



**Short Stop, Long Memories in Helsinki: Crafting guided tours for  
cruise ship travelers with a short layover**

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## Abstract

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<p>This product-based thesis delves into the realm of cruise ship tourism in Helsinki, with a particular focus on crafting a tailored guided tour for travelers with limited layover time. Beginning with an introduction that outlines objectives and success criteria, the thesis explores the nuances of cruise ship tourism, emphasizing short layovers and positioning Helsinki as a key destination. This niche exploration highlights an aspect of the tourism industry that is frequently overlooked. It is based on the author's personal interest and insightful findings from her work as a tour guide in Helsinki. The thesis emphasizes the value of customizing guided tours to handle this particular context as it explains the complexities of cruise ship tourism and the difficulties presented by brief layovers. Because of her practical expertise and in-depth knowledge of the local tourism industry, the author offers an in-depth viewpoint that emphasizes this niche's hidden potential. In addition to improving visitor experiences in Helsinki, the thesis seeks to raise the profile of this specific segment within the larger field of tour guide practices by addressing the sometimes-overlooked needs of time-constrained travelers.</p> <p>The development of the touristic product is scrutinized, covering definitions of tourism products and guided tours, alongside discussions on the new product development process, digital marketing plans, and project management. The heart of the thesis lies in the exploration of the author's interest and observations as a tour guide in Helsinki.</p> <p>The central theme, "Short Stop, Long Memories in Helsinki," unfolds in a dedicated chapter. Here, the author introduces the concept of crafting guided tours, elucidating product goals, development processes, and critical considerations. These encompass product levels and features, destination attractions, facilities, services, accessibility, competitor analysis, cost and profit calculations, risk evaluation, and strategic marketing approaches. The final product encapsulates not just theoretical considerations but practical solutions, manifesting in the form of a brochure and detailed itineraries as part of the project proposal.</p> <p>A reflective discussion in another chapter presents key findings and actionable suggestions based on the research. The author shares insights into project success and learning outcomes, contributing a practitioner's perspective to the evolving landscape of tour guide practices in Helsinki.</p> <p>The thesis concludes with a comprehensive reference list and appendices that include valuable resources such as the top tour operators in Helsinki, hypothetical financial figures, and detailed brochures and itineraries for the crafted guided tour. Rooted in personal interest and professional observation, this thesis offers a unique exploration of cruise ship tourism in Helsinki and provides practical insights for tour guides aiming to create memorable experiences for time-constrained travelers.</p>
<b>Key words</b> Cruise ship tourism, Helsinki, short layover, product development

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## 1 Introduction

Cruise ship trips are distinctive and alluring travel experiences that combine luxury, exploration, and cultural immersion in the busy world of international travel. Layovers in port cities offer an appealing opportunity for people who are lucky enough to travel on board these sailing wonders to learn about the diverse culture of the region while they are traveling and discover different treasures.

In other hand, short layovers during cruise ship travels can often leave tourists feeling rushed and limited in exploring the destination. However, with the help of a guided tour, these cruise ship travelers can make the most out of their short layover and create long-lasting memories (Horejsova and Paris, 2013).

And when it comes to treasure hunting discovering, Helsinki, the capital of Finland, stands out as a unique travel destination that invites the exploration with its blend of modernism, heritage, stunning architecture, and exciting cultural scenes.

As cruise tourism adapts to the new reality post-COVID-19 (Auziņa-Emsiņa and Ozoliņa, 2021), innovative solutions are being proposed to enhance the overall experience for travelers (Gouveia and Eusébio, 2019). For example, the suggestion of promoting the niche of cruise tourism with short layovers aligns with the unique charm of Helsinki, offering an intimate and personalized exploration of the city's highlights.

With the Port of Helsinki being the busiest international passenger port in Europe, accommodating 12.2 million passengers in 2019 (Port of Helsinki: passenger traffic 2015-2020, s.a.), Helsinki is well-positioned to cater to the needs of cruise ship travelers with short layovers, which often these travelers have addressed the concerns of feeling uncertain and insecure about exploring independently, this is a very good reason why it is crucial to provide a sense of safety and convenience.

