

# Importance of Heritage and its Accessibility for Tourism in Diamantina MG: Cultural Heritage of Humanity/ UNESCO

ELCIONE LUCIANA DA SILVA<sup>109</sup>

## Abstract:

Tourism is considered a major economic power and today's one of the most dynamic activities. It is noteworthy that, in addition to generating economic benefits, the activity also contributes to the enhancement of cultural and environmental aspects of the recognised tourist destinations. Among heritage charters that guided conservation policies worldwide, the Norms of Quito were the ones that gave more importance to the touristic use of heritage. A meeting held by the Organization of American States (1976), concrete proposals for using the heritage sites were presented, considering as a landscape the transformation of areas with limited economic resources in Latin America. Thus, tourism was considered an essential component in bringing value to natural and cultural monuments, as well as enhancing the importance and significance of heritage sites to the nation. In this context, it is important to understand that in addition to owning monuments of historical and artistic interest, destinations must seek a better use of these monuments by tourism, as well as create strategies to enable cultural tourism while paying attention not to banalize its meaning. Tourism, therefore, should fulfill its role of intermediary element that allows the encounter between people and cultural heritage. This article has as object of study the city of Diamantina, declared a UNESCO World Cultural Heritage Site in 1999. There, cultural tourism is an economic alternative. However, the city is struggling with irresponsible use of heritage buildings for tourist visits, poor accessibility of its monuments and the lack of the perceived value in actions taken. The aim of this paper is to present how the city promotes its monuments for tourist visits; describe the major existing projects to improve accessibility to cultural heritage through tourism; suggest possibilities for enhancing the intangible heritage with tourism; and discuss the contribution of tourism to the valuation of the city's world-renowned heritage sites.

**Keywords:** World Heritage; Diamantina/MG Brazil; Tourism; Accessibility; Preservation

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<sup>109</sup> Department of Tourism – Interdisciplinary Faculty of Humanidades, Federal University of Vales do Jequitinhonha and Mucuri, [elcioneluciana@yahoo.com.br](mailto:elcioneluciana@yahoo.com.br)

**Resumo:**

O turismo é considerado uma força econômica importante e uma das atividades mais dinâmicas da atualidade. Vale ressaltar que além de gerar benefícios econômicos, a atividade contribui ainda para a valorização dos aspectos culturais e ambientais dos destinos reconhecidos, evidenciando a relação intrínseca entre o turismo e o patrimônio. Dentre cartas patrimoniais que orientaram as políticas de preservação em nível mundial, as Normas de Quito, foi umas de que mais se atentou ao uso turístico do patrimônio. Em reunião (1976), sobre a conservação e utilização de monumentos e lugares de interesse histórico e artístico, realizado pela Organização dos Estados Americanos, acirra-se o interesse sobre o patrimônio cultural na utilização turística. São apresentadas propostas concretas para a utilização do patrimônio, tendo em vista o panorama de transformação de áreas de poucos recursos econômicos dos países da América Latina. Assim, o turismo foi considerado elemento essencial para a valorização dos monumentos naturais e culturais mundiais e para a consciência de sua importância e significado para a nação. Neste contexto, é importante compreendermos que além de possuir monumentos de interesse histórico e artístico, os destinos devem buscar uma melhor utilização do monumento pelo turismo, além de criar estratégias que pudessem viabilizar o turismo cultural, atentando ainda para a utilização do patrimônio pelo turismo de forma a não banalizar seu significado. O turismo, portanto, deve cumprir seu importante papel de elemento intermediador que permite o encontro entre as pessoas e o patrimônio cultural, contribuindo assim para a valorização dos sítios históricos reconhecidos mundialmente, por meio das trocas culturais, pelo respeito pela diversidade, pelo sentimento de pertencimento identitário, pelas vivências e experiências entre as diversas culturas. O presente artigo tem como objeto de estudo, a cidade de Diamantina, declarada patrimônio cultural da Humanidade pela UNESCO em 1999. Diamantina foi considerada o maior centro de extração de diamantes do mundo no século XVIII. Possui o turismo cultural como alternativa econômica. O objetivo deste artigo é avaliar como a cidade dispõe seus monumentos para a visitação turística, apresentar os principais projetos existentes para acessibilidade do patrimônio cultural para o turismo, sugerir possibilidades para a valorização do patrimônio intangível pelo turismo e discutir qual a contribuição do turismo para a valorização do patrimônio da cidade que é mundialmente reconhecido.

