 6.1 (page 119)  
What's the sector? (Card activity page 120)

## PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

### DEALING WITH FIGURES

#### Aims and objectives

##### In this lesson students will:

- read an article about medical tourism
- practise giving statistical information
- listen to a doctor's talk on medical tourism in Asia

#### Reading

##### MEDICAL TOURISM

##### Exercise 1, page 56

Students discuss the questions in pairs before you discuss them as a class. Do not give answers at this stage as students will shortly read a text on medical tourism, which will give the answers.

##### Exercise 2, page 56

Students read the report. Then go through their answers and check vocabulary, e.g. *orthodox*, *holistic*, *eternal*. Ask students which niche they prefer and why. Find out if they have ever been on such a holiday themselves.

Medical tourism involves surgery or other medical treatments.

Wellness tourism concerns physical fitness and psychological and spiritual well-being.

#### EXTRA ACTIVITY

Students work in pairs or threes and discuss which type of medical or wellness tourism they would be most interested in and why. Alternatively, they discuss which are the most popular in their country/ies.

##### Exercise 3, page 56

Students reread the report, comparing answers with a partner before class feedback. Elicit the number of syllables and syllable stress for the contents of the word-building table to help.

- 1 The reasons include rising health costs, a distrust of orthodox medicine and a desire for alternative, more holistic therapies. As a result of media pressure, people are also more willing to spend money on physical beauty.
- 2 a Spiritual retreat    b Essential medical tourism    c Voluntary medical tourism

- 3 rising, growing  
 4 psychological, spiritual  
 5 1 therapy 2 surgical 3 relaxation 4 fitness  
 5 preventative

## Speaking

### DEALING WITH FIGURES AND STATISTICS

#### Professional skills

#### DEALING WITH FIGURES

Find out if students find it easy dealing with figures and statistics in English. Then go through the examples given, checking pronunciation.

#### Exercise 4, page 57

Students work in pairs and practise saying the figures before listening to the recording.

#### Audio script Track 6.2, Exercise 4, page 57

- 1 Two hundred and fifty-two US dollars.
- 2 Three point five million euros.
- 3 Seventy-two thousand, five hundred and twenty-five yen.
- 4 A quarter.
- 5 Two-thirds.
- 6 Twelve point five percent.
- 7 One and a half million.
- 8 Six point two five billion.

#### EXTRA ACTIVITY

Students write a mix of ten different figures, taking turns to dictate them to a partner before checking answers.

## Listening

### MEDICAL TOURISM STATISTICS

#### Exercise 5, page 57

Tell students they are now going to listen to a Thai doctor talking about medical tourism in Asia. Students note reasons for growth. They compare their answers with a partner before you discuss them as with the class.

The cost, the time and the ageing population in the Western World

#### Exercise 6, page 57

Allow students time to look at the table before listening a second time. Go through answers as a class, checking pronunciation. Ask if they are surprised at any of the information and if so, why.

Value of the global market for medical tourism	about US \$100bn
Cost of a heart bypass operation in Thailand compared to the USA	one-tenth
Over 55s as a percentage of total wellness tourists	40%
Size of medical tourism market in Asia	1.6 million
Percentage of the American market Singapore would like to have	8.5%

#### Audio script Track 6.3, Exercises 5 and 6, page 57

##### I = Interviewer, DrC = Dr Chaya

**I** So Dr Chaya, the global market for health tourism is worth about 100 billion US dollars and it's growing all the time. Do we know anything about the reasons for this?

**DrC** Well it's fairly obvious that one of the main reasons for medical tourism is cost. For example, here in Thailand, heart bypass surgery costs one-tenth of what you would have to pay in the USA. Another major motivation is time – there are huge waiting lists in Canada or the UK for most operations and procedures, so if you want treatment quickly, you have to travel. But I think the main factor in the growth of this form of tourism in the Western World lies with the ageing population. The number of people in the 65 to 75 age range has increased dramatically in the last ten to fifteen years, and they are the section of the population who need medical treatment the most. They're also the people looking for spiritual wellness. Around 40 percent of the people attracted by this kind of tourism are over the age of 55.