Using reliable sources and guides can help cruise ship travelers maximize their limited time and make informed decisions about the best attractions, activities, and culinary delights to explore during their short stay in Helsinki. Also, by encouraging local businesses to actively participate in the cruise tourism industry, Helsinki can further enhance its economic impacts and provide a memorable experience for cruise ship travelers,

This thesis is a response to the challenge caused by the brief duration of layovers, which promotes turning every minute that passes into an opportunity for meaningful engagement. It aims to create an experience that captures the spirit of Helsinki, a city where each historical site, market stall, and architectural wonder tells an interesting story.

As a tour guide invested in the success and reputation of Helsinki as an outstanding cruise destination, the author personally encountered the challenges of aligning diverse interests, managing time constraints, and providing an authentic experience that resonates with the diverse backgrounds of cruise ship passengers. Through this project, the author aims to contribute valuable insights and practical recommendations for fellow tour guides, travel operators, and stakeholders in the tourism industry, all of whom play a pivotal role in shaping the narratives that unfold during these short stops in Helsinki.

There are two primary sections to the thesis. The first one serves as a theoretical framework for the phases of project planning and the development of new tourism products. Additionally, the fundamentals of the guided tour's cost structure. The new product's features and objectives are described in the second section, along with an in-depth description of the real product development process, risk management, competitor analysis, hypothetical costs and profits, marketing, and commercialization until develop in the proposal of the guided tour. The author has used Visme design tool to create the charts on the figures in this thesis, also has used Cite Them Right Harvard, a tool for creating Harvard style citations for the references that have been consulted. The list of references appears at the end of the thesis before the Appendix section.

“Short Stop, Long memories” seeks to be more than a manual; rather, it aims to serve as a link between theoretical reflection and real-world application. In these pages, the author analyzes the mutually beneficial relationship that exists between the time-starved traveler and the places that temporarily receive them; also delve into the main chore of experiencing tourism, looking far beyond to discover how even brief encounters may profoundly change a traveler's perspective and help them feel more connected to the entire world, and in this specific case: Helsinki, known as the Daughter of the Baltic.

### **1.1 Aim, objectives and success criteria**

This thesis is a product based, which aims to address the distinctive needs of cruise ship travelers with limited time in Helsinki by developing a proposal for these guided tours. The final product will be a brochure (Appendices 3 and 4) and tour itineraries (Appendices 5 and 6) designed by the author using the Visma design tool, based on firsthand observation. The creation of guided tours relies on a solid understanding of the demands of consumers and a tourism business-oriented perspective from the author.

Also, the author intends to draw attention from different stake holders in the tourism industry to position Helsinki as a preferred destination for cruise ship visits, by offering memorable and enriching experiences when adapting to different customers' preferences.

In proposing a guide for cruise ship travelers in Helsinki with a focus on short layovers, the success of the project can be assessed through various indicators that reflect the effectiveness and positive impact of the guided tours. While this thesis is a project proposal, key success measures can be outlined to guide its future evaluation.

Firstly, it's essential to assess the economic influence of guided tours, emphasizing an anticipated surge in expenditure by cruise ship travelers during their brief stopovers. The proposal underscores the potential revenue growth for local establishments such as eateries, stores, and cultural sites, as a direct result of the suggested guided tour itineraries.

Tourist satisfaction surveys can be envisioned to gauge the success of the guided tours. These surveys would be conducted post-tour, seeking feedback on participants' overall satisfaction, perceived value for money, and the quality of the tour guide. Additionally, questions about participants' likelihood to recommend the experience to others could be included to assess the tour's potential word-of-mouth impact.

The proposal of this thesis could also consider utilizing social media platforms to gauge the involvement and emotions associated with the conducted tours. Monitoring favourable feedback, content created by users, and the general online visibility of the tours can act as a measure of how well they draw the interest and enthusiasm of cruise ship passengers.

Furthermore, the proposal could suggest delving into partnerships and collaboration opportunities as a metric for success. It entails gauging the enthusiasm and openness of local businesses, tourism agencies, or cruise companies to cooperate or broaden alliances in line with the suggested guided tours. Fruitful collaboration may serve as evidence of this project's positive reception within the tourism sector.

