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# LGBT Tourism in Denmark



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## LGBT Tourism

This paper is about LGBT tourism also known as Pink tourism. LGBT is short for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender, and is a form of niche tourism marketed.

Lesbians and gay men have long traveled the world like everyone else. For earlier decades they did so at the personal price by hiding their sexual orientation. However, social, cultural and political advances throughout many different cultures have now opened up for travel options for gay people, who no longer have to hide their identities as they visit new destinations<sup>1</sup>.

The key components in the LGBT tourism marketed, is for travel services, destinations and accommodations to attract the LGBT tourists who is looking for vacations in LGBT-friendly destinations.

## LGBT Denmark

For a long time Denmark has been a tolerant and relaxed country for LGBT communities. In 1948 Denmark established the world's first national association for gays and lesbians – LGBT Denmark. In 1989 Denmark became the first country in the world, to legally recognize registered partnership for same-sex couple. Since 2009 registered gay couples have been allowed to adopt, and since 2012 gay people are legally allowed to get married in church.

Generally Denmark is considered a great inclusive place for people of all persuasions. Throughout the year there is a wealth of LGBT activities and events, especially in Copenhagen the capital of Denmark<sup>2</sup>. In fact Denmark is so LGBT-friendly that Lonely Planet named Copenhagen as the most gay-friendly place in the world in 2014, saying that Copenhagen is one of the most tolerant and open minded communities in Europe<sup>3</sup>!

As a celebration to equal rights, Copenhagen City Council decided in 2014 to name the square next to Copenhagen City Hall, Rainbow Square inspired by the LGBT flag<sup>4</sup>.

For many years Copenhagen has been an attractive place to be a tourist, most visitors are coming for a city-break vacation in this cozy capital. People visit to explore cultural sights and events, bike around, and enjoying the view of Danish architecture and design. However, Copenhagen is now hosting major LGBT events, to attract people from this LGBT segment. Events like Copenhagen Pride and MIX Copenhagen which is one of the largest and oldest annual film festivals in Denmark. MIX Copenhagen shows screened films that seek to question and explore sexual boundaries. In 2009 between July 25<sup>th</sup> and August 2<sup>th</sup>, Copenhagen was hosting a major LGBT sports and cultural event called World Outgames with 5.500 non-local active participants and an estimated 5.000 spectators attending. In the context of this event a report was made with the aim to establish the tourism economic impact of the games, and to establish a tourism related profile of the LGBT

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<sup>1</sup> (<http://www.e-unwto.org/doi/pdf/10.18111/9789284414581>, 2012) page 16

<sup>2</sup> (<http://www.visitdenmark.com/denmark/gay-and-lesbian/gay-and-lesbian-denmark>)

<sup>3</sup> (<http://www.lonelyplanet.com/travel-tips-and-articles/the-most-gay-friendly-places-on-the-planet>, 2014)

<sup>4</sup> (<http://www.visitcopenhagen.com/copenhagen/lgbt/copenhagen-names-central-square-name-lgbt>)

segment, also including their satisfaction level, travel behavior and preferences in general. The report was hoped to contribute to the existing work with the LGBT segment from a tourist perspective and it provides justification for attracting larger events to Denmark<sup>5</sup>.

The report was a result of cooperation between VisitDenmark and Wonderful Copenhagen with help from the World Outgames organization and the main conclusions were as follows:

- *The event gave Denmark and Copenhagen 78 million DKK in additional tourism spending – hereof restaurants and accommodation received more than half.*
- *International visitors represented over 90 pct. of the economic impact, making World Outgames a truly international event.*
- *The event attracted high spenders from the international LGBT community, with average daily expenditures of approximately 1,200 DKK and total budgets of 9,800 DKK.*
- *Visitors had a very lengthy stay of 7 – 8 days, which resulted in approximately 66,000 bednights, of these 33,000 bednights were in hotels.*
- *The LGBT segment is characterized as being frequent travellers, greatly interested in city-breaks. But also other types of holidays such as active/theme holidays and round trips are among their top priorities.*
- *'Double income no kids' clearly defines this segment. Household income lies in the high end and the majority live as couples without children.*
- *Both Copenhagen as a city and the World Outgames organization succeeded in being excellent hosts. There were very high satisfaction levels among participants with the city and the event.*
- *Copenhagen was an important 'Reason To Go'<sup>6</sup>*

As you can see, this report is a great value to define the LGBT segment. It provides us with a good view on the segment's consumption practice and traveling habits, but also a view on the importance of this segment for the experience economics.

## Management approach to LGBD tourism

### Lack of data and knowledge

Marketing in LGBT tourism (better known as Pink tourism), is difficult to define. It's hard to really pinpoint how the process and strategy of the market for Pink tourism is made, since there is such little knowledge or data about what lesbians and gays do on their holiday. The earliest knowledge

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<sup>5</sup> (<http://www.visitcopenhagen.dk/da/wonderful-copenhagen/denmark/touristic-profile-major-lgbt-event-copenhagen-2009>)

<sup>6</sup> (<http://www.visitcopenhagen.dk/da/wonderful-copenhagen/denmark/touristic-profile-major-lgbt-event-copenhagen-2009>)

and articles about Pink tourism was in the late 1990's (works such as Holcomb and Luongo, 1997 Hughes, 1997 and Pritchard 1998) in the current time, knowledge about pink tourism has matured from a few articles to some 30 more and a Phd thesis from Cox. Even though LGBT tourism is a small niche market, a group called IGLTA(International gay and lesbian association) have formed to focus on promoting and enhancing the experience of LGBT tourism. This has led to a merge or association with UNWTO ( world tourism organization), who has since there taken an interest in LGBT tourism and made a global report on LGBT. This global report has led to increase of interest in the market LGBT tourism, and proven that the market has improved the economic state of tourism. Before we get into the market segmentation of LGBT tourism, it would be wise to dive deeper into who made LGBT tourism possible and how they did it.