**I** And how big is the market for medical tourism here in Asia? How many medical tourists are there?

**DrC** The estimated market size is around 1.6 million, with the major providers being Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, the Philippines and South Korea. Thailand alone hosts medical visitors from over 190 countries. Singapore is aiming for a 4.8 billion dollar share of the American market – that's about 8.5 percent of that particular market. Another attractive feature of this market is that medical tourists spend about two-and-a-half times more than the average traveller so they're an excellent source of revenue. The Royal Thai government has drawn up a five-year plan to double this revenue.

I And do you get domestic ...

### RESEARCH MEDICAL TOURISM STATISTICS

Students research what medical treatments and services are available in a country of their choice as well as collect some relevant statistics. Ask them to prepare a short presentation of around five minutes.

#### Homework suggestions

- Students write a blog article for a travel site describing a 'medical tourism' holiday they have recently been on and how it was. Would they recommend the experience? (200–250 words)
- Students write a formal report on one type of 'medical' or 'wellness' tourism available or one which might have the opportunity to develop in their country. Encourage them to use language from the lesson and include some statistics. Refer them to the model for report writing on page 101 at the back of the book. (200–250 words)

Photocopiable notes 6.2 (page 119)  
Information exchange (Card activity page 121)

## CASE STUDY IMPROVE CLIENT SECURITY

### CASE STUDY MENU

#### FACT FILE

*Robben Island* is situated eleven kilometres from Cape Town, in the middle of Table Bay, within sight of the city. It was on this island that Nelson Mandela was held prisoner for eighteen years. Before being a prison for political activities during the Apartheid era, the island was a leper colony. The island is now a museum and conversation area and was declared a World Heritage Site in 1999. Nowadays it is a popular tourist attraction.

Refer students to the lesson's aims and objectives before focusing their attention on the map and photos. Ask what they show. Find out if anyone has visited South Africa or Robben Island and what they remember about them. Ask where the tourists are in the right-hand photo (a township).

#### EXTRA ACTIVITY

Students work in pairs or small groups to answer the questions below. This could be done as a race.

- 1 From what South African city can you see Robben Island?
- 2 Why is Robben Island famous?
- 3 When did the island become a World Heritage Site: in 1995, 1999 or 2001?
- 4 Who goes to Robben Island these days?

#### Answers

See fact file above.

### The township experience

#### FACT FILE

A *township* is the term used to refer to a slum in South Africa.

A *shanty town* is a very poor area in or near a town where people live in small houses made from thin sheets of wood, tin, etc.

#### Exercise 1, page 58

Explain who the woman in the photo on the right is and find out if students know what a *township* or *shanty town* are before they read the texts. Ask students to compare answers with a partner before going through them. Check vocabulary, e.g. *unconscious*, etc.

- 1 It offers visitors the opportunity to get to know the 'real' South Africa.
- 2 To experience the 'real South Africa' and try the local food.
- 3 It is a local barbecue hotspot. The couple probably went there to try the local food, e.g. a 'smiley'.
- 4 Students' own answers.

## A customer phone call

### Exercise 2, page 59

Students listen to the recording and then read the follow-up email. Allow time for students to discuss answers in pairs before class feedback. Check the meaning of vocabulary, e.g. *to assure someone, put off, incident, in accordance with*.

- 1 She says this is the first incident for a very long time. There has never been a problem in ten years of running the operation.
- 2 Students' own answers.
- 3 Students' own answers.

### Audio script Track 6.4, Exercise 2, page 59

**BJ = Bronwyn Jones, R = Receptionist,  
DS = Dikeledi Sisulu**

**BJ** Good morning, can I talk to Dikeledi Sisulu, please?

**R** Yes, who's speaking, please?

**BJ** My name is Bronwyn Jones. It's about a booking I made.

**R** Hold on, I'll put you through.

**BJ** Thank you.

...

**DS** Good morning, Mrs Jones, what can I do for you?

**BJ** Oh, hello. I recently made a booking for the Township Experience and I've just been reading about all the attacks in the townships and I really don't feel safe now about the whole thing, and so I've decided not to go. Could you please cancel the booking for me?

**DS** Um, you must be thinking about the honeymoon couple in the car that was hijacked, they weren't actually attacked, and ...

**BJ** Yes, I've read all about it and it was absolutely horrible, and it's put me off the whole trip.

**DS** Well, I understand how you feel and we are all very shocked about it, but I can assure you that this is the first incident like this for a very, very long time. We've been doing these tours for over ten years and we've never had a problem.