While at this stage, envisioning success metrics such as community involvement and support can be essential. The proposal may outline plans to assess the degree of involvement and support from the community with the guided tours, considering factors such as residents' perceptions, participation, sustainability, and any positive impact on community well-being. All these key indicators help to provide a roadmap for future evaluation and refinement based on real-world outcomes.

## **2 Cruise ship tourism**

In the last several years, cruise ship tourism has grown significantly as more and more tourists want to take advantage of this distinctive kind of travel. Cruise ship destinations are becoming increasingly important as the industry grows (Bruzzi and Benevolo, 2021). This chapter explores the prospects and difficulties related to cruise ship tourism locations, considering the elements that make them appealing as well as potential problems brought on by a rise in cruise ship traffic.

### **2.1 Overview of cruise ship tourism**

Cruise ship tourism is characterized by the provision of ship-based on-board leisure activities and entertainment, the exploration of various destinations, and the experience of a floating resort environment (Arasli, Saydam and Kilic, 2020). The industry has grown steadily from the 1980s up until the outbreak of COVID-19 at an average annual rate of 7.6%, making it one of the most active parts of the world's tourism industry. Although predominantly concentrated in North America and Europe, international cruise lines continue to explore new markets as well as develop new routes and destinations (Bruzzi and Benevolo, 2021).

Cruise ship tourism has undergone significant transformations, adapting to changing consumer preferences and global events. The industry has witnessed a shift towards experiential travel, with cruise lines offering themed cruises, immersive shore excursions, and onboard activities catering to diverse interests (Papathanassis, 2017). Furthermore, the integration of technology has enhanced the overall cruise experience, from online booking platforms to onboard amenities such as smart cabins and virtual reality entertainment.

Until 2019, cruise tourism was among the fastest-growing sectors in the tourism industry, with high growth expected worldwide. The cruise industry has been characterized by the increasing number of cruise ships, cruise lines, and the emergence of cruise corporations (Dhungana, 2021).

However, the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 has significantly impacted the cruise ship tourism industry (Bruzzi and Benevolo, 2021). The pandemic brought a halt to the growth and operations of cruise ships, leading to a crisis that had profound implications for industry and destinations.

Despite the recent downturn in global economies, cruise ship tourism is still growing faster than most other forms of tourism combined, and it has become one of the most popular, profitable, and cost-effective businesses in the international tourism sector. The growth of cruise tourism has been

described as explosive and phenomenal, with the industry diversifying in terms of destinations, ship design, activities, themes, and the length of trips (Zhang, H. et al., 2022).

Cruise ship tourism has been a subject of interest for researchers in the tourism, hospitality, and regional development fields, leading to a variety of key research themes. Previous studies have delved into the innovation within shipping companies, the impact of cruise ship tourism, and the working conditions of cruise ship employees (Yip, Lau and Kanrak, 2023). However, the academic research in this area is relatively limited compared to other segments of the tourism and hospitality industry, despite the substantial economic contribution of cruise tourism to global economic development (Paoli et al., 2017).

The economic impact of cruise tourism cannot be overstated, with the sector contributing \$2 trillion towards global economic development (Brida and Zapata, 2009). Despite the limited number of studies, it is evident that cruise tourism holds a pivotal role in the prosperity of nations and specific destinations. In the last two decades, researchers have primarily focused on evaluating the expenditures of cruise ship tourists, recognizing the direct and indirect effects on local economies. While this has been a valuable area of study, it is essential to broaden the scope of research to encompass the broader impacts of cruise tourism on local communities, and environmental sustainability (Tiago et al., 2018).

Additionally, the socio-cultural impacts of cruise tourism on local communities have garnered attention in recent research. It is essential to assess how cruise tourism influences the cultural fabric of destinations and the interactions between cruise passengers and local residents (Oe and Nguyen, 2021). Research on this topic has gradually increased, encompassing not only economic and environmental aspects but also sociocultural considerations that require continual analysis, addressing, and monitoring.