### **IGLTA ( international gay and lesbian association)**

As mention before, a group called IGLTA is responsible for promoting LGBT tourism through their website (<https://www.iglta.org/>) and by merging with UNWTO, they also gave global awareness of LGBT tourism.

Now to understand better how this organization has improved and promoted LGBD tourism, one would need to get more knowledge about the organization. In this pursuit, one could ask these questions, who are IGLTA? What does the organization do to promote LGBT tourism? And does it work?

### **Who is IGLTA?**

At the first glance of their website, it seems something like a travel guide for lesbians and gays. They even have a definition written on front page of what they stand for “ *IGLTA is worlds leading global travel network dedicated to connecting and educating LGBT travelers and the businesses that welcome and support them along the way.*” This indicates that IGLTA is a channel for LGBT tourism, they promote the market by informing the lesbian and gay people about the best places for them to have holiday, but also to educate them on what is LGBT friendly and not.

### **What does the organization do to promote/help LGBT tourism?**

IGLTA have a lot of small events that you can be part of. One of this events have direct correlation to improve rights for lesbians in Haiti, you don't even have to be licensed counselor to be a part of the movement. The movement itself is about protesting against the rule that same sex marriage is not allowed in Haiti. This event is of course a textbook example of how the organization is helping the community of LBGT tourism by gathering residents against the ban on same sex marriage through the communication channel of the internet. Other than the event of Haiti, they also have honeymoons and trekking through mountains in France. This shows that the organization is not only concern about activist activity but also pleasant activity that gays and lesbian can enjoy.

IGLTA has an annual convention, where businesses and other common people who are interested in LGBT tourism, can attend the convention and learn about the market through workshops and lectures. From this convention, IGLTA makes connection to other interested business who wants to invest in the future of LGBT tourism, but is also an opportunity to spread the word of LGBT tourism to people who are curious about this subject.

### Does it work?

The only way one can know for sure if it works, is to look at the economy of LGBT tourism. Get an overview of the income from LGBT tourism, see if it has increased and try to take a look on how much it profits the tourism market. That's why this question can only be answered in the next section, which will be about the process of the market segmentation of LGBT tourism

### Marketing in LGBT tourism

Through the marketing of LGBT tourism, it's important to look on the spending habits of lesbians and gays. This will give a better knowledge on how the economy LGBT tourism contributes in the market of tourism. It can also determine how much LGBT tourism has matured since the beginning of era in the late 1990's. By using the global report of UNWTO and IGLTA, one can get an insight of economy aspect of LGBT tourism.

### Economy

In the LGBT tourism market, there is a coin-term that goes under the name Pink-dollars. This term meaning a currency that comes out of the LGBT tourism. The term Pink dollar is most used for the income of gay traveler and not lesbians, since it's more likely that gay men don't have kids and is big spenders (DINK; dual income, no kids).

This outrageous comment is likely to be true, since in the report they found an increase of gay and bisexual man taking vacation trips, by point average of 3.9 and for lesbian women 3.3. Thomas Roth the president and founder of CMI( communication Marketing, INC) said *"Based on this data and CMI sample demographic, we estimate that the annual economic impact of LGBT travelers is over \$65 billion dollars per year in U.S alone"* This estimate derives from the numbers of gay men on LGBT trips and not lesbian.

The reason that lesbians have not been considered as a factor of LGBT tourism market is because lesbians tend to care more about adventure in their vacation and not luxury. Even though lesbians spending habits are not taken in count, one can still find information that can give one an idea how much income derives from the lesbians' community. The largest lesbian magazine conducted a survey among their subscribers. From this survey they got 1000 responses, showing that 29 percent of does 1000 responses spend more than \$2000 and 33 percent spend over \$1000.

Same sex-marriage has really increased the revenue to the tourism market. More countries are doing it for the benefit of pink dollars; the state senate of New York released a look on the economic impact of same sex marriage. The report said to increase the revenue with \$310 million in the next 3 years in USA. An example on same sex marriage in Denmark is Ærø. Ærø promoting itself as the most beautiful nature in Denmark, and the best place to get married for gays and lesbians. The reason it's so attractive for the LGBT community, is there is no discrimination towards them and a lot of countries like Russia haven't legalized same sex marriage and then their only hope to get married is to do it in Ærø.

### **Social aspect of LGBT tourism**

Ever since LGBT tourism started, more and more businesses are starting to see the economic benefits. This has led to a massive campaign of branding LGBT tourism, to the rest of world. Which have increased the tolerance towards gay and lesbian, and legalization of same sex marriage in many countries. At this point of time, the gay and lesbian market segmentation is so strong that countries all over the world is building solidarity op for the community of LGBT tourism, likely in future almost every country will be LGBT friendly. The new generation will also learn from our tolerance of gay and lesbian, and be even more tolerant towards lesbian and gays than our generation.

### **Conclusion**

So one can conclude, since tourist market has open its mind towards LGBT tourism the revenue of this market segmentation has increased exponentially. The fact that the so called pink dollar gives such a big revenue, has open the mind of other countries to allow same sex marriage. This has also made people more tolerant towards gay and lesbian people, so from the social aspect because of the LGBT tourism segmentation, lesbian and gay are getting less discriminated on their vacation and in their own country. At last we can conclude that LGBT tourism has improved the tourism markets revenue and its social impact has made world more open towards gay men, trans sexually and lesbians. This might still just be a niche market, but it has the potential to be a global market.

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