**BJ** Sorry, but I find that difficult to believe. Everyone knows that Steenland is dangerous. All I'm saying is that I want to cancel the booking.

**DS** OK, but it's a great pity because I'm sure you would have really enjoyed the experience.  
**BJ** Maybe, but can I give you the booking reference number? ...

## Safety measures

### Exercise 3, page 59

Explain to students that they are going to listen to a conversation between Dikeledi Sisulu and Thabo Mbilatshwa, a community worker, on safety and security in Steenland. Tell them to make notes of the measures mentioned. After listening, students compare ideas with a partner before checking them as a class.

- 1 expensive items: not to carry expensive cameras or wear expensive jewellery
- 2 money: not to carry large sums and keep any money in a money belt
- 3 going out: not to go out alone after dark

### Audio script Track 6.5, Exercise 3, page 59

**DS = Dikeledi Sisulu, TM = Thabo Mbilatshwa**

**DS** I need your help, Thabo, I had a cancellation for the Township Experience this morning and it's not the first. The attack on that British couple is damaging our reputation as a tourist destination. If things carry on this way, I'm going to lose my business. What can we do to make Steenland safer for visitors?

**TM** Well, I think we should start by focusing on the kind of measures we already take, I mean those tourists ignored the advice the people in their hotel gave them. But if they'd been your clients, you wouldn't have let them go anyway, right? You already tell your customers not to go out alone or after dark. Maybe you could post a whole section on safety and security on your website? Then all visitors will know both what to expect and all the things that they should do to make sure that nothing happens.

**DS** Such as?

**TM** OK, well the main thing is not to carry expensive cameras and wear expensive jewellery – that's asking for trouble. Or carry large sums of money. And if they do carry money, keep it in a money belt. And no one should ever, ever walk the streets after dark.

**DS** Yes, all that's very sensible but we don't have tours after dark! And all our tours are with experienced guides who know which areas to avoid.

**TM** You could certainly say something like all the guides are well known and respected in the community and our vehicles are recognized in the townships. Everyone knows that it isn't good to harm tourists because it harms our economy. And



that they, the tourists, should always stay with their guide. And if they do get into a dangerous situation, NEVER oppose any criminal, just give them what they want immediately or they might kill you.

**DS** I don't want to make people panic or I'll never get any bookings!

**TM** Another thing you could do is stress how important community action is for us here in the townships. Tell them that if they ever find themselves in an emergency situation, then all they have to do is call our community safewatch call centre at eblockwatch and we'll send out one of their members to help them.

**DS** Now telling them about eblockwatch IS a good idea. But they have to register for that, don't they?

**TM** Yes, but it's easy – they just have to go to the website at [www.eblockwatch.co.za](http://www.eblockwatch.co.za).

**DS** OK, well, I'll start drafting a paragraph to reassure potential visitors and some Dos and Don'ts. I'll send them to you so you can add anything you think I've left out.

#### Don'ts

- visit townships alone
- carry valuable items with you
- go out after dark
- oppose a criminal

### UNIT 6: KEY WORDS

Highlight the key words box and elicit definitions for a selection of the words. Check on parts of speech, syllable stress and pronunciation as needed. Suggest that students use the DVD-ROM Mini-dictionary for further self-study.

#### Homework suggestions

- Students write a list of 'do' and 'don't' safety/advice tips for visitors to their own country (at least ten tips). This could be discussed in groups.
- Students write a sentence of their own for each of the key words given for the unit (13 in total). Encourage them to use a variety of structures and language from the unit.

### TASK

Put students into pairs and go through the writing tasks, checking students understand what they need to do and before asking them to brainstorm ways to improve security. Monitor during the activity, providing help as needed. Once students have discussed what to include in their safety tips and email, they could be left to complete the writing at home.

#### POSSIBLE OUTCOME

Positive aspects to include on the Township Experience website:

- safe place to visit if precautions are taken
- chance to meet local people and be welcomed into their homes and community
- hand-made craft items make ideal souvenirs whilst providing income for locals
- opportunity to sample local cuisine and beverages
- local taxis offer tours around other townships
- trip to Robben Island led by former freedom fighters
- all trips can be tailored to your needs and interests

Useful safety and security tips to include:

Dos

- pay attention to advice given by hotel staff about places to avoid
- stay with the local guide
- use a money belt for small change
- register on eblockwatch
- ring the community safewatch call centre in the event of trouble