The evaluation of the socio-cultural impacts of cruise tourism on locals has also revealed the need for a nuanced understanding of the interactions between tourists and residents (Kovačić and Silveira, 2020). This includes the preservation of local traditions, the potential for cultural exchange, and the potential challenges posed by large influxes of visitors. Furthermore, environmental sustainability (Reckermann et al., 2022) has become an increasingly critical focus within the cruise industry, prompting measures for more sustainable practices and technologies.



## 2.2 Short layovers during cruise ship trips

Cruise ship travel offers a unique experience that allows passengers to escape their daily routines and indulge in luxury (Hwang and Han, 2016). It is characterized by an all-inclusive holiday on a cruise ship with a specific itinerary that calls at several ports or cities (Zhang et al., 2022). They allow passengers to explore different destinations and experience unique cultural activities within a limited time frame. These ports provide opportunities for tourists to explore and experience different destinations during their cruise vacation. Some cruise itineraries include short layovers, typically lasting between 8 to 16 hours, where the ship docks at a port for a brief period of time before continuing its journey to the next destination. During these short layovers, passengers have the chance to disembark and enjoy various activities and attractions in the port city.

Short layovers, or stopover visits, in cruise ship travel play a crucial role in enhancing the overall experience for passengers. These layovers allow passengers to immerse themselves in the local culture, heritage, and attractions of the port city. (Santos, Radicchi and Zagnoli, 2019)

The significance of short layovers in cruise ship travel lies in the unique opportunities they provide for passengers to make the most of their vacation. During short layovers, passengers have the chance to explore new destinations, engage in various activities, and experience the local flavors and customs. This not only adds value to their travel experience but also contributes to the formation of brand prestige for the cruise line. Furthermore, short layovers in cruise ship travel have a positive impact on destination competitiveness. (The Competitiveness of Global Port-Cities: Synthesis Report Edited by Olaf Merk, s.a.) They attract tourists by offering location-specific activities and services that showcase the uniqueness of the port city. These activities and services, such as themed exhibitions, special displays, and visiting iconic landmarks, create a sense of excitement and allure for passengers considering the stopover destination.

These experiences allow passengers to have a taste of the destination and potentially spark an interest to return for a more in-depth visit in the future. In addition, short layovers in cruise ship travel support the growth and development of local economies. (Baixinho, 2016) They create opportunities for passengers to spend money on local businesses, such as restaurants, shops, and tour operators. This infusion of tourism revenue can have a positive impact on the local community, supporting job creation and economic growth. Furthermore, the short rotation calls during cruise ship travels create challenges for the cruise supply chain management.

Gaining insight into the opinions of passengers via surveys and feedback acts as a guide for the continuous improvement of short layovers. It impacts cruise lines' decision-making processes, influencing how itineraries, shore activities, and the overall guest experience are designed (Carciotti, Marin and Ukovich, 2019).

In essence, short layovers in cruise ship travel offer a range of benefits for both passengers and destinations. They are essentially the perfect example of how time, economy, logistics, culture, and sustainability are all tightly integrated together in the travel industry (Rodrigue and Wang, 2020).

### **2.3 Cruise ship tourism destination: Helsinki**

Helsinki, the capital city of Finland, has a rich and fascinating history that has shaped the city into what it is today. From its humble beginnings as a small fishing village in the 16th century to its rise as a major European metropolis, Helsinki has gone through significant transformations throughout the years.

Throughout its history, Helsinki has experienced the influence of various powers, including Sweden and Russia. During its time as part of Sweden, Helsinki developed into an important trading hub and a strategic maritime center. The city underwent further development during the Russian rule, as it became the capital of the Grand Duchy of Finland in 1812, highlighting the city's enduring historical significance (Grabowski, 2017). Under the rule of the Russian Empire, Helsinki saw significant growth and modernization, becoming an important administrative, cultural, and educational center. The unique history of Helsinki, including its status as a grand duchy within the Russian Empire, has played a pivotal role in shaping the city into the modern, developed capital. During this time, grand architectural projects were undertaken, such as the construction of Helsinki Cathedral, Central Railway Station, and Senate Square, which are still iconic landmarks today. ([www.visitfinland.com](http://www.visitfinland.com), s.a.)

