

Experience of good practices

Cataluña in Havana: a cultural excursion proposal for Old Havana



Cataluña en La Habana: una propuesta de excursión cultural para La Habana Vieja

Catalunha em Havana: uma proposta de excursão cultural para Havana Velha

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ABSTRACT

Tourism, managed from a sustainable local development approach, improves the competitiveness of destinations and articulates the participation of the local population. In Havana's Historic Center, for several years now, local development proposals have been implemented that have the potential to contribute to the sustainable development model of the Office of the Historian. For the implementation of new tourism products, the key is to identify demand segments that value heritage and integrate cultural attractions into differentiated products that promote urban and social revitalization. One ethnic group with great influence on the city's heritage is the Catalans, although their tourism potential has not been fully exploited. The objective of the research is to design a travel-type tourism product that, through the Catalan heritage, promotes local development in Havana's Historic Center. For this purpose, a mixed and exploratory methodology was used, applying

tools for environmental analysis, marketing mix and statistical methods. As a result, the touristic product Cataluña in Havana was designed, adjusted to the needs of the demand. In this way, the Historic Center of Havana is positioned not only as a cultural reference, but also as an example of how tourism can boost local development, consolidating a more equitable and resilient tourism model.

Keywords: local development; product design; cultural heritage; sustainable tourism.

RESUMEN

El turismo, gestionado desde un enfoque de desarrollo local sostenible, mejora la competitividad de los destinos y articula la participación de la población local. En el Centro Histórico de La Habana, desde hace varios años, se han implementado propuestas de desarrollo local que tienen el potencial de tributar al modelo de desarrollo sostenible de la Oficina del Historiador. Para la ejecución de nuevos productos turísticos, la clave es identificar segmentos de demanda que valoren el patrimonio e integrar los atractivos culturales en productos diferenciados que fomenten la revitalización urbana y social. Una etnia con gran influencia en el patrimonio de la ciudad es la catalana, aunque su potencial turístico no ha sido plenamente aprovechado. El objetivo de la investigación es diseñar un producto turístico de tipo viajes que, a través de la herencia catalana, fomente el desarrollo local en el Centro Histórico de La Habana. Para ello, se utilizó una metodología mixta y exploratoria, aplicando herramientas para el análisis de entorno, el *marketing mix* y métodos estadísticos. Como resultado, se diseñó el producto turístico Cataluña en La Habana, ajustado a las necesidades de la demanda. De esta manera, el Centro Histórico de La Habana se posiciona no solo como un referente cultural, sino también como un ejemplo de cómo el turismo puede impulsar el desarrollo local, consolidando un modelo turístico más equitativo y resiliente.

Palabras clave: desarrollo local; diseño de productos; patrimonio cultural; turismo sostenible.

RESUMO

O turismo, gerenciado a partir de uma abordagem de desenvolvimento local sustentável, melhora a competitividade dos destinos e articula a participação da população local. No Centro Histórico de Havana, há vários anos, foram implementadas propostas de desenvolvimento local que têm o

potencial de contribuir para o modelo de desenvolvimento sustentável do Escritório do Historiador. Para a implementação de novos produtos turísticos, a chave é identificar os segmentos de demanda que valorizam o patrimônio e integrar as atrações culturais em produtos diferenciados que promovam a revitalização urbana e social. Um grupo étnico com grande influência sobre o patrimônio da cidade é o dos catalães, embora seu potencial turístico não tenha sido totalmente explorado. O objetivo da pesquisa é criar um produto turístico do tipo viagem que, por meio do patrimônio catalão, promova o desenvolvimento local no centro histórico de Havana. Para isso, foi utilizada uma metodologia mista e exploratória, aplicando ferramentas de análise ambiental, mix de marketing e métodos estatísticos. Como resultado, foi elaborado o produto turístico Catalunha em Havana, ajustado às necessidades da demanda. Dessa forma, o Centro Histórico de Havana se posiciona não apenas como referência cultural, mas também como exemplo de como o turismo pode impulsionar o desenvolvimento local, consolidando um modelo de turismo mais equitativo e resiliente.

Palavras-chave: desenvolvimento local; design de produto; patrimônio cultural; turismo sustentável.

INTRODUCTION

From a socio-economic point of view, tourism is considered a vital means for sustainable human development worldwide and remains one of the main creators of employment and an important source of income. With this in mind, it is anticipated that tourism will play an important role in the achievement of all the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Brooks et al., 2023). The SDGs in turn have given a new direction to tourism. A current tourism model tends to adopt a management approach that tends to use community resources responsibly, promoting a cultural connection and taking care not to generate environmental pollution. In this sense, sustainable tourism is expected to generate economic benefits, achieve social equity and reduce environmental damage (Zeng et al., 2024).

Furthermore, tourism, when managed from a sustainable local development approach, improves not only the competitiveness of destinations, but also articulates the proactive insertion of the local population. Under this approach, the development of communities is the main focus of tourism management objectives as they play an essential role in the sustainable development of the destination (Quang et al., 2023). Tourism companies apply commercial strategies to attract tourists

and thus achieve economic growth, support community development, while communities embark on cultural reproduction to provide resources for tourism development (Zeng et al., 2024).

Therefore, effective sustainable tourism strategies require a multi-stakeholder approach that values input from all sectors of society, including government agencies, private sector participants, and non-governmental organizations, to ensure that diverse perspectives are taken into account in tourism planning and implementation. This holistic commitment supports the development of policies that not only mitigate the negative impacts, but also maximize the socioeconomic and environmental benefits of tourism. Ultimately, this approach underscores the importance of value creation for all stakeholders to ensure that tourism development operates in a sustainable manner (Han et al., 2024).