**Palavras-chave:** Patrimônio Mundial; Diamantina/MG Brasil; Turismo; Acessibilidade; Preservação

**Resumen:**

El Turismo es considerado actualmente como un elemento importante de generación de poder económico y una de las actividades humanas más dinámicas. Es de destacar que, además de generar beneficios económicos, la actividad también contribuye a la mejora de los aspectos culturales y ambientales de los destinos reconocidos, destacando la relación intrínseca entre turismo y patrimonio. Entre las cartas internacionales del patrimonio que han guiado las políticas de conservación en todo el mundo, destacamos *Las Normas de Quito*, que estuvieron especialmente dirigidas al uso turístico del patrimonio. La reunión (1976) relativa a la conservación y al uso de los monumentos y lugares de interés histórico y artístico, realizado por la Organización de los Estados Americanos, suscita el interés sobre el patrimonio cultural en el uso turístico. En lo concerniente a propuestas concretas del uso de la equidad, se presentan la gestión del paisaje como una transformación de las zonas de escasos recursos económicos de América Latina. Por lo tanto, el turismo se considera esencial para la mejora de los monumentos del mundo natural y cultural, y se toma conciencia de su importancia y significado para la nación. En este contexto, es importante entender que además de tener monumentos de interés histórico y artístico, los destinos deben buscar un mejor uso del monumento por el turismo, y crear estrategias que puedan permitir el turismo cultural. Prestando atención, incluso al uso de la herencia por el turismo a fin de no trivializar su importancia. El turismo, por lo tanto, debe cumplir su papel de elemento intermedio que permite el encuentro entre las personas y el patrimonio cultural, contribuyendo así a la mejora de los sitios históricos reconocidos en todo el mundo. A través de los intercambios culturales, el respeto a la diversidad, a la sensación de identidad de pertenencia, a las vivencias y experiencias entre las diferentes culturas. Este artículo tiene como objeto de estudio, la ciudad de Diamantina, declarada por la UNESCO patrimonio cultural en 1999. Diamantina fue considerada como el más grande centro de la extracción mundial de diamantes en el siglo XVIII. Tiene el turismo cultural como una alternativa económica. La finalidad de esta investigación es evaluar cómo la ciudad gestiona sus monumentos para las visitas turísticas, presentando los principales proyectos existentes para la accesibilidad del patrimonio cultural para el turismo, sugiriendo posibilidades para la valoración del patrimonio inmaterial para el turismo y, así poder discutir cuál es la contribución del turismo a la apreciación del patrimonio de la ciudad que es reconocida en todo el mundo.

**Palabras Clave:** Patrimonio Mundial; Diamantina / MG Brasil; Turismo; Accesibilidad; Preservación

## 1. Introduction

Tourism is an activity of paramount importance to the socio-cultural promotion and economic development of a location with tourism potential. However, it is important that there are actions, public policies and projects that can make these cities competitive, as well as make better use of the attractions that the destination offers. In this article, I will describe the use of cultural attractions at world-renowned sites, studying the city of Diamantina, located northeast of Minas Gerais/Brazil.

Diamantina was declared Cultural Heritage of Humanity by the United Nations Organization for Education, Science and Culture (UNESCO) in 1999. The historical and cultural legacy acquired by the city, since the colonial period, now presents itself as its main tourist motivation, and therefore the study of the relation between tourism and heritage is of great importance to understand the role of actions that improve the heritage's value and the accessibility to it. Although the relation between travel and heritage exists since the 18th century, it was only in 1976, at a meeting on the conservation and use of monuments and places of historical and artistic interest held by the Organization of American States, that the interest on cultural heritage for touristic usage escalated worldwide. On this occasion, proposals were presented for the usage of heritage by tourism. Tourism is presented as an important element that allows the encounter between people and cultural heritage, thereby contributing to the enhancement of world-renowned historic sites through cultural exchanges, respect for diversity, the sense of identity and belonging, the experiences and interactions between different cultures.

In this case study, we will see how the international recognition awarded to the city of Diamantina was important to increase its tourism competitiveness. The aim of this paper is to present how the city promotes its monuments for tourist visits; describe the major existing projects to improve accessibility to cultural heritage through tourism; suggest possibilities for enhancing the intangible heritage with tourism; and discuss the contribution of tourism to the valuation of the city's world-renowned heritage sites.

## 2. Methodology

In order to achieve the research objectives, the author used bibliography related to tourism development and appreciation of heritage to create a *theoretical corpus* and thus be able to establish the relation between the two themes. Also, used secondary sources, such as Research on Tourism Demand, developed by the Federal University of Vale do Jequitinhonha –

Department of Tourism to identify the tourists' profile visiting the city and to prove that heritage is a major motivator for visiting the city. The author conducted research at local offices and institutional bodies such as heritage departments, Department of Culture – Tourism Sector, Tourism and Heritage of Diamantina (Secretaria de Cultura, Turismo e Patrimônio de Diamantina), among other institutions linked to local tourism, to identify actions that supported the development of tourism and appreciation of heritage. In order to identify the support the tourist receives when visiting the historical monuments of the city, the researcher conducted systematic observatory visits between the months of December 2015 and February 2016. On this occasion, the accessibility to the monument, hours of operation and services rendered at the monuments were considered in the analysis.

### **3. Historical Background: Study of the City Diamantina**

Diamantina is located in the Northeast region of Minas Gerais state (Brazil), mesoregion of Jequitinhonha (upper Jequitinhonha), distant 297 km from the state capital. Similar to other cities in Minas Gerais of the 18th century, its history is linked to the exploitation of precious stones.

Expeditions in the region began in the second half of the 16th century, with explorers coming from the coast of Bahia and Espírito Santo. The entries become more and more frequent. Despite the constant "visits", the exploratory activities did not fixate residence, since the regions were considered inhospitable and wild (Costa, 2001).

In the 17th century, life in the colony was agitated by the constant presence of the 'bandeiras', missions led by adventurers with exclusively economic interests seeking to get rich. With the discovery of the first gold nuggets and precious stones, the visits became more frequent and people began to settle.

In the 17th century, appeared the first settlements in the territory now called Minas (Mines), at strategic locations for the missions and bandeiras, around the most common stops near rivers and gold mines. These paths gradually turned into camps and later became the first towns and cities (Costa, 2001).

The formation of city of Diamantina is directly related to the diamonds exploitation. The bandeira from São Paulo region called Gerônimo Gouveia came from Serro Frio, in 1713, following the course of the Jequitinhonha River, finding a great amount of gold in Rio Piruruca

and Rio Grande. In this area, started the gold mining. Following Rio Grande, he found a brook and a vast swamp that was called Tijuco, indigenous word for mud (Costa, 2001).

Felício dos Santos (1976) reports the fame of the Diamond District that was very well known in Portugal for its wealth, and where many adventurers and immigrants came to settle in the hopes of fast enrichment. According to Santos (1976), "notable change suffered the people's customs, isolated in this corner of Brazil. With the coming of different people, started imitating the customs and fashions of the metropolis, which in turn sought to imitate what they saw in France".

Gradually, the number of residents and density of the city increased. Diamantina became one of the most important urban centres for supplies in the region. It became the home of important families and authorities sent by the Crown to oversee mining (Prado, J.R., 2000).

Even before being recognised by the Portuguese Crown, the diamond was already present in the Diamond District's residents' lives. Mawe (1944) reports that the mineral was used in card games, unaware of its value. He also reports that adventurers and pioneers had already searched for gold in the Diamond District region, unsuccessfully. Only a few years later, the existence of diamond was verified in the region, leading the Portuguese Crown to impose the so-called Demarcation Diamantina.

From 1729 on, the official diamond mining turned the political and administrative framework of the colony more complex, requiring the creation of Diamond District. Connected directly to Lisbon, the large diamond-producing region was isolated from the rest of its Captaincy, staying under close and active surveillance, with many cases of violence.

*Submitted to a particular administration not only to foreigners, but also to national, the Diamond District forms some sort of separate state in the middle of the vast empire of Brazil (Saint- Hilaire, 1974: 13).*

*The laws are so severe that anyone found outside the main road is subject to being detained as a suspect and subjected to examinations and interrogations, which may often cause embarrassments and delays (Mawe, 1944: 209).*

Until the middle of the 18th century, with the stabilization of settlements, urban life was established. The cultural formation of Diamantina gets closely linked to the exploitation of precious stones and the arrival of people from different cultures, as quoted by Mawe:

*(...) Stores are crammed with English goods, as well as ham, cheese, butter and other consumer products. (...) The sums paid by the government for the rental of the black (slaves), officers' salaries (...) this, and the expenses of the surrounding city dwellers move a large trade. (...) The officers are well paid and live with a level of comfort that foreigners would hardly imagine possible in such a distant place (Mawe, 1996: 69).*

Saint Hilaire (1976) gives a description of the high cultural level of Diamantina, despite being so far apart from the rest of the country.

*There reigns an air of abundance that I could not observe in any part of the province. (...) And we can even say that bums are even rarer than in Vila Rica and Vila do Príncipe. (...) In this place, I found more education than in the rest of Brazil, more taste for literature and a livelier desire to learn. (...) The shops in this village are provided with (...) large quantities of luxury items, (...) these goods are mostly of English manufacture (...) (Saint-Hilaire, 1976: 33).*

*In Diamantina, an enlightened elite was born. In the 1750s, the Arraial do Tijuco got its own Opera House. The various churches also hired musicians to write pieces for the masses and celebrations such as Holy Week, Ash Wednesday, the Lord of Passos, Corpus Christi. The mulatto José Joaquim Emerico Lobo de Mesquita stood out among the 120 musicians who performed at Tijuco during the 18th century, becoming a renowned composer (Furtado, 2008).*

After the stagnation of diamond exploration, mid-19th century, agriculture became an alternative to the economic crisis. The growth generated by the former progress was not able to overcome the isolation of the region. For the city, to develop a better communication with other urban centres was necessary, which was difficult because of the precarity of the roads (Martins, 2000).

The arrival of electricity and Brazil's Central Railway changed this scenario and decreased the distances between cities and major trade centres. The implementation of the railway has brought many benefits to the region, including an increase in number of factories and growth in urban infrastructure. However, after a few decades, economic expansion of the city ceased, and many industries stopped their activities. With the expansion of highways, many of Diamantina's

satellite cities now started looking towards companies in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo (Martins, 2000).

Despite the isolation from major urban centres having hindered the economic development of Diamantina, we consider that such distancing also contributed to the preservation of its colonial houses, since the expansion of industries in the city did not compromise the secular houses. The preservation of the colonial houses helped assure Diamantina its recognition as national heritage by the Institute for National Historical and Artistic Heritage in 1938 and decades later, in 1999, its recognition as a World Cultural Heritage by UNESCO. In the following chapters, it will be pointed out the important relation between tourism and heritage and discuss the importance of the preservation of Diamantina's heritage for the development of local tourism.

#### **4. Tourism and Heritage**

The importance of tourism to heritage has been discussed more frequently in recent years, especially in relation to its economic benefits. Undoubtedly, the activity is very important, economically - for the maintenance and preservation of heritage - as well as for bringing cultures together, facilitating the encounter between people and restoring our ancestor's memories. According to Camargo (2004), the term 'heritage' arises with the French Revolution. The concept was generated as heritage to prevent the destruction of property during the Revolution. It was necessary to protect and catalog the remaining properties, since many had been destroyed, many others were sold. Although the term Heritage was coined during the French Revolution, cultural trips already existed since the Renaissance, motivated by study and experience. Britain supported this type of trip and the Crown funded part of it, especially for future diplomats and occupants of positions in the kingdom (Yasoshima and Oliveira, 2002).

During this period, German, Polish, Danish, Dutch and English travelled to France, around 1672, taking flyers similar to our current tour guides with information that led to cities and famous places. They were proposed two tours: the petit tour, Paris and southwest France; and the grand tour, south, southwest and the Bourgogne. It was from these that came the expression "to the grand tour" that began to be used in England in the 17th and 18th centuries (Yasoshima and Oliveira, 2002: 38), mainly to complement the education of noblemen. Tourism appears inextricably linked to heritage as an element that underpins the economic value of the latter.



With the French Revolution, revolutionaries believed that the visits of French monuments could attract foreigners and provide considerable gains similar to what happened in Italy, especially in Rome. According to Camargo (2004), the French observed the inflow of European travelers heading to Italy, making them wonder about the huge direct and indirect benefits the historical monuments and other heritage assets could bring to their country.

Tourism, historically outlined as an aristocratic practice, presenting as fundamental attraction the cultural products from the past, became a habit disseminated bourgeoisie and then, at the end of the 20th century, a mass phenomenon, part of the cultural industry (Camargo, 2004).

According to the Ministry of Tourism: "Cultural Tourism includes touristic activities related to experiencing the set of significant elements of the historical and cultural heritage; and cultural events, enhancing and promoting the tangible and intangible assets of culture" (MTUR, 2009).

To Ruschmann (2006), there are cultural elements that motivate the visitation, such as: crafts, arts, traditions, cuisine, regional history, architecture, religious events, etc. The author points out unfavorable aspects related to the cultural impact that appears in places where mass tourism occurs, which may compromise the authenticity and spontaneity of cultural events. In addition, we can include the loss of character of handcrafts; vulgarization of traditional events; cultural arrogance; destruction of historical heritage.

As for the favorable cultural aspects, Ruschmann (2006) highlights the increase in value of local crafts; higher appeal towards cultural inheritance; ethnic pride; appreciation and preservation of historical heritage.

Tourism is considered an important economic power and one of the most dynamic activities of today. The activity can generate economic benefits and contribute to the enhancement of cultural and environmental aspects of the renown destinations.

It is important to emphasise that the sites considered World Heritage Sites are selected for their uniqueness and importance to all people. The preservation of these sites is essential to ensure the testimony of other civilizations over time, important events that have marked humanity; so tourism should be committed to also ensure its preservation. The importance of tourism is closely linked to the economic development of the sites, since it is able to allow the encounter of people with heritage that belongs to all. The role of tourism for the preservation of world heritage is mentioned in some heritage charters that guided preservation policies worldwide. Among these stand out the Norms of Quito, the ones that focused most on touristic use of heritage.

A meeting held by the Organization of American States (1976) on the conservation and use of monuments and places of historical and artistic interest, stirred up concern about the cultural heritage for touristic usage. Concrete proposals for using the heritage sites were presented, considering as a landscape the transformation of areas with limited economic resources in Latin America.

According to Carvalho e Silva (2010), cultural heritage, as a testimony of the various experiences of social groups, is presented in various hues, considering the tangible and spiritual aspects that create meaning and significance to the cultural legacy passed down from generation to generation.

In this context, it is important to understand that in addition to owning monuments of historical and artistic interest, destinations must seek a better use of these monuments by tourism, as well as create strategies to enable cultural tourism while paying attention not to banalize its meaning. Tourism, therefore, should fulfill its role of intermediary element that allows the encounter between people and cultural heritage, thereby contributing to the enhancement of world-renowned historic sites through cultural exchanges, respect for diversity, the feeling of identity and belonging, the experiences and interactions between different cultures.

Diamantina was chosen by the Ministry of Tourism as a tourism-inducing destination in the Diamonds' Region. When speaking of tourism in the city, its world-renowned heritage sites cannot be ignored. Its architectural complex and history are the main motivating factors attracting tourists to the region. In the next section, we will describe how essential is heritage to tourism in Diamantina and how the city presents its monuments for visitation.

## **5. Tourism in Diamantina - Cultural Heritage of Humanity**

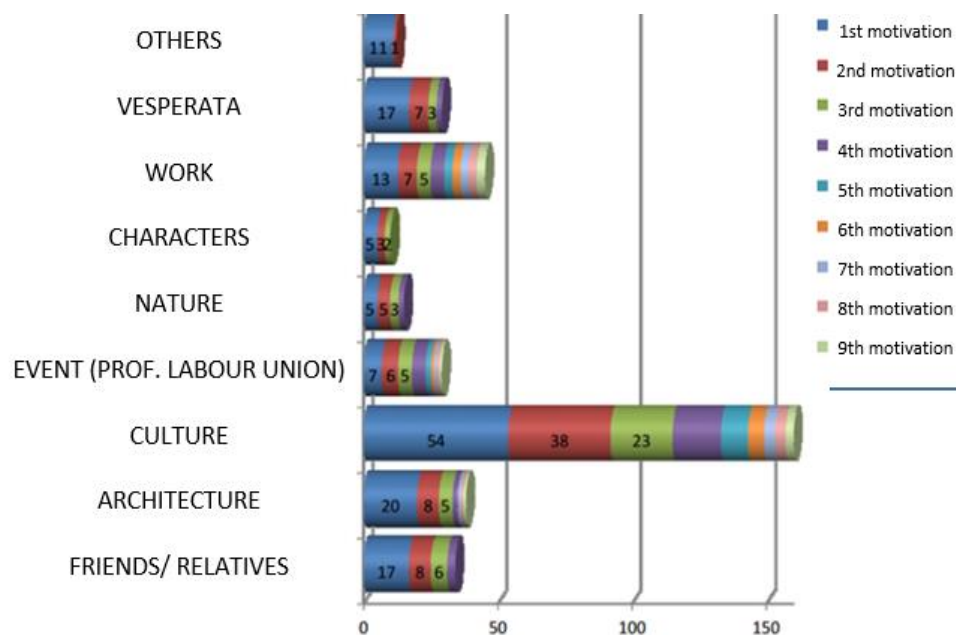
Diamantina is located in the Espinhaço ridge, considered the seventh biosphere of Humanity by the United Nations. Its origin is linked to the exploitation of precious stones and is witness of an important period of the region's cultural development. It was considered one of the largest diamond producers in the world. The city has managed to preserve many of the elements that refer to this period, through the grandiosity of their houses, existing cultural events in the city and religiousness.

The importance of Diamantina, its history within the national context and the need to preserve its colonial houses made the SPHAN – National Historical and Artistic Heritage Service

(currently IPHAN) declare its architectural ensemble a protected site in 1938. Diamantina is one of the first six Brazilian cities listed as historic monuments in 1938 by IPHAN. The city is surrounded by the Cristais ("Crystals") Ridge, a major geological formation that stands out in the landscape and is fully integrated into the urban architectural ensemble. The city is an authentic example of the efforts made by man to seek their fortune in inhospitable places (UNESCO, 1998). Diamantina shows how the explorers of Brazil, adventurers in search for diamonds and representatives of the Portuguese Crown were able to adapt European models to the tropics in the 18th century. Its architecture was considered one of the most sober of Minas Gerais / Brazil (UNESCO, 1998).

After being listed as a protected heritage site in 1938, the city of Diamantina acquired great status in the national tourist landscape. Despite the listing, at this time it was still responsibility of the state to preserve the Brazilian memory and identity, without necessarily incentivizing tourism. It is noteworthy that after the title of UNESCO World Heritage Site granted in 1999, Diamantina emerged in the international tourism scene and became the stage for the expansion of tourist enterprises and institutional strength in the city. In addition, the city gained great responsibility having to invest in cultural events and strengthen the cultural traits that motivated the tourist visitation.

Analysing a research conducted by UFVJM's Department of Tourism (2012) on the motivations for visiting the city of Diamantina, we realise that Culture is at the top of the list, followed by Architecture. Therefore, the cultural attractions and the architectural ensemble recognised as a World Heritage Site are primarily responsible for attracting tourists to the city (Graph 1).



**Graph 1. Tourist motivation research**

Source: Department of Tourism/ UFVJM, 2012

Diamantina is included in one of the major tourist routes in Brazil, the Royal Road, which joins the various paths built during Brazil's colonial era to transport the riches of Brazil to the coast of Rio de Janeiro, and from there to the Portuguese metropolis. Initially, the road connected the old Villa Rica (now called Ouro Preto) to the port of Paraty. However, the need for a safer and faster route to the port of Rio de Janeiro led to the opening of a "new pathway". With the discovery of precious stones in the region of Serro, the road was extended all the way to Arraial do Tijuco (now Diamantina).

Diamantina plays an important role in Minas Gerais' tourism scenario. It has satisfactory hospitality and service structure, and counts with the presence of institutions working for the local integrated development, such as the State Forestry Institute (IEF), Diamonds' Region Tourist Association, National Commercial Education Service (Senac), Estrada Real Institute (IER), the National Historic and Artistic Heritage Institute (IPHAN), the Brazilian Small and Medium Enterprises Support Service (Sebrae), Federal University of Vales do Jequitinhonha and Mucuri (UFVJM).

Thanks to the prestige achieved, largely due to the preservation of its heritage, Diamantina has a favorable environment for economic development through tourism. Besides having a favorable framework for the development of the activity, the city organizes many events that attract tourists throughout the year, such as Vesperata (Figure 1). In addition, its residents are

very devout and maintain important traditions in the city such as Semana Santa (Figure 2) and Corpus Christi (Figure 3) embellishing the streets with colored sawdust and sand, marking the paths for the processions; a great example of intangible heritage that can be used for tourism.



**Figure 1. Vesperata**

Source: Saint Germain



**Figure 2. Holy Week**

Source: Rodrigo Cavalcanti



**Figure 3. Corpus Christi**

Source: SECTUR/ Diamantina

Another intangible heritage that is well used as a strategy to attract tourists is musicality. In addition to Vesperata, Diamantina uses the musicality on other occasions such as concerts in churches. Recently, the city has restored the Igreja do Carmo's pipe organ, one of the few in Minas Gerais, and is creating new tourism products such as the Historic Organ Concert Almeida e Silva / Lobo de Mesquita. In addition, there is a commitment to projects that value the practice of the Seresta (Figure 4) tradition in the city.



**Figure 4. Seresta**

Source: Aguinaldo Souza

Many districts and villages in Diamantina still keep important cultural traditions. Some of these have been certified as 'quilombos' by the Palmares Foundation, and represent a living testimony of the slavery period and precious stones exploitation. Although the city did not develop many actions aimed at cultural tourism in these villages, these could be included in projects related to ethnic tourism, which could offer a unique exchange between tourists and these communities that still own the knowledge and memory of a very important period for Diamantina, which are nevertheless left aside of local tourism. These communities have some cultural events, such as: Folia de Reis, Dança Chula, the Banto language and knowledge passed on by ancestors, descendants of slaves, verbally.

Another important factor is that the title acquired by the city as a World Heritage contributes to justify the importance of resources for various projects and activities related to tourism, so the possibility of fundraising and partnerships to carry out projects is increased, such as the Diamantina Gourmet Food Festival promoted by the Diamantina's Association of Companies Related to Tourism and the City of Diamantina; sporting events like Diamantina Adventure, which has regional partners; preparation of marketing plan developed in partnership with SEBRAE (Serviço de Apoio às Micro e Pequenas Empresas de Minas Gerais - Brazilian Micro and Small Business Support Service; among other actions and events. It's important to note that Diamantina is one of the 65 tourism-inducing destinations in the country and receives incentives from State and city governments for tourism development and direct actions of the State Department of Tourism and Ministry of Tourism (*Secretaria de Estado de Turismo e Ministério do Turismo*).

It is important to highlight that in a city recognised as a Heritage Site of Humanity, there should be not only protection and preservation, but also a responsible management of tourism. According to MTUR (Ministério do Turismo, 2015), Diamantina was one of the municipalities that most advanced in terms of public policies for tourism in Brazil, in 2015. The city now occupies the 29th position in the level of competitiveness ranking. Therefore, improvement in tourism management involved a collective effort between the City Hall, the Municipal Tourism Council - COMTUR, institutional partners, local businesses and the community. However, the same study reveals the importance of the body of the local government, not only to encourage further development of culture, but also to create a municipal plan of Culture, that could also help maintain and official calendar of cultural events that take place in the city.

It is important to stress that some events, despite being in the local calendar, are often sporadic, some occur only once a year and are still conditioned by the release of public funds,

sponsorships and fundraising projects. Therefore, when working with culture, tourism managers are also conditioned by the priorities given by the local government.

It is a great challenge to the city to implement actions and establish partnerships for the opening of monuments for tourist visits. Currently, SECTUR (*Secretaria de Cultura, Turismo e Patrimônio de Diamantina*) has the project called: Visit Diamantina: Religious Monuments, a partnership between the City, the parishes and brotherhoods and UFVJM (Universidade Federal dos Vales do Jequitinhonha e Mucuri - Federal University of Valley of the Jequitinhonha and Mucuri), which ensured the opening of a few number of monuments for visitation. In this project, the city gives scholarships to students who welcome tourists in the monuments and provide information about them. In some cases, they participate in refresher courses or have Embratur-certified guides coaching them (SECTUR, 2016).

It is important to consider that cultural tourism has more demanding enthusiasts, usually people with high cultural levels, therefore requiring receptionists to have a high level of commitment to the heritage and to search for information, in order to provide the tourist a pleasurable and knowledgeable visitation to the attraction. Currently, only two churches have the support of the scholarship students, though SECTUR has a proposal to increase it to four churches, with an authorized officer accompanied by the students (SECTUR, 2016). It is necessary to think about the site security, considering that students do not have the support of security personnel in times when working on the project, in addition to creating memorial spaces in each religious monument that improve the communication about the protected site to the tourist.

The tourist who visits the city is seeking for a unique experience with this heritage, and needs tools that can facilitate communication. Therefore, even though the SECTUR project is important to the accessibility to monuments, it is also important to consider how the tourist's contact with this heritage takes place.

It is important to emphasize the need for materials containing information about the city and the cultural monument visited, such as audiovisual resources about the local memory and identity, descriptive and promotional material about the city and about the historic and religious monuments, etc, considering the existing collection and interactive tools. Monuments such as the House of Chica da Silva has no furniture that could help tourists to feel as if in the past. The mansion, home to the IPHAN only has portraits of Chica da Silva painted by local artists. Recently, there were excavations in the house's yard to get time utensils that could be displayed at the museum, however, it is impossible to confirm if those were the ones used at the time of the former slave. Therefore, there is no visual support to the interpretation of the heritage, "the





process of adding value to the visitor's experience, by providing information and representations that enhance the history and the cultural and environmental characteristics of a place." (Goodey, 2002: 13).

Another example is the Old Market, the former stop for troops that supplied the main villages in the region. Despite being one of the few still preserved in the region, the market does not have an exhibition space that reveals relevant information about that era. It is noteworthy that this space hosts important events that attract people to the public asset, however, the interpretation of the heritage is important for cultural tourism and brings support to the tourist.


Only recently, the House of Glory, the city's landmark chosen by the campaign for World Heritage installed an interactive totem and opened a multimedia room containing the history of the building, which became an important communication tool between the cultural asset and the tourist (Table 1).

Regarding the visitation of the monuments, it is important to emphasise that the city has a very hilly terrain, which hampers the movement and accessibility of the elderly tourists visiting the attractions. Another important factor that hinders access to the monuments is the lack of accessibility projects for people with reduced mobility in the interior of the monuments.

Monuments	History and use by tourism
 <p>Chica da Silva's House</p>	<p>Sobrado known to have been the slave Chica da Silva's residence between the years 1763 and 1771, it is currently the headquarters of IPHAN. Opens every day, but has a very small collection and furniture. It is known to host some exhibitions, however unrelated to Chica da Silva's story.</p>
 <p>Intendant's House</p>	<p>Colonial house. The building was the Quartermaster's House in the 18th century. Currently, it serves as Diamantina's City Hall, public office and has no visitors' infrastructure.</p>

 <p>Municipal Market</p>	<p>Municipal Market. It was the former drovers' ranch, erected in 1835, houses the Municipal Market, where, nowadays, a food and handcrafts fair is held on weekends.</p> <p>Without space interaction facilities. (Despite there is no space for interaction between the asset and the tourist who, despite experiencing the events that occurring there, cannot find tools that help him to understand the market's history).</p>
 <p>JK House</p>	<p>JK House. President JK's former house. A humble house where the former President of Brazil, JK, spent his childhood. It was turned into a museum. The rooms hold a library, personal objects, photos and guitars used by the politician to participate in serenades.</p> <p>It is open to visitors from Tuesday to Sunday.</p>
 <p>Crystals Ridge</p>	<p>Crystals ridge. Important rock formation that surrounds the city of Diamantina.</p> <p>Declared a Natural Heritage Site by IEPHA / MG.</p> <p>Great place for hiking, contemplating the city from the observation spots.</p> <p>Easily accessible, however, does not offer security for tourists.</p>
 <p>Bomfim church</p>	<p>Bomfim church. The church, funded by the military, was inaugurated in 1771. Among the attractions are the altar with gold carvings and the bell tower. It has no guided tours.</p>
 <p>Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church</p>	<p>Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church. Erected between 1760 and 1784, the church has an odd feature – the tower is located at the back of the building. It has an organ with 549 pipes, one of the only still functional in Minas Gerais.</p> <p>Recently, there has been concerts with the church organ, which became a new attraction in the city.</p> <p>There are no guided tours.</p>
 <p>San Francisco Church</p>	<p>San Francisco Church. The predominant style in San Francisco's Church, 1775, is the Rococo – the beautiful carvings of altars combine wood and gold.</p> <p>There are no guided tours.</p>

 <p>Luz Church</p>	<p>Luz Church. The Church of the 19th century had its origin because of an earthquake in Lisbon, in 1755. A devout made a promise to Our Lady of Light, asking for protection for her and her family, building the church in her honor at Arraial do Tijuco.</p> <p>Not open to visitors.</p>
 <p>Rosario Church</p>	<p>Rosario Church. Built in 1731 by the Brotherhood of Our Lady of the Rosary, it is one of the oldest temples in Diamantina.</p> <p>There are no guided tours.</p>
 <p>Teatro Santa Izabel</p>	<p>Teatro Santa Isabel. The old Teatro Santa Isabel was opened to the public around 1840.</p> <p>There were plays, balls, public conferences. The economic depression in the 19th century made the theater close its doors. In 2010, the theater reopened its doors.</p> <p>There are no guided tours.</p>
 <p>St. Anthony Cathedral</p>	<p>St. Anthony Cathedral. The current Diamantina Matrix was built between 1933 and 1940, replacing the old church of St. Anthony of Tejuco.</p> <p>There are no guided tours.</p>
 <p>House of Glory</p>	<p>House of Glory. Construction from the 18th century brings two houses together by a connecting walkway over the street.</p> <p>Headquarters of UFMG's Geology Centre, the houses are opened to visitors and presents geological maps, photographs, quartz and diamonds. A totem was recently installed at the reception, and an audio and video room, where is told the history of the mansion, was opened.</p> <p>There are self-guided tours.</p>

 <p>The Diamond Museum</p>	<p>The Diamond Museum. The Museum opened in the 50s occupies a large house from 1749.</p> <p>The collection includes objects from the 17th to 19th century, as tools used in diamond mining, hassocks, weapons, dishes, artwork and furniture. It is open from Tuesday to Sunday and has a guided tour. There are some cultural events with no fixed dates.</p>
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**Table 1. List of Monuments and touristic use**

Source: Elcione Silva

## 6. Considerations

Tourism is an invaluable ally to the economic development of a destination. When it comes to locations declared World Heritage Sites, we must pay attention to the real contribution of tourism and its intermediary role between the heritage and the tourist. We should care about this relationship, which can bring benefits such as better appreciation of heritage, cultural transformation of people, sense of belonging, experience sharing, knowledge of the culture; however, we must also be careful with its negative impacts such as acculturation, depredation of sites, trivializing of culture, etc. Diamantina stands out in the national tourism scene, undoubtedly thanks to its heritage, preserved and internationally recognised as a World Heritage Site. However, with this title comes many challenges, the need for responsible tourism management actions and heritage protection; and therefore the city should be prepared to develop high quality cultural tourism, contributing not only to keep the tourists close, but also overcoming their expectations and thus enabling a real experience with cultural heritage. Diamantina is in a prominent position in regards to tourism in Minas Gerais, with favorable tourism infrastructure and presence of important institutions that support local tourism in an integrated manner. However, actions to improve accessibility to monuments, effective projects for the opening of historical and religious monuments, as well as improvement and investment in translation tools, interactivity and communication between the heritage and the tourist, are all of great importance so that cultural tourism is better seized in the city.

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