During World War I, Finland declared its independence from Russia in 1917. After gaining independence, Helsinki continued to grow and evolve. It became a hub for trade and commerce, with its proximity to the international center of St. Petersburg proving advantageous for business and industry. (Ojanen and Raunio, 2017) Throughout its history, Helsinki has been a city at the crossroads of East and West, influenced by both Swedish and Russian rule before gaining independence.

However, despite the changing powers and influences, Helsinki has managed to preserve its attachment to tradition ([historia.hel.fi](http://historia.hel.fi), 2022). Today, stands as a vibrant and cosmopolitan city, known for its modern architecture, beautiful parks, and thriving cultural scene.

The cruise tourism sector, accounting for approximately 5% of total maritime traffic on the Baltic Sea, has become a vital component of the fast-growing international tourism sector (Reckermann et al., 2021). Helsinki, the capital of Finland, has a long-standing relationship with cruise ship tourism, dating back to the early days of the industry.

Over the years, the city has evolved as a popular port call for numerous cruise lines, attracting tourists from around the world to experience its unique culture, architecture, and picturesque seaside views. As a result, the city has seen significant growth in the number of cruise ships visiting its port, reflecting the broader trends in the global cruise industry (Paananen and Minoia, 2018). Historically, Helsinki has always been a significant trading port due to its strategic location on the Gulf of Finland. According to one source, the modern era of cruise tourism in Helsinki can be traced back to the 1960s when cruises began to emerge as a popular form of leisure travel (My Helsinki, s.a.).

The growth of cruise ship tourism in Helsinki can be attributed to several factors. One factor is the decline in transoceanic ship travel, which coincided with the rise of modern cruises (Kong et al., 2021). During this time, cruise ships became more accessible and affordable for the general public, leading to an increase in demand. Another factor has been the expansion of the international passenger traffic in the port, adding more terminals and renovating old ones.

In 2019, the port recorded a staggering 12.2 million passengers (Statista, s.a.), solidifying its position as the busiest international passenger port in Europe. Even though the current trend is positive—in 2022, there were 8.1 million passengers at the Port of Helsinki (2021: 3.7 million). Reaching the passenger volumes seen prior to the COVID-19 pandemic in liner traffic is anticipated to take two to three years (Port of Helsinki Annual Report 2022, s.a.).

It can be mentioned as another factor for the continuous growth of cruise tourism in Helsinki, as well as globally, is the response of cruise lines to the desires and expectations of their customers (Ćorluka, Peronja and Tubić, 2020). Cruise lines have continually embraced innovation in ship size, design, amenities, and itineraries, as well as the development of new cruise ports to enhance the overall passenger experience. Helsinki's status as a thriving cruise tourism destination reflects the broader trend of cruising becoming an increasingly competitive and dynamic sector within the tourism industry. With the availability of ship-based leisure activities and a diverse array of sightseeing attractions in port cities, cruising has become a favored choice for travelers seeking unique and memorable recreational experiences and Helsinki is not the exception.

The city's strategic location on the Gulf of Finland, coupled with its architectural gems along the waterfront, contributes to its appeal as a unique and attractive cruise destination, due to its accessibility while traveling to other destinations close by like Tallinn, Estonia, or Stockholm, Sweden; Helsinki lies somehow in between, which is the perfect motivation to embark and take the advantage of a short trip.

Helsinki truly has become a beacon in the cruise ship tourism industry, attracting travelers with its unique blend of Nordic charm, modern sophistication, and a commitment to sustainable tourism. As cruise ships dock along the quays of this vibrant city, passengers are welcomed into an experience that transcends the conventional, offering a journey through time, culture, and natural beauty.

### **3 Development of the touristic product**

Touristic product development is a crucial aspect of the tourism industry, as it plays a vital role in designing attractive and enticing offerings for travelers. By creating unique and appealing touristic products, destinations can effectively cater to the diverse interests and preferences of travelers, ultimately enhancing their overall visitor experience. This chapter covers various aspects of touristic product development, including the conceptualization, planning, and implementation stages. Also discusses the key factors that need to be considered when developing touristic products, such as market demand, sustainability, cultural authenticity, and value for money (Vareiro and Mendes, 2019). Additionally, it will examine the strategies and approaches that destinations can adopt to ensure the successful development of touristic products.