Related to the above, heritage tourism is embedded within efforts to develop communities in a sustainable manner by placing economic and political value on the heritage resources and attractions of destinations, which provides additional reasons to conserve heritage in addition to the cultural imperatives for its maintenance. By taking advantages from the community's cultural and historical capital, heritage tourism can contribute to the flourishing of local communities and their positive development (Brooks et al., 2023).

In the case of Cuba, the tourist destination of Havana, characterized fundamentally by its cultural and heritage values, has gained greater tourist centrality, receiving more than half of the country's total visitors, reflecting the growing international interest in urban-cultural attractions (Cruz Sosa & Lam González, 2020; Hernández Flores et al., 2024). Among the elements that highlight its heritage importance are mainly those associated with the Spanish colonization period.

Specifically, in Havana's Historic Center, local development proposals have the potential to contribute directly to the sustainable development model, carried out by the Office of the Historian (OHCH) with the objective of preserving the cultural heritage and the living conditions of its residents. From the tourism perspective, the key lies in identifying demand segments that value this heritage and, based on this, integrating cultural attractions into differentiated tourism products that promote the revitalization of the urban and social environment. These products, being aligned with the principles of sustainability, not only improve the state of cultural resources, but also allow the community to actively participate in their conservation, benefiting from the income generated.

Along the same lines, it should be noted that the cultural influence of Spain and its various ethnic groups have left a significant mark on the local idiosyncrasy, which is visible in the Historic Center. As a result, one of the most important markets for the destination is Spanish. One of the ethnic groups with great influence on the city's heritage is Catalan, although its tourism potential has not been fully exploited. Designing a tourism product that highlights these values could attract new demand segments and further diversify the destination's cultural offerings.

Initiatives such as this proposal will enrich the destination's tourism offer and promote a more inclusive and sustainable tourism model that contributes to the well-being of the community. In this way, Havana would be positioned not only as a cultural reference, but also as an example of how tourism can be an engine of change for local development, consolidating a more equitable and resilient tourism model

As a result, the general objective of the research is to design a travel-type tourism product that, through the Catalan heritage, promotes local development in the Historic Center of Havana.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The methodology used in this research was mixed (applying qualitative and statistical methods) and exploratory. Based on the experiences developed by the FTour Student Scientific Work Group of the Faculty of Tourism (University of Havana), regarding product design, the research was divided into three phases, with their respective stages, as well as method and tools, as shown in table 1.

Table 1. Methodological trajectory

Phases	Stages	Methods and tools
Previous phase	Stage 1: Identification of primary and secondary sources of information	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Documentary analysisSemi-structured interviews
Phase 1: Study of the environment	Stage 1: Demand behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none">PESTAPORTER's five forces
	Stage 2: Macro-environment analysis	
	Stage 3: Microenvironment analysis	

Phase 2: Conceptualization	Stage 1: Demand segmentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cluster analysis hierarchical • Statistical Methods • Survey
Phase 3: Configuration design	Stage 1: Design of the variables that make up the field trip	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marketing Mix • Semi structured interviews • Inventory of resources • Brainstorming • Documentary review • CANVAS Model • Scientific observation

Source: Own elaboration

The previous phase of bibliographic review was carried out through the analysis of documents found in the main open access databases on the web. In addition, semi-structured interviews were conducted with different experts on the subject. For the selection of the experts, the following criteria were taken into account:

- Possess more than 5 years of experience related to the study of the Catalan heritage in Havana.
- Belonging to some of the institutions specialized in the research and promotion of Catalan culture on the island.

Phase 1 of the research consisted of three stages, in which, first, a study focused on the behavior of demand, for which different statistical analyses were applied. Then, studies of the external environment (using the PESTA tool, which analyzes political, economic, social, technological and environmental factors) and the internal environment (using Porter's five competitive forces) were undertaken.

During Phase 2, surveys were processed from a sample of 74 Catalans, applied through the Google Forms platform. The sampling was by convenience, based on the limited capacity of the researchers to reach this audience; the criterion used to select the sample was that they had to be Catalans. The population taken was 296 as this was the number of Catalans received during the month of June (the same month in which the surveys were conducted) of the previous year. The sample calculation was determined as shown in table 2. Once the questionnaires had been processed, it was proceeded to segment by benefits, using the hierarchical clustering technique with IBM Statistic SPSS Version 22 software.

Table 2. Variables to determine sample size

Variable	Description	Value
N	Population size	296
n	Sample size	¿?
p	Probability of occurrence of the event	0.5
q	Probability of the event not occurring	0.5
E	Margin of error	0.10
z	Reliable constant	1.96

Source: Own elaboration

In Phase 3 it was proceeded to design the excursion, for which it was applied the tools of the marketing mix. For the design of the product, the field work carried out by the researchers was taken into account, which allowed the elaboration of an inventory of resources, where all the resources and attractions with tourist potential, linked to the Catalan heritage, were collected. Once the resources of the inventory were evaluated, it was proceeded to the selection of the elements and conformation of the itinerary of the excursion, for which a brainstorming session was carried out with the participation of the authors and the experts consulted.

