

MEMORY AND IDENTITY IN THE PRAIA GRANDE FAIR IN SÃO LUIS, MARANHÃO, BRAZIL

Chances for Cultural Tourism

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This essay seeks to reflect about the Praia Grande Fair, located in the Historic Center of São Luis, Maranhão, as a space maintainer of memory and local identity, discussing the possibilities for its use in connection with the provision of leisure and tourism in the city. As theoretical direction for rationale of this work, the study links issues about memory, identity and cultural heritage, emphasizing it as a resource for the cultural tourism segment. Starting from a qualitative approach, through a literature search and field, it was analyzed, from the content of interviews with residents and merchants of the neighborhood, multiple meanings and values assigned to the Fair by social actors. It was found that the Praia Grande Fair is configured as affective heritage for the local community and is considered an important witness to the individual and collective experiences. It is concluded that the Praia Grande Fair as part of tourist attractiveness tends to contribute to the enrichment of the relationship between tourists and residents and for the appreciation of heritage by means of profiting based on the principles of cultural sustainability.

KEY WORDS: cultural heritage, tourism, identity of place, cultural memory, qualitative research. Praia Grande Fair (Brazil).