#### **3.1 Definition of tourism product**

There are many definitions about what is a touristic product and its characteristics, but, surely one of the most complete definitions is the one proposed by Dimitris Koutoulas: “The tourist product is defined as the total bundle of functionally interdependent tangible and intangible elements that enables the tourist on the one hand to engage in a specific activity at one or at several consecutive destinations and on the other hand to facilitate the transition to the destination(s) and the social reproduction during the trip” (Koutoulas, 2015).

Also, another definition that complements the previous one is the one proposed by the UNWTO (World Tourism Organization): “Tourism Product is a combination of tangible and intangible elements, such as natural, cultural and man-made resources, attractions, facilities, services and activities around a specific center of interest which represents the core of the destination marketing mix and creates an overall visitor experience including emotional aspects for the potential customers” (UNWTO, s.a.).

Lastly, one of the concepts of tourism product which is most acceptable worldwide is the one proposed by the famous marketers Kotler, Bowen, Makens and Baloglu: “A product is anything that can be offered to a market for attention, acquisition, use, or consumption that might satisfy a want or need. It includes physical objects, services, places, organizations, and ideas” (Kotler et al., 2017).

Tourism product components refer to the various elements and factors that make up the overall experience and offerings of a tourism destination (Lemy and Kusumo, 2019). These components play a crucial role in attracting tourists and ensuring a memorable experience for them. Understanding these components is essential for destination managers and tourism professionals to effectively plan and develop their offerings.

Smith introduced his tourism product model through five elements; physical plant, services, hospitality, freedom of choice and involvement (Smith, cited by Janhunen, 2014).

The first component is the *physical plant*, which includes the infrastructure and facilities that support tourism activities (Smith, 1994 cited in Gyimothy, 2000). This can include accommodation options such as hotels, resorts, and vacation rentals, as well as transportation systems like airports, roads, and railways. The physical plant also encompasses natural attractions such as beaches, mountains, and national parks, which are often key draws for tourists.

The second component is *service*, which refers to the hospitality and customer service provided to tourists (Gyimothy, 2000). This includes the quality and professionalism of staff in hotels, restaurants, tour operators, and other tourism-related businesses.

The third component is *hospitality*, which goes hand in hand with service. Hospitality encompasses the warmth and welcoming nature of the local community towards tourists. This can include cultural exchange, interactions with local residents, and the general atmosphere of the destination. A hospitable environment can make tourists feel more comfortable and connected to the place they are visiting (Janhunen, 2014).

The fourth component is *freedom of choice*, which refers to the range of options available to tourists. Tourists should have the freedom to choose from a variety of activities, attractions, accommodations, and dining options (Janhunen, 2014). This diversity enables them to customize their experience and cater to their individual preferences and interests.

The fifth component is *involvement*, which refers to the level of engagement and participation that tourists have in the destination. They may have opportunities to interact with locals, take part in cultural activities or festivals, and contribute to the local economy through their purchases and support of local businesses. These components, both tangible and intangible, work together to create a unique and memorable tourism product. In addition, the tourism product also includes attractions, accessibility, amenities, ancillary services, activities, and available package tours (Arcana and Febianti, 2018).

In summary, the tourism product is a combination of various components such as the physical plant, service, hospitality, freedom of choice, and involvement (Karakuş, 2019). All these works together to create a satisfying and memorable experience for tourists.