Once the marketing mix variables had been defined, except for the price variable, which was left to be defined together with the travel agency, the product was summarized in a CANVAS model. The model allowed the authors to better understand the implementation of the product.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Phase 1: Study of the environment

Behavior of Catalan tourist flows to Cuba

For the design of this travel-type tourism product, the study of the travel patterns of Catalan tourists to Cuba was of vital importance. This analysis made it possible to forecast the potential of the demand segment to which the offer is directed, the months of greatest interest to establish different commercial strategies, in addition to being an important indicator to characterize the demand.

Figure 1 shows the behavior of Catalan tourist arrivals at the Caribbean island since 2022, when 6,042 visitors arrived according to the National Institute of Statistics of Spain. In 2023, 5,660 arrived, which represents a significant decrease. For the first eight months of 2024, which represent the most updated data available up to the date of the research, 3135 visitors were registered cumulatively, a figure that is lower than in previous years, up to the same period. There is a clear downward trend. This phenomenon can be interpreted because there has not been any type of commercial strategy specifically aimed at this market. The creation of products that extol the cultural heritage, linked to the Catalan footprint in Havana, although it will not revolutionize the behavior so far, it does represent the first effort, to our knowledge, made to capture this market, at least through a specialized offer.

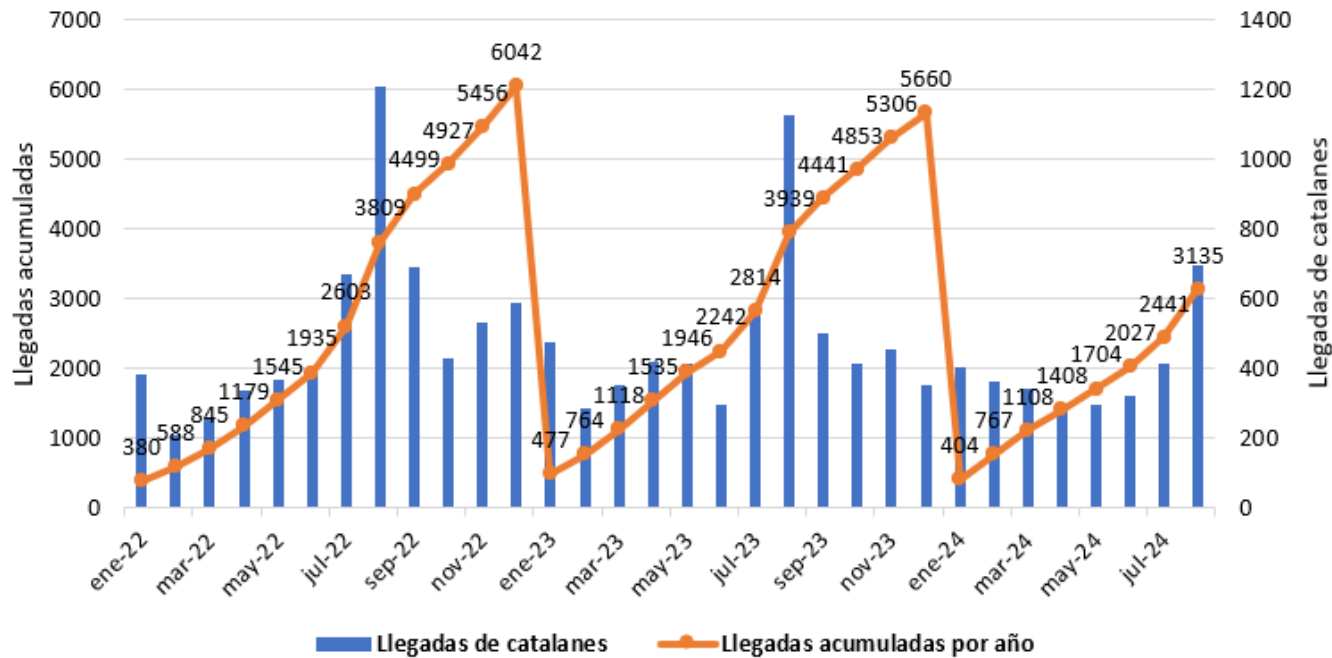


Figure 1. Behavior of Catalan visitors by months in the period 2022-2024

Source: Own elaboration based on data from the Spanish National Institute of Statistics

It is also interesting to analyze which are the months with the highest arrival of Catalan tourists, so that special offers can be offered and different marketing tools can be applied to increase these tourist flows. As can be seen in the previous figure, the summer months are the ones with the greatest movement of Catalans to the island, mainly during the month of August, where a large peak can be seen. Figure 1 shows that the behavior of arrivals responds to a marked seasonality, with peaks in the months of July-September and lows in February-June.

It is important to highlight that, beyond the potential or not of the segment for the destination, this product highlights and proposes to recover a cultural heritage that has an incalculable value for the idiosyncrasy of the nation. At the same time, it promises to benefit the development of the communities where it will be developed, within a sustainable development model.

Potential demand

Most visitors to Havana's Historic Center have a marked cultural profile. It is mostly a short-stay tourism in the destination, since it shares the visit with other sites and modalities. The average stay is short and there are a large number of excursionists who only spend a few hours there (Arceo

Martínez et al., 2021). This shows the importance of maintaining a varied and innovative offer that is highly coherent with demand in order to avoid the risks of a low rate of repeat visits and average stay.

