

Beer Tourism in South Africa: Emergence and Contemporary Directions

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ABSTRACT

Beer tourism is a growing dimension of culinary or food tourism. In terms of culinary tourism South Africa is traditionally associated with wine tourism. However, the country is experiencing the rise of beer tourism. Against the background of international research on beer tourism the paper examines the emergence, growth and changing directions of South African beer tourism. It is argued that the current focus in beer tourism is upon the country's expanding network of craft beer micro-breweries and associated organized beer festivals. Beer tourism offers opportunities for driving tourism development in several destinations including small town South Africa.

Keywords: *culinary tourism, beer tourism, South Africa, craft beer.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Within tourism scholarship the topic of culinary tourism is of growing interest and research momentum (Hjalager and Richards 2002; Long 2003; Brownlie et al. 2005; Hashimoto and Telfer 2006; Hall and Sharples 2008; Smith and Xiao 2008; Henderson 2009; Harrington and Ottenbacher 2010; Ab Karim and Chi 2010; Murray and Kline 2015). Kraftchick et al. (2014) view culinary tourism as a form of niche tourism with people travelling to a particular destination to experience the unique foods and beverages of that destination. Indeed, culinary tourism is delineated as the pursuit of unique and memorable eating and drinking experiences and seeks to lure tourists in search of authentic experiences with the consumption of local food and beverages considered as bringing tourists closer to the home culture (Plummer et al. 2005; Bujdoso and Szucs 2012a). Hall and Mitchell (2005) demarcate the scope of culinary tourism as encompassing visits to primary and secondary food producers, food festivals, restaurants and special locations for food tasting and/or experiencing the attributes of specialist food production as the essential driver or motivation for travel. Arguably, the local food and beverages of a region can assume a significant part in the culture of regions and can be one of the essential motivations for tourists to travel to certain areas in order to experience that cultural aspect (Plummer et al. 2005; Hall and Gossling

2014). Several authors highlight the opportunities for culinary tourism to be a driver for sustainable local and regional development, a basis for local economic diversification as well as strengthening local identities and traditions (Hall et al. 2003; Everett and Aitchison 2008; Harrington and Ottenbacher 2010; Hall and Gossling 2014).

Researchers of culinary tourism have focussed much attention on the productive relationships between tourism, food and different kinds of beverages (Hall et al. 2000, 2003; Plummer et al. 2005; Hall and Sharples 2008). In particular, most scholarship has been devoted to wine tourism (Hall et al. 2000). Beyond wine, other forms of beverages and their linkages with tourism also have come under academic scrutiny. Examples are whisky and bourbon, tequila, coffee, tea, sake and, most recently, beer. As is stressed by Murray and Kline (2015) beer tourism is an extension of culinary tourism. The phenomenon of beer tourism is considered as “a young form of special interest tourism” (Howlett 2013: 32). It is defined as a type of tourism “of which participants are motivated by gastronomic experience of drinking different types of beer and typical atmosphere of brewing restaurants or knowing history and current technology of beer manufacture” (Jablonska et al. 2013: 67). Bujdoso and Szucs (2012b: 105) argue “beer tourism has become a new and popular form of alternative tourism” and “a growing industry as more and more companies offer tours to beer brewing regions”.

It is against the backdrop of the appearance of a dedicated beer-tourism literature that the objective in this article is to examine the growth and contemporary directions of beer tourism in South Africa, a destination which in terms of culinary tourism usually is associated with wine tourism (Ferreira and Muller 2013). Indeed, the wine routes and wine farms of the Western Cape are leading attractions for international tourists to South Africa as well as for domestic travellers (Rogerson and Visser 2006; Rogerson 2015). Although the phenomenon of wine tourism has gathered a number of studies in South Africa existing local tourism scholarship overlooks the rise and shifting directions of the country’s economy of beer tourism (Rogerson and Rogerson 2011; Rogerson and Visser 2014; Hoogendoorn and Rogerson 2015).