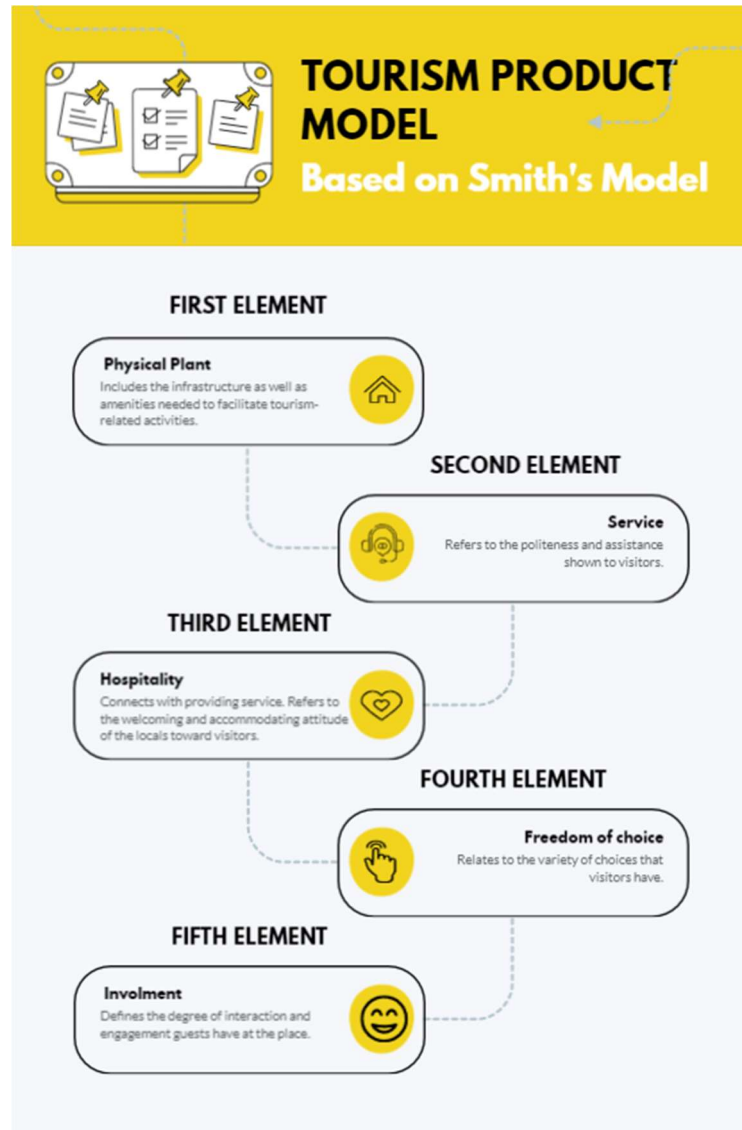


Figure 1. Adaptation of Smith's model for the generic tourism product (Smith, cited by Janhunen, 2014).

An additional crucial component of the product concept is the product level. These levels help to understand the various layers of a tourism product and how they can be offered to customers effectively. The different levels of tourism products are typically categorized into five levels, including the core product, the basic product, the expected product, the augmented product, and the potential product (Kotler cited by Beresecká, Hudáková and Hamadová, 2018).

Philip Kotler's Five Product Level Model is a comprehensive framework that delineates the various layers of a product, extending beyond its tangible form to encompass the augmented attributes that enhance its value (Kotler et al., 2015). At the core of this model lies the fundamental product,

representing the physical embodiment and functional features of the offering. It constitutes the basic attributes that satisfy the core needs of the consumer, serving as the foundation upon which the other levels are built.

Moving outward, the second level encompasses the expected product, encapsulating the standard features and qualities that consumers anticipate when making a purchase. Meeting these expectations becomes crucial for maintaining customer satisfaction and loyalty (Kotler et al., 2015). Beyond mere functionality, consumers seek a certain level of predictability in terms of performance and reliability.

Ascending further in the model, the third level introduces the augmented product, which encompasses additional elements that go beyond the essential functionalities (Kotler et al., 2015). These could include features such as warranties, customer service, and packaging components that enhance the overall consumer experience and contribute to the perceived value of the product.

The fourth level, the potential product, explores the realm of possibilities and innovations that could be incorporated in the future (Kotler et al., 2015). It involves anticipating and adapting to emerging trends, technologies, and consumer preferences. This perspective allows businesses to stay relevant and competitive by continuously evolving their offerings.