A current trend in tourist demand is the search for unique experiences instead of conventional tourist attractions. In addition, it is interesting to note that European tourists (Spanish, Italian, German and English) show a tendency to repeat cultural experiences in Havana's Historic Center, which makes them segments of high interest (Cruz Sosa & Lam González, 2020; Pérez Rives & Echarri Chávez, 2021).

In this sense, taking into account the characteristics of the tourists that visit this tourist area and in correspondence with the characteristics of the product it is proposed to design, other potential segments for the excursion are identified as: specialists in cultural and heritage studies interested in delving deeper into the Catalan footprint, as well as cultural tourists interested in experiencing exotic products. This is due to the segment's own needs, as well as the fact that these characteristics coincide with some of the current visitors to the destination.

Another important segment identified arises as a result of the Ruta y Andares project, headed by the OHCH. The main objective of this project is to bring the Cuban family closer to the historical-cultural heritage treasured in the Historic Center. For this reason, the value proposition of the excursion to be designed is perfectly articulated with the objectives of the project and, therefore, it is proposed as a strategic objective to be inserted within the proposals of Rutas y Andares, thus reaching the Cuban family.

Macro-environment analysis

Political: Within the political framework, Cuba is currently on the list of countries sponsoring terrorism and, in addition, faces an intensified and historic economic blockade imposed by the government of the United States. This panorama has a direct influence on tourism, due to severe travel restrictions and economic penalties. Despite this, tourism in Cuba has become one of the most important economic sectors. This is supported by state policies that allow greater attention to the development of the activity. These policies are reflected in the guidelines approved by the 7th Congress of the Communist Party of Cuba, where special attention is focused on increasing the country's competitiveness in the world tourism market through the diversification of the tourism offer in general, with the creation of new products and the achievement of a coherent quality-price ratio.

Guideline No. 260 stipulates the creation of complementary offers to lodging that distinguish the country, prioritizing the development of the following modalities: health tourism, marinas and nautical tourism, golf and real estate, adventure and nature tourism, theme parks, cruises, history, culture and heritage, conventions, congresses and fairs, among others (Pinto Delgado, 2023).

On the other hand, the management model of Cuban heritage cities (in this case the Historic Center of Havana) is composed of two public entities: the Local Body of People's Power which, in its national, provincial or municipal demarcation, is vested with the highest authority for the exercise of state functions and to promote the development of its territory, for which it coordinates and controls the execution of the policy, programs and plans approved by the higher organs of the State and the OHCH or the Conservator, which ensure the preservation, conservation, heritage restoration and cultural, social, physical and economic development in a sustainable manner in the Prioritized Areas for Conservation under its jurisdiction, endorsed in Decree 346 of the Council of Ministers of 2018. Both have as fundamental premises: consolidating cultural heritage as an engine for development, promoting cultural diversity and reinforcing local identity, and maintaining the human being as the fundamental subject of the work (Echarri Chávez et al., 2019).

Economic: The country, in 2024, was going through a difficult economic situation. As a result of the global pandemic, economic recovery has been slow and key sectors of the economy have faced very complex scenarios. One of these sectors is tourism, which is considered the locomotive of the Cuban economy (García et al., 2021). According to data from the National Bureau of Statistics and Information, in 2023 Cuba received 1 666 998 arrivals of non-resident international visitors, which represents 468 627 visitors more than in 2022, but far from the 4 683 655 that arrived in 2018. As of August 2024, Cuba had registered a total of 1 608 078 visitors, representing 96, 46% over the total number of visitors received the previous year; it was expected by the end of the current year, to reach 3 500 000 visitors. In this context of slow recovery of tourism, it is evident the need to implement strategies that allow the total recovery of one of the most important economic sectors of the country.

In addition to this complicated context, there is a group of economic phenomena through which the country has gone through (monetary unification, dollarization of the currency, bankarization, new openings to the private sector) that have not yet found the desired results by the governmental leadership, and which is reflected in high levels of inflation, speculation and other economic and social phenomena (Hidalgo de los Santos, 2022). This situation directly affects the Historical Center

of the City of Havana, from the reduction of investments in social projects, restoration, creation of entrepreneurship, investment in tourism, among others. This is evident, for example, in several of the city's streets and buildings that present a high degree of deterioration, insufficient road signs, dirt in streets and squares, poor lighting on roads and in some monuments and significant buildings, insufficient variety of products in stores, etc. (Arceo Martínez et al., 2021).

Sociocultural: The Historical Center of the City of Havana is a tourist area recognized worldwide and declared a World Heritage Site by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization since 1982. One of the characteristics that allow it to hold that category is the high conservation of its historical attractions, which also have a high patrimonial value. Most of these resources are linked to the Spanish heritage, with its various ethnic groups, including the Catalan, during the periods of colonial domination.

To a large extent, this has been the result of the implementation of a tourism development model focused on the integral and self-financed rehabilitation of heritage, reinvesting tourism profits in local projects and social programs. This project has resulted in the recovery of numerous properties.

In this regard, Robert Beatón et al. (2021) and Echarri Chávez et al. (2021) state that 95% of residents recognize the importance of tourism for the development of the Historic Center as high to very high; they also recognize how much it has improved the quality of life of the community in the destination. They add that tourism in the destination contributes 30% of the annual rehabilitation program's sustenance and the income generated by the sector in the community has made possible the reactivation of local entrepreneurship, with the existence of almost 1,000 businesses linked to the tourist activity. Culture is the central axis of the program, which is developed in an area of high heritage value, but always for the benefit of the local population (Echarri Chávez et al., 2019; Levrand, 2019)

Technological: 15 years ago, the OHCH began its digital transformation strategy to use new technologies to facilitate the lives of the inhabitants of Old Havana and benefit the hundreds of thousands of people who visit the capital's Historic Center every year (Labañino et al., 2021; Pérez Rives & Echarri Chávez, 2021). This project aims to create a competitive smart destination in line with current trends. In addition, it represents a necessary qualitative leap that will allow offering better services to tourists and local citizens, achieving higher satisfaction rates.

On the other hand, one of the shortcomings perceived in the destination is that tourism management entities do not sufficiently use information and communication technologies in the marketing and promotion of the cultural offer.

It is important to add that, although the country is not developed in terms of new technologies, one of the measures applied in recent years that has been increasingly implemented in the tourism sector is payment by electronic means. The use of electronic channels, based on the digitalization of the operations carried out by the banking system, was one of the measures taken to favor the process of bankarization of the country. Within the technological modernization process, it is intended to give priority to technological channels, since the ATM network service in the country is not efficient. This possibility is incorporated by the payment gateways Transfermóvil, Enzona or the Points of Sale Terminals.

Environmental: Cuba is promoting the development of sustainable tourism in order to reconcile the interests of economic growth with the improvement of living conditions. However, it is crucial to incorporate more policies that encourage the collection of raw materials and recycling of solid waste in general, through the creation of centers specialized in these activities in their various modalities. In addition, the environmental culture among residents is currently deficient, which contributes to the littering of streets and squares. This is an aspect that should be considered and improved in the future because it directly influences the quality of life of residents and the level of satisfaction of visitors.

Microenvironment analysis

Rivalry among existing competitors: It is currently evaluated as low; as the threat of competitors is not observed since there is no knowledge of any company or travel agencies (AA.VV.) planning to make a similar product, which provides the same benefits for customers. Only one website was found that offers a guided tour on Catalan architecture in Havana, specifically on modernism.

Entry of potential competitors: Evaluated as medium. The Historic Center of Havana, thanks to the management of the OHCH, has carried out an arduous restoration of its cultural heritage. On several occasions, resources have been recovered and are now part of the excursions offered by the AA.VV. that market the destination. As these projects continue to develop, the competitiveness of the destination increases, along with the diversity of offers and products. In addition, the destination is not only promoted through the state-run AA.VV., but the local inhabitants themselves act as tour

guides on their own, designing products that enjoy great acceptance among foreign visitors. However, the supply of tourist excursions is still limited, and when a new product emerges, it is usually adopted or partially adapted by other companies. It should be added that the Catalan heritage is perceptible from different influences (art, architecture, pharmaceuticals, politics, history, traditions) and around the country. It is considered that, at present, it is not sufficiently exploited for tourism, although this does not indicate that in the future it will be taken advantage of in the creation of new travel products, which would potentially increase the competition with the excursion to be designed.

Negotiating power of suppliers: For the design of an excursion, more than suppliers, strategic organizations are identified that allow the tourist travel product to be offered. In this case, it refers to those institutions such as museums, local government agencies that allow the processing of permits necessary for the development of the activity, the OHCH for the active development of necessary historical research, the Sociedad de Beneficencia de Naturales de Cataluña, Faculty of Arts and Letters of the University of Havana; as well as the local community, among others. The substitution of any of these actors is impossible due to the functions they perform and, therefore, it is determined that they have a high bargaining power.

Buyers' bargaining power: As already defined, the segments to which the tourism product will be directed are Catalan citizens (this being the target segment), academic researchers who may be interested in the topic, other segments that are attracted by exotic experiences and cultural enrichment, and the Cuban family. Since the target segment identified is very specialized and in terms of volume does not represent large numbers, it is expected that the negotiating power of the clients will be very high, since there are not many commercial alternatives. To counteract the effects of this influence, it is necessary to carry out, prior to the design of the excursion, an exhaustive study of the demand to identify the benefits that motivate these segments to travel.

Substitute products: There has been a notable increase in the number of cultural products throughout the country, due to the boost given to cultural tourism. The travel tourism product, in this case, can be seen reflected in numerous excursions and tours around the Historic Center, offered by several AA. VV. For example, the agency Viajes Cubanacán, Cubatur, Havanatur and San Cristóbal de La Habana itself offer several excursions, as well as city tours, both panoramic and walking tours of the Historic Center, which highlight its cultural heritage. Among them: the excursion My Colonial Havana, City tour Havana, Panoramic tour of Old Havana, Havana tours in antique cars, among others. In

addition, every year new offers are launched by private agencies that could be detrimental to the successful development of the proposed excursion.

Phase 2: Conceptualization

During this phase, data associated with the characteristics of the demand were obtained from the opinions expressed by the 74 respondents. Table 3 shows the data obtained after the segmentation of demand, which made it possible to identify four clusters.

After having analyzed the four clusters, the authors decided to define the first two as target demand segments. This is justified by the attractiveness analysis: they are the most representative and also have the same expectations regarding the Catalan footprint and expect several benefits in common. Based on this, and contrasting with the benefits sought by the rest of the segments of interest identified, it is determined that the design of the excursion should be directed in such a way as to highlight the different resources and attractions linked to the architectural styles related to the Catalan footprint in Havana and the gastronomic influence. Likewise, an itinerary should be designed to allow visitors to enjoy the Catalan heritage in depth and offer the opportunity to strengthen ties with the local community. It should be kept in mind that these segments are highly educated and should therefore be offered a highly specialized service.

Table 3. Profile of identified segments

Cluster	N.1	N.2	N.3	N.4
Sample size	34	20	10	10
They previously traveled to Cuba	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
They independently organized trips	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
They travel alone	Yes	No	No	Yes
They hire services from AA.VV.	No	Yes	Yes	No

They have a university education	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Conformed mainly by sex visitors:	Female	Male	Male	Female
Ages	41 - 51	41 - 51	+52	30 - 50
Enjoying gastronomy	Very important	Very important	Somewhat interested	----
Appreciating architecture	Very important	Very important	Somewhat interested	Somewhat interested
Quality- price ratio money	Very important	----	----	----
Engaging with the community	Very important	Important	----	Somewhat interested
Making use of the most of time	Important	----	----	----
Take time to enjoy the experience	Very important	Important	----	----
Enjoying the bars	----	Important	----	----

Source: Own elaboration

Phase 3: Configuration design

Product: As can be seen in table 4, the Cataluña in Havana product was divided into a one-day program consisting of two excursions. One of them, focused on Havana's intramural attractions and the other focused on Havana outside the city walls. The decision is based on the great distance to be covered by the clients in order to be able to cover both sections. It does not mean that the entire tour cannot be done, but in order to make the tour more accessible, and based on the criteria issued by the potential demand, the division is made. As shown in the table, both tours have the same objective and theme, which justifies the above decision. The way in which the excursions are

distributed offers enough time for clients who wish to be on both tours to enjoy lunch (which can be arranged by the travel agency or be at the client's free choice).

Table 4. Technical data sheet of the excursions

Excursion name	Estimated time	Schedule
1. Excursion Cataluña in Havana from within the city walls	2:30 hours	10:00 am - 12:30 am
2. Excursion Cataluña in Havana outside the city walls	1:35 hours	2:00 pm - 3:35 pm
General objective		
To exalt the heritage linked to the Catalan footprint in Havana, based on the links of the Catalan emigration and its influence on Havana's culture.		
Subject of the tour		
The links of the Catalan immigration with the architectural and historical heritage of Havana as one of the most outstanding examples within the economic, political and cultural spectrum of the 19th century in the city.		
Designed for 12 - 15 pax		
Marketing agency: San Cristóbal de La Habana		

Source: Own elaboration

From this, the presence of a guide trained in heritage interpretation, with a perfect command of the Catalan language, as well as a command of different languages as a basic requirement of any tour guide, are identified as indispensable resources for the development of the excursion. In addition, it is important to alert clients that they should stay well hydrated during the tour.

It should be noted that the itinerary of the excursion includes those sites that, according to the authors' criteria, could be of greater interest to visitors (Tables 5 and 6). This does not mean that other resources linked to the Catalan footprint, along the Historical Center, could be integrated during the tour, if the guide so considers, with the aim of achieving a personalized service and customer satisfaction. It should be noted that it would be pertinent to create a project that links the Sociedad de Beneficencia de Naturales de Cataluña, when it reopens its doors, the Catalan Chair and the

descendants of Catalans on the island with the development of activities that could be included in the excursions.

Table 5. Contents of the Cataluña excursion in Havana from within the city walls

Schedule	Description of activities
10:00 am - 10:15 am	The tour begins in La plaza de Armas, the place of origin and foundation of La Habana. From here they go to the surrounding of El Castillo de la Real Fuerza, where they can gaze at El Castillo de los Tres Reyes Magos del Morro and La Bahía de la Habana. It is explained that this was the first vision the Catalan arrivers had when arriving in Havana. It is a good moment to explain the importance of Havana port in the trade between Spain and America, where Cataluña played a crucial role in these commercial relations
Travel to the next point: 5 minutes	
10:20 am - 10:30 am	At the Botica de Santa Rita, visitors will learn about what was one of the most important pharmacies in Havana during the colonial period, founded by the illustrious Catalan Don Pedro Sanfeliu. In addition, links will be established between the pharmacy and the present-day Catalan casal, which was the driving force behind the later emergence of the latter.
Travel to the next point: 5 minutes	
10:35 am - 10:45 am	At Hostal Valencia they will appreciate a characteristic construction of the 18th century, with the rooms distributed around the central courtyard and a backyard surrounded by galleries that allow communication between the different areas of the house. The connection with the Catalan imprint will be shown through the Samá family, owner of the establishment and one of the most influential families of the second half of the 19th century.
Travel to the next point: 2 minutes	
10:47 am - 11:07 am	The next destination is the Plaza de San Francisco de Asís, home to the Lonja del Comercio. This historic place played a crucial role in Havana's commerce and also witnessed the presence of Catalan merchants. The figure of Catalan Narciso Maciá Domenech is highlighted, as the first president of the Lonja del Comercio and, in addition, linked to the Barraqué family, one of the wealthiest Catalan families of his

	time, through his marriage to María Ana Barraqué Adué. After the explanation, the client is given 10 minutes of free time to take pictures and explore the square.
Travel to the next point: 8 minutes	
11:15 am - 11:25 am	The group is directed to the Cueto Palace, which stands out as a significant and best-preserved example of Catalan Art Nouveau in the city. It is also considered the first work that introduced the "Catalan style" in Havana (1905). Once the explanation is finished, a group photo is taken from the front of the building, which offers a wonderful view. This photo is sent to the clients who wish to receive it at the end of the tour as a digital gift.
Movement to the next point: 2 minutes	
11:27 am - 11:45 am	The tour continues to the Plaza Vieja where it will briefly explained the history of how one of the most important markets of the city arose, housing many Catalan businesses, including the Romagosa family, very wealthy at the time, mainly thanks to the trade of tropical fruits. At the end of the explanation they will have 5 minutes of free time to take pictures of the square and explore the surroundings.
Travel to the next point: 10 minutes	
11:55 am - 12:10 am	The tour continues along Teniente Rey Street until arriving at La Reunión Pharmacy. Here the clients will receive an explanation of the characteristics of the pharmacy and the influence of the Sarrá family in Cuba. Here it will be explained how the owners managed to own the whole block around and boast what would be at the time the largest pharmacy in Latin America. After the explanation, the clients are directed to the next point through Teniente Rey Street, where they will be able to continue seeing different establishments that have the Sarrá family's surname.
Travel to the next point: 10 minutes	
11:20 am - 12:30 am	Once in the place, it is presented to the Plaza del Cristo, site that housed several famous Catalan tobacco warehouses and its relationship with prominent figures such as Juan Conill, the first tobacco warehouseman in branch and also mentor of many important Cuban tobaccoists as the case of the Catalans Jaime Partagás and José Gener.

Source: Own elaboration

Table 6. Contents of the Cataluña excursion in Havana outside the city walls

Schedule	Description of activities
2:00 pm - 2:10 pm	The initial stop of this tour will be in front of the Bacardi building, which was the headquarters of the renowned liquor brand founded by the Catalan Facundo Bacardi Massó. Here the history that gave birth to this brand and to the Bacardi family will be unveiled, and the unique architecture of the building will be explained, describing the meanings and symbolisms contained in its structure.
Move to the next point: 5 minutes	
2:15 pm - 2:25 pm	The next place to visit is the Floridita Bar. Here the story of Constantí Ribalaigua Vert and El Floridita will be told. This Catalan was the owner of the bar that would be considered one of the best in the world. He is also famous for his reinterpretation of the daiquiri drink, with which he made his customers fall in love, among them the Nobel Prize-winning American writer Ernest Hemingway.
Travel to the next point: 10 minutes	
2:35 am - 2:45 pm	The next destination is the Alicia Alonso Theater, formerly the Tacón Theater. Here it will be taken the opportunity to explain the history of an important Catalan personality: Francisco Marty Torrens, who was the one who built the theater at the time. Taking advantage of the central position of the place, and just a few meters from the currently being restored Payret Theater, the links of this theater with the tragic story of its founder, the Catalan Joaquín Payret, will be explained.
Travel to the next point: 10 minutes	
2:55 pm - 3:05 pm	The Capitol of Cuba is presented as one of the most majestic and iconic structures in Cuba. In addition, it is mentioned how it is currently the seat of the Cuban parliament. From this brief introduction, it is explained that Cuba has left a wide influence in the politics of Cataluña and its independence movement. The first Catalan constitution is given as an example, which was called the constitution of Havana, since it was signed in this same place. Also, the similarities between both flags, the flag of Cuba and the flag of Cataluña, are explained.
Travel to the next point: 10 minutes	

3:15 pm - 3:25 pm	The group is then directed to the back of the Capitol, where the Partagás Tobacco Factory is located. Although it is no longer in operation, it still maintains its original facade. In front of it, stories will be told about this factory and about the family that gave it its name, Partagás.
Move to the next point: 1 minute	
3:26 pm - 3:35 pm	Calle Barcelona is the last destination of the tour, located in the immediate vicinity of the factory. Here a small Gaudi-style park is shown, which is located halfway down the street. Taking advantage of the name of the place, the guide ends the tour, explaining how the Catalan footprint has led them to the Cataluña of Havana.

Source: Own elaboration

Distribution: It is defined that the AA.VV. marketing the present excursion should be San Cristóbal de La Habana because it is recognized as a Cuban receptive agency specialized in historical-cultural and patrimonial tourism. In addition, the OHCH is included as a key partner for the commercialization of the product through its project Rutas y Andares, which has several points located within the tourist area such as museums or other sites of affluence of a large culture-loving public.

Promotion: Based on the characteristics of the demand identified in the segmentation stage, the strategy is defined as promotion for foreign tourists, mainly through social networks. This is determined on the basis of the autonomy that clients have to organize their trips and the low dependence on travel agencies. A web page will be created, linked to the San Cristóbal travel agency in order to make reservations, dedicated to disseminating Catalan history and heritage on the island, mainly through blogs. In addition, profiles will be created on Instagram and Facebook networks, as they are the most widely used in the world with access to Cuba. In these profiles, educational content will be published about Cuba and the Catalan footprint, information for making reservations, answers to possible questions, content referring to the excursions themselves and the experiences of customers. All of the above actions will complement the various promotional campaigns carried out by OHCH and Rutas y Andares, but this time with a focus more on the Cuban family.

Also, links will be established with the chair of Catalan of the Faculty of Arts and Letters of the University of Havana and the Sociedad de Beneficencia de Naturales de Cataluña for the development of joint activities in order to disseminate the Catalan footprint to students and the national segment in general.

Figure 2 shows the business model to which the design and implementation of the product responds and which the authors will use as a guide to explain the project to investors interested in carrying it out.

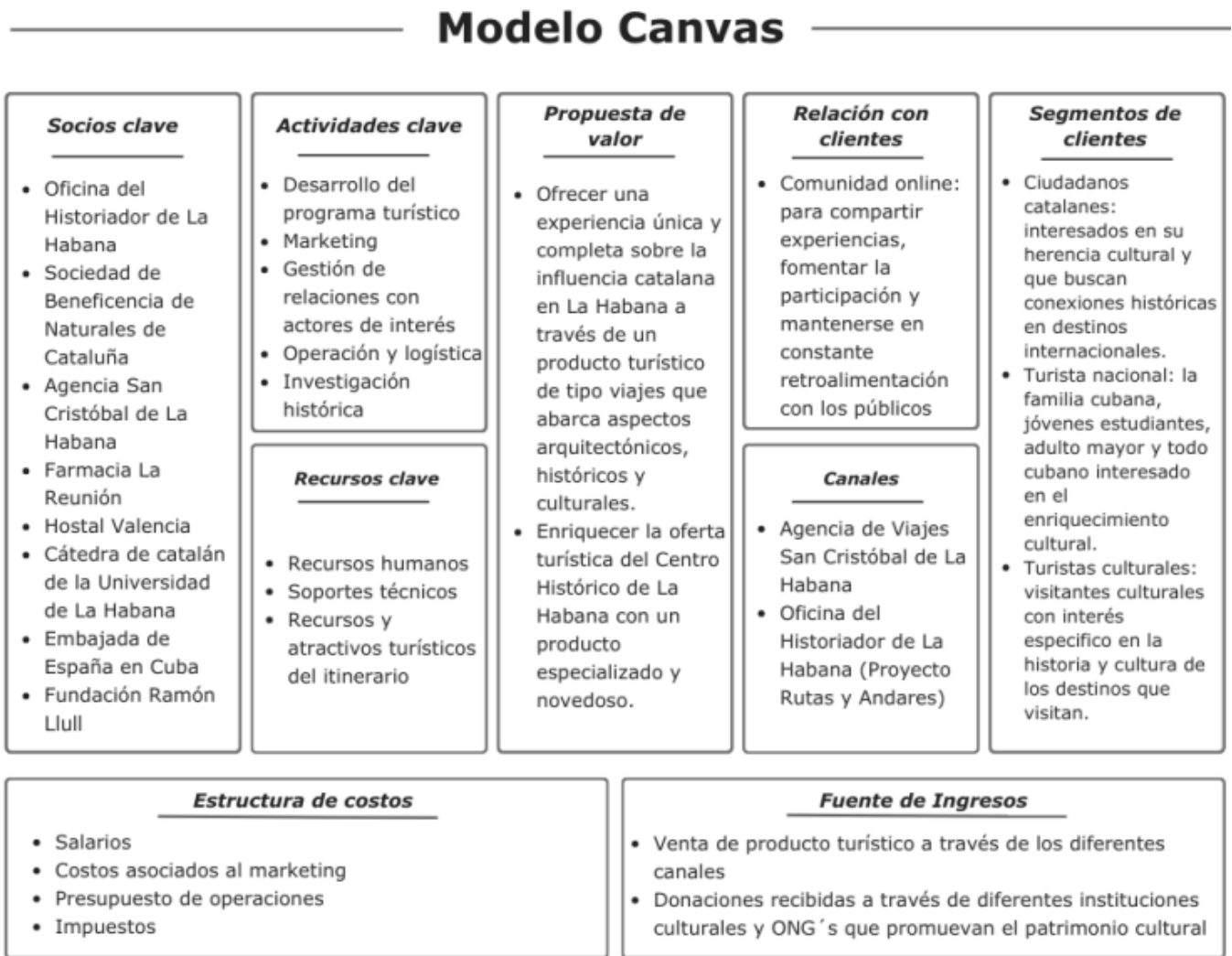


Figure 2. CANVAS Model
Source: Own elaboration

Taking into account the above elements, it can be stated that the research made it possible to identify and document various resources and tourist attractions linked to the Catalan heritage in Havana's Historic Center. These resources not only have a high patrimonial value, but also represent a significant opportunity to diversify the tourist offer of the territory. A specialized tourist itinerary was

designed that includes visits to sites of Catalan historical and cultural interest in Havana. This itinerary is based on a detailed analysis of available resources and is adjusted to the expectations and preferences of Catalan tourists.

Despite the existence of substitute products in the area, the designed excursion has an added value in that it brings together the history of a culture that contributed so much to the evolution of the territory. In addition, if implemented, it will allow to revalue it and put the resident population in contact with visitors to the tourist area. The project not only enriches Havana's tourist offer, but also fosters the development of a more diversified and sustainable cultural tourism. In this way, the destination is positioned not only as a cultural reference, but also as an example of how tourism can be an element that energizes local development, moving towards a more equitable and resilient tourism model.

It is important to point out that the product designed is taken as a basis for the development of a joint project between several actors (University-Business), in order to identify unsatisfied needs in terms of cultural tourism in Havana, and thus diversify the current offer. At the same time, it will be possible to generate income to revitalize the cultural heritage of Havana and generate economic benefits for the host community.

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Conflict of interest

Authors declare no conflict of interests.

Authors' contribution

Yoan Hernández Flores and Alejandro Montesino Pérez designed the study, analyzed the data and prepared the draft.

Alejandro Montesino Pérez and Joelmi Mariela Ulloa Ferreiro were involved in data collection, analysis and interpretation.

All the authors reviewed the writing of the manuscript and approve the version finally submitted.



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