2. RESEARCH ON BEER TOURISM

Despite the expansion of beer tourism, academic research about beer tourism is described as immature (Niester 2008). The international corpus of beer-specific tourism scholarship lags far behind the volume of research that is, for example, devoted to wine tourism (Rogerson and Collins 2015). Howlett (2013: 23) considers brewery based tourism to be “a small and relatively unknown form of tourism” (Howlett, 2013: 23). Likewise, Niester (2008: 1) avers “that there is a significant lack of previous research and associated theory” with regards to the topic of beer tourism. Since the first academic forays in beer tourism launched by Plummer et al.’s (2005, 2006) work on the Waterloo-Wellington Ale Trail in

Canada, a number of other investigations have appeared. The existing literature on beer-specific tourism contains a range of different works which examine the characteristics of beer tourists; the organization of beer tourism through visits to breweries, beer museums and exhibits, and a range of special events and festivals, including beer festivals and trails; and, research around the impacts of beer tourism for particular destinations (see for example Lyons and Sharples 2008; Niester 2008; Pechlaner et al. 2009; Alonso 2011; Baginski and Bell 2011; Bujdos and Szucs 2012a, 2012b; Dillivan 2012; Howlett 2013; Jablonska et al. 2013; Spracklen et al. 2013; Dunn and Kregor 2014; Eberts 2014; Kraftchick et al. 2014; Minihan 2014; Murray and Kline 2015; Rogerson and Collins 2015).

Henderson (2009), Dillivan (2010) and Spracklen et al. (2013) point out beer tourism is an integral part of tourists consuming local heritage and of experiencing local history and cultures as reflected in food and drink. Neo-localism is a trend towards the active, conscious creation and maintenance of an attachment to a locality or place (Flack 1997). Craft breweries thus emerge as a culinary tourism attraction and exemplify one of the many ways that communities can reaffirm their local identity in the wake of the impacts of globalisation on homogenising tastes and products (Schnell and Reese 2003; Murray and Kline 2015). Further, by branding beers with local themes a unique beverage culture can be fostered to enhance the distinctiveness of localities for tourism development (Schnell and Reese 2014). Among others Eberts (2014: 196) contends that tourism has emerged as “an important component of the craft breweries business model and increases their connection to local communities”.

The promotion of beer tourism is a vehicle for localities to attract niche tourists either as a supplement to other tourism assets or as the main attraction and constitutes a growing phenomenon in several parts of North America and Western Europe (Savastano 2011; Bujdos and Szucs 2012b; Murray and Kline 2015; Rogerson and Collins 2015). In Germany brewery tourism is an integral facet of understanding the culture and cuisines of localities as well as the long-established histories of brewing and of breweries, particularly in Bavaria (Pechlaner et al. 2009: 33). Jablonská *et al.* (2013: 25) present the notion of beer tourism as a composition of “several activities such as brewery excursions, beer tasting, beer festivals, beer trails or more complex organized tours with beer themes”. In Slovakia the periodicity of hosting several beer festivals and beer events throughout the year maintains the supply and demand for beer tourism from both international and domestic tourists, but also retains the strong heritage and traditions associated with beer in the country.

Another rising focus for beer tourism is the United Kingdom where ‘real ale’ tourism, is expanding particularly in northern England (Maye 2012). Here ‘real ale destinations’ are packaged and promoted by the tourism industry. Spracklen et al. (2013) associate the resurgence of real ale with the search for authentic food and drink as the industry is an element in the revitalization of beer traditions and of particular identities in the wake of an increasingly ‘lagerized’ commercial world of beer. It is argued that beer, a traditional and often ‘taken-for-granted’

product, can be leveraged as a basis for sustainable tourism development. In particular the British pub and local breweries are a significant component of national architectural, social and industrial heritage (Niester 2008).

Arguably, in the long-term the enhancement of the relationships between beer and tourism through the different aspects of beer tourism can furnish opportunities for the growth of both the beer industry and of the tourism economy. For tourism promotion the concept of route development has been adapted by the beer brewing industry and commonly is referred to as a 'beer trail' or 'ale trail'. Beer trails are a subset of what Timothy and Boyd (2014) describe as "purposive cultural routes". It is observed beer trails "increasingly are taking their place alongside more-established wine trails to draw the connoisseur to areas with a clustering of microbreweries" (Schnell and Reese 2014: 175). The potential local development benefits of successful beer trails can be to strengthen pride in local breweries, attract tourists to localities, develop cooperative and collaborative networks and partnerships for both tourism expansion and expand sales of beer (Plummer et al. 2005, 2006). Brewery tours and tasting rooms which allow the visitor to experience new types of beer and interact with brewmasters are a significant attraction for beer tourists (Plummer et al. 2005). According to Schnell and Reese (2014: 175) brewery tours "have now taken their place alongside winery tours" and represent "a means of experiencing the 'authentic' nature of a place". The existing limited research findings on beer tourists suggest that typically they wish to visit regions where they can tour multiple breweries and taste multiple products (Howlett 2012; Murray and Kline 2015).

3. THE EMERGENCE OF BEER TOURISM IN SOUTH AFRICA

The historical development of the beer industry in South Africa mainly is oriented around the emergence of South African Breweries (SAB) as the country's monopoly brewer for the national 'clear' beer market. Currently, SAB Miller enjoys a 95 percent share of the South African beer market.

The works of Tucker (1985) and Mager (2008) trace the growth and trajectory of SAB and of its achievement of monopoly brewer status for South Africa in 1956 following its takeover of Ohlsson's Breweries in the Cape and Union Breweries in Natal. During the apartheid period an enormous expansion occurred in the South African brewing industry. In particular, the growth of the industry accelerated after the lifting in 1962 of the prohibition on the sale of "European" liquor to the country's African or Black population (Mager 2004). Mager (2008) documents how successive international brewers and local entrepreneurs sought to benefit from increased demand in the 1970s but were unable to withstand the competition from SAB, whose position as monopoly producer went virtually unchallenged until the end of apartheid isolation and South Africa's re-insertion into the global economy. At the time of democratic transition in 1994 the national beer industry essentially was bifurcated between the production of clear beers by

SAB and of 'traditional' sorghum based beers marketed to the majority Black (African) population. Historically, under apartheid the sorghum beer industry was a state-run monopoly and represented a controversial key source of local state funding for township development (Rogerson 1986).

Beer tourism in South Africa is a relatively youthful phenomenon. In a rich analysis Mager (2006, 2012) examines the nexus of heritage and beer tourism in the country and of the re-imaging of beer after democratic transition. It is argued that the "story of state-run beer halls and opposition to them was captured as heritage in the Kwa Muhle Museum in Durban" which depicts a discourse about power and powerlessness and the struggles of ordinary people for dignity" (Mager 2012: 107). As a form of 'dark tourism' it is proclaimed the KwaMuhle Museum enjoys "the unenviable reputation as once being one of the most hated buildings in the city [Durban] when it was the former Department of Native Affairs, an authoritative body responsible for enforcing punitive apartheid legislation" (South African Tourism 2015a). A completely different narrative in the meaning of 'beer for the people' is constructed by SAB, the country's major producer of clear beer. Founded in 1895 the company used the opportunity of its centenary (which fell one year after South Africa's democratic transition) "to establish a monument to bottled beer as the nation's longest standing national popular drink and so claim a place close to the heart of the new nation" (Mager 2012: 107). Two focal points for beer tourism were constructed as heritage landscapes with the goal of creating "something highly visible and long lasting that would encapsulate SAB heritage and carry it forward" (Mager 2012: 107). The first was a visitor centre located at the cultural area of Newtown, Johannesburg, the apex of an imagined post-apartheid future. The Centenary Centre – subsequently retitled The SAB World of Beer - was addressed at its opened on 15 May 1995 by President Nelson Mandela. The museum seeks to explain the beer brewing process in detail and "to convey a message that combined production, branding and consumption" (Mager 2012: 109). The museum's location in inner-city Johannesburg was to be a part of urban renewal for the cultural district of Newtown and a focal point for leisure tourism in Johannesburg (Rogerson 2002). However, as a consequence of its location in the perceived 'unsafe' environs of inner city Johannesburg visitor numbers and tourism growth initially was slow (Rogerson and Kaplan 2005). Nevertheless, as inner-city renewal progressed, Johannesburg matured as an urban tourism destination in the post-apartheid era (Rogerson and Visser 2007; Rogerson, J.M. 2014; Rogerson and Rogerson 2014). Accordingly, "the World of Beer saw itself increasingly as a place of hospitality and began to attract substantial numbers of visitors" (Mager 2012: 115).

In Cape Town Mager (2012) points out that the initial expansion of beer tourism was again somewhat hindered by geography. SAB had no historical connections to the city's Victoria and Alfred Waterfront which is the major magnet for international leisure visitors to South Africa (Rogerson and Visser 2006 Rogerson JM 2012). SAB's beer heritage development in Cape Town involved the expansion of its Newlands brewery plant. It was argued this would

promote beer culture beyond branding as well as provide an alternative tourism focus to the rapidly growing wine routes of Cape Town and its surrounds. The SAB Heritage centre in Cape Town is situated in a restored malt house which was originally built in 1821 and the site of a brewery constructed in 1859. During 1995 the SAB Heritage Centre on the (former) Ohlssons's Brewery site was opened and in the following year it was granted national heritage monument status. At this centre tours (and beer tastings) are offered to explain the growth of the beer industry in South Africa and emphasize in particular the special role assumed by SAB (Mager 2012).

Another facet of the development of beer tourism in South Africa relates to the emergence of shebeens. The rise of the backyard shebeen as the focal point of an illicit liquor trade was a response to the municipal monopoly on the manufacture and sale of sorghum beer from which the local state derived a considerable amount of revenues for the administration of African urban townships during both the colonial and apartheid periods (Rogerson 1986; Mager 2005). The network of state run beer halls generated much hostility, resistance and angry opposition from both male drinkers about unpalatable brews and among African women who resented losing their right to brew traditional beer. However, as shown by Rogerson and Hart (1986) shebeens as drinking places emerged as vibrant elements in the fabric of the urban informal economy in South Africa. Despite many initiatives by national and local state to repress or destroy the shebeen trade, they persisted and survived into the post-apartheid era as spaces and places of informality, enterprise, drinking and sociability (Charman et al. 2014). The first organised shebeen tours emerged alongside the beginnings of township tours in South Africa in the late 1980s and early 1990s. The shebeen thus became an element of 'slum tourism' a term which "describes organized tours to deprived areas" (Frenzel 2012: 49). The central feature of slum tourism is of "the touristic valorization of poverty-stricken urban areas of the metropolises in so-called developing or emerging nations which are visited primarily by tourists from the Global North" (Steinbrink et al. 2012: 1).

During the 1990s the potential market for such tours expanded greatly with democratic transition and South Africa's re-entry into the international tourism economy. The rise of township tourism and of poverty or slum tours offered renewed opportunities for the expansion of shebeen tours separately or as part of the wider offering in a township tour (Rogerson 2008). Proposals were aired for establishing a Soweto shebeen route but suspicions among liquor retail entrepreneurs resulted in limited cooperation and minimal progress with this beer tourism project. Nevertheless, as Mager (2012: 121–122) points out, whilst the imagined Soweto shebeen route struggled to materialise, in other parts of South Africa where shebeeners "were less encumbered by competing interests among liquor retailers" a number of shebeen tours were launched. Localities where this occurred included Mamelodi near Pretoria and KwaZakhele in Port Elizabeth. Arguably, as Mager (2012: 122) contends, many Soweto shebeeners "remained sceptical of subjecting themselves and their patrons to the tourist gaze". This said,

in several township tours, a shebeen visit became part of the itinerary and often incorporated tastings of home-brewed sorghum beer. Currently, dedicated shebeen tours can be organised as a separate offering to the township tour and these are available in several townships including Soweto, KwaMashu and Inanda. The shebeen tours or ‘crawls’ are marketed in Durban particularly at youth tourists in the age group 20–35 years. One example is the “Shebeen scene tour” an activity with a bar-hopping experience described as “authentic, African, and an all round unforgettable experience” in which participants are advised to bring along with their hat and camera some beer goggles and party shoes (Street Scene 2015).

Overall, for Mager (2012: 122) “beer tourism in the first decade after apartheid remained a discordant set of spaces”. In the second decade after apartheid the narrative of beer tourism shifts markedly to focus not only on the beer products of SAB or sorghum beer but increasingly upon an alternative array of new craft beers which were produced by a burgeoning number of craft breweries launched in South Africa since 2000. The new directions charted in beer tourism in South Africa exhibit parallels with the craft beer tours, trails and festivals on offer in North America and Western Europe (see eg Alonso 2011; Baginski and Bell 2011; Bujdoso and Szucs 2012a, 2012b; Spracklen et al. 2013; Dunn and Kregor 2014; Eberts 2014; Kraftchick et al. 2014; Murray and Kline 2015).

4. CHANGING DIRECTIONS OF BEER TOURISM

In common with trends observed in USA, UK and Australia, South Africa has witnessed the appearance and growth of a craft beer sector of microbreweries (Corne and Reyneke 2013). It can be argued that following global trends and triggered by the enormous consolidation of SABMiller with its production of increasingly standardized lager and light beers, there has emerged a counter movement in South Africa’s beer industry which took place over the past 30 years and closely resembles trends occurring elsewhere. This reaction against consolidation and lack of variety offered to consumers essentially resulted in a revitalized interest by South African consumers in ‘older’ beer styles, such as pale ales, porter, brown cask ales, stout and bitters (Corne and Reyneke 2013). In this respect the development and growth of the South African microbrewing and craft beer industry is not dissimilar to that experienced in the UK or the USA during the early 1970s and 1980s. Some noticeable differences though are that it occurred much later and on a much smaller scale than in USA or the UK and that until recently the rate of formation of craft breweries was relatively gradual (Corne and Reyneke 2013; Strydom 2014).

The documented beginning of microbrewing in South Africa is 1983 with the establishment of Mitchell’s Brewery in Knysna. Since 1983 a variety of structural changes and a new geography of craft beer production emerged as many local beer consumers turned towards the more artisanal crafted beer product which is

produced locally. This is in preference to the conventional mass-produced beer products offered by multi-nationals such as SABMiller. It is evident, however, that growth in micro-breweries was slow during the 1980s. Between 1982 and 1995 no breweries were launched, which Strydom (2014) attributes to unrest and general uncertainty around South Africa's transition to democracy. Throughout the 1990s and 2000s a small number of craft breweries were established; by 2000 there were eight craft breweries. New developments in this period mainly occurred in and around Cape Town and KwaZulu-Natal rather than in Gauteng, the major national market for beer consumption. The expansion occurring in the Cape Town area has been suggested as a 'natural' development following the appearance from the 1990s and proliferation there of boutique wineries. From 2003 there has been a surge of new micro-brewery establishments in many parts of the country, including Gauteng. By 2008 the number of breweries had reached a total of 22 operations. The tipping point for brewery development in South Africa was 2011 after which an extraordinary rapid increase in numbers occurred. For Strydom (2014: 8) 74 percent of all the cohort of craft breweries have been founded between 2011 and 2014. In 2014 South Africa had a total of 105 micro-breweries.

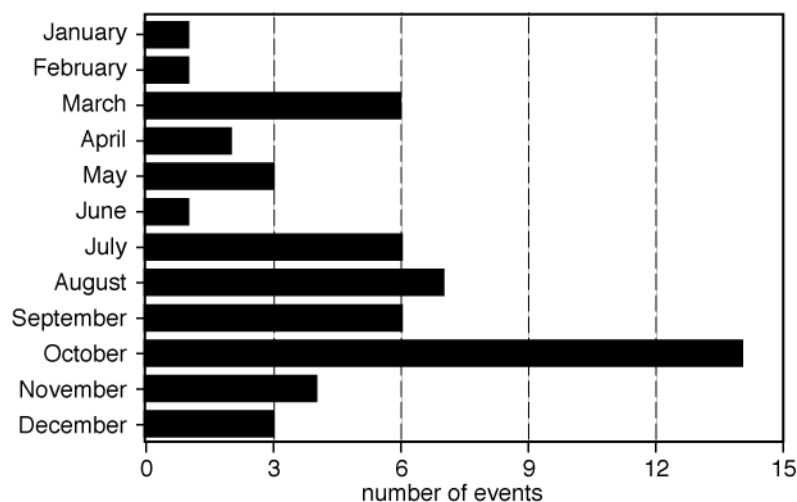


Figure 1. *Seasonality of South African Craft Beer Festivals (Source: Authors).*

This evolving network of craft breweries provides the anchor for a new and increasingly vibrant form of beer tourism in South Africa. Indeed, their appearance and growth is associated with the launch and popularity of many brew pubs and restaurants focussed on craft beer. In addition, several craft beer festivals, beer tours and routes have been initiated as further support for the expansion and new directions of South African beer tourism. A national audit conducted in 2014 reveals the existence of a total of 54 craft beer festivals occurring in South Africa. As is shown on Figure 1 the occurrence of these festivals is throughout the year. Most festivals take place during South Africa's winter and spring months (July-October) with a peak in October with festivals timed to coincide with Munich's beer Oktoberfest.

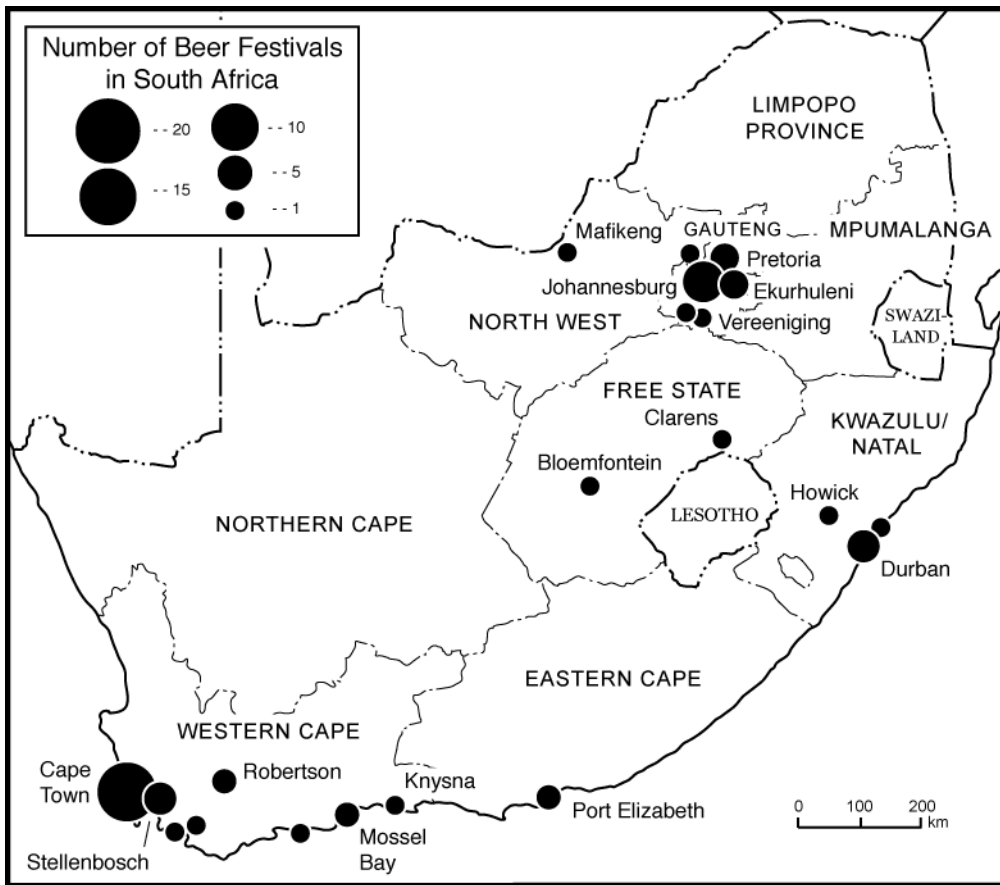


Figure 2. Location of Craft Beer Festivals in South Africa (Source: Authors).

The geography of these festivals as shown on Figure 2 is significant. The largest number of craft festivals are in South Africa’s major cities with individually Cape Town (16), Johannesburg (7) and Durban (5) the most popular venues. The fourth most important location for craft festivals is Stellenbosch, which is the heart of the Cape Winelands, and a focal point for wine routes. Beyond these centres it is notable that beer festivals are organised now in a number of small South African towns such as Hermanus, Robertson, Clarens, and Knysna.

Table 1. Profile of Attendees at Four South African Beer Festivals.

Characteristic	Key Findings
Age, Gender, Marital Status, Race	63% age 26–45; 65% male; 69 % single; 64% White and 17 % African (Black)
Education, Employment, Income	69% Tertiary University qualification; 70 % in full-time employment and 21% students; 70% Annual Family income >R500 000
Nationality and Residence	89% South African citizens; 55 percent are not residents of community where festival is hosted

Who is attending festival and size of group?	33% are with friends only, 23% with spouse, 20% with friends and relatives and 11 percent alone; Average size of group 3.09 persons
Length of stay and Accommodation	27% are staying overnight; Average stay 1.54 nights; 46 % at Bed and Breakfast, 31 % at Hotel, 17 % with friends/relatives and 6% at backpacker hostels.
Attendance at other festivals	91% have attended other local craft beer festivals; Average festival attendance is 2.20 but 17 % have attended at least 4 beer festivals; 73 % definitely plan to attend future events
Awareness of Beer festival	27% social media; 20 % friends and relatives; 19 % word of mouth; 13 % radio or television
Major reason behind decision to attend and estimated amount of money spent at festival	18% to sample new types of beer, 17% to socialize with friends and family, 14 % to purchase beer, 11 % to enjoy the entertainment and 10% to experience food and beer pairings; In terms of expenditure 71 percent is over R400
Participation in Craft brewery tours	45 % have undertaken brewery tours
Potential for South Africa to be a successful beer tourism destination	82% Yes and 18 % maybe

Source: Survey.

Data was collected during 2014–2015 at four beer festivals to examine the profile of festival attendees. The four festivals were the Cape Town Festival of Beer, Sandton Craft Beer Fair (Johannesburg), SA on Tap (Johannesburg), and Clarens Craft Beer Festival. Interviews were undertaken with a purposive sample of 132 attendees across these four festivals. Table 1 provides a summary of key findings concerning visitors to these four festivals. Among the most notable results are the majority of attendees are domestic visitors, mainly white, single, well-educated and in the age-group 26–45 years. Beer festival attendees are usually in groups of 2–3 persons of friends or relatives; although 73 percent are day visitors as many as 55 percent are not residents of the locality where the festival is being hosted. Nearly all attendees visit several such beer festivals on an annual basis with social media, word of mouth and friends and relatives major sources of information.

Core reasons for attending the festival are to experience new forms of beer, to make purchases of beer, socialize with friends and relatives, enjoy festival entertainment and consume new beer and food pairings (Table 2). Of the total sample of interviewees as many as 45 percent had actually undertaken a brewery tour. At the Clarens beer festival a major reason for attendance is that of ‘getting

away for the weekend' as most attendees were not from the local area and instead from cities in South Africa's economic heartland around Johannesburg. In terms of festival attendees staying overnight at the locality where the festival occurs, across the four festivals only 27 percent are tourists according to that definition. Of note is that 83 % of this group are in paid accommodation with the rest staying at friends or relatives accommodation. A significant finding, however, was that at the small town of Clarens in the Free State 88 percent of attendees were non-locals and 58 percent of attendees were staying overnight. Indeed, the findings from Clarens confirm the potential of beer tourism as a basis for promoting local tourism development in small town South Africa. It is observed that many craft breweries situated in small towns are emerging now as local tourist attractions (Anon. 2014) and foci for place-based economic development (Rogerson 2014).

South Africa's first beer tourism route was launched in October 2002 in the province of KwaZulu-Natal (News 24, 2002). The route, a product of private sector initiative, was coordinated by one of the craft micro-breweries' organisers and marketed as offering "a highly specialised taste experience" to parallel that of wine tasting (News 24, 2002). The route incorporated visits to five micro-breweries and two larger commercial breweries. Beer tourists are enticed to traverse 'the brewtiful country' (Corne 2010). The route begins in Durban and travels through the scenic area of the Natal Midlands with visits to breweries at Dundee and Eshowe, both part of the Battlefields heritage area (Van der Merwe 2014). The pathway of the beer route overlaps also part of the Midlands Meander, one of South Africa's most successful route tourism initiatives.

Over the years the mix of breweries that tourists are encouraged to visit on this tour of KwaZulu-Natal has changed, not least as a result of a churning of micro-brewery operations. However, the overall offering encourages tourists to sample the products of all segments of the national beer industry, namely clear beer produced by SAB, sorghum brew products and the craft beers of several micro-breweries. Its promoters claim the Beer or Brew route, a recent addition to the tourist offering "promises something quite different for this province and the country as a whole" (SA-Venues.com, 2013). In particular, visits to the Khangela sorghum beer plant in Durban to taste *utshwala* (traditional African beer) are billed "as a real experience for foreigners" (SA-Venues.com, 2013). Another recent combination of breweries termed unofficially as the KwaZulu-Natal brew route is marketed as "akin to a treasure hunt as beer lovers meander across the province, from the Valley of a Thousand Hills through the Midlands, and northeast into Zululand, then to the seaside seeking to uncover the province's finest beers" (South African Tourism, 2015b). The focus is exclusively on visiting craft breweries with tourists encouraged to undertake a self-drive tour in search of "an epicurean adventure" on a beer tasting route "which isn't a conventional signposted A-to-B route" (South African Tourism, 2015b).

Outside of the province of KwaZulu-Natal a number of other unofficial ale trails or brew routes exist particularly in Gauteng and the Western Cape. Around Johannesburg a number of tour operators now offer 'Jozi' craft brewery beer

tours. Most organised beer tours, however, are in Cape Town and its surrounds, the area which contains the greatest cluster of craft micro-breweries in South Africa. The majority of these tours target international tourists visiting Cape Town and are marketed as alternatives to the region's wine routes. Of note is the appearance of a handful of beer tours in South Africa which are now organised and marketed by international tour companies. For example the British based Ker & Downey Africa, well-known for its organised safari tours in several African destinations, now offer a five day craft beer tour based around Cape Town. This luxury tour includes accommodation at a boutique hotel, a beer cruise aboard a trendy yacht as well as visits to select local craft breweries. The costs and marketing of the package is reflective of the upmarket nature of this beer tourism offering.

Built for those in search of fun and most importantly both ladies and gents who have a love of craft beer. This is the perfect beer holiday for your friends to let loose in what is known as one of the best cities in the world. From food and draft tastings and the best of youth culture in Cape Town. This is the ultimate retreat for bachelors and bachelorettes alike to celebrate birthdays and any other occasion with friends (Ker & Downey Africa 2015).

5. CONCLUSION

For culinary tourists South Africa is most closely associated with the culture of wine and of wine tourism (Ferreira and Muller 2013). As compared to wine tourism at present the phenomenon of beer tourism is on a much smaller-scale in South Africa. This said, there is evidence of vibrancy in South African beer tourism in particular with the burst of new entrepreneurship in craft micro-breweries across the country. The appearance of these micro-breweries is an alternative or counter-movement to the homogenized nature of offerings from the country's monopoly brewer SAB Miller.

In a parallel with North America and Western Europe this new craft beer tradition in South Africa is laying the foundations for a changed direction in beer tourism which is currently the domain of mainly domestic tourists (Rogerson 2015). The network of craft breweries are the base for diversifying the beer tourism offerings of South Africa beyond that of the 'clear' beers of SAB Miller or the traditional sorghum beer products. Brewery visits, beer festivals and the establishment of beer routes are furthering the advance of South African beer tourism and the growth of the craft beer industry itself. In terms of tourism development the findings disclose that the growing network of craft beer micro-breweries can be a new economic driver in small town South Africa.

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