At the top of Kotler's model is the fifth level, the core product. This transcendent level delves into the intangible aspects of the product, such as the emotional and psychological benefits it provides to the consumer (Kotler et al., 2015). It encapsulates the deeper, more profound satisfaction that arises from owning or using the product, addressing not just functional needs but also the emotional and aspirational dimensions of consumer desires.

In essence, Kotler's Five Product Level Model serves as a strategic framework for businesses to holistically approach product development and marketing, ensuring that they cater to the diverse and evolving needs of consumers across different dimensions, ultimately fostering long-term success and customer loyalty (Kotler et al., 2015).



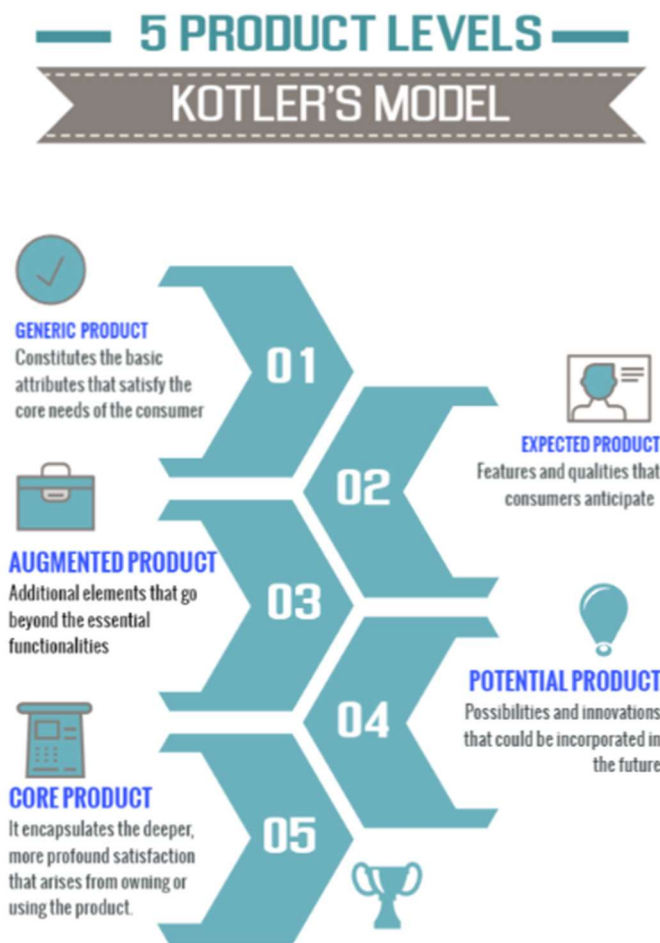


Figure 2. Kotler's Five Product Levels Model (Kotler et al., 2015)

Understanding these levels is crucial for tourism businesses to create and offer products that cater to the evolving needs and preferences of customers, ultimately leading to a more satisfying and memorable tourist experience (Haid and Albrecht, 2021).

### 3.2 Definition of guided tour

In the realm of tourism, a guided tour is a carefully planned and organized excursion that takes individuals or groups of travelers to various destinations. These tours are led by knowledgeable and experienced tour guides who provide informative commentary, facilitate activities, and ensure the smooth operation of the tour (Häkkinen et al., 2016).

Guided tours can be of different types (Thomson, 2018), catering to diverse interests and preferences. For those seeking cultural immersion, there are guided tours that focus on historical sites, museums, and local traditions. These tours provide a deeper understanding of the destination's cultural heritage and allow travelers to interact with local communities. On the other hand, adventure enthusiasts can opt for guided tours that offer thrilling activities such as hiking, zip-lining, or rafting. The main purpose of a guided tour is to enhance the travel experience by providing valuable insights, context, and expertise that may not be easily accessible to independent travelers.

Guided tours are an integral part of the services offered by cruise companies. These guided tours encompass various activities such as adventures, general tours, landscape and seascape tours, heritage tours, wildlife tours, and cultural tours (Kundra et al., 2022). These tours are managed by specialist local tour operators and marketed as packages that include on-site transportation. One of the key advantages of a guided tour is the convenience it offers. With all the details taken care of by the tour operator, travelers can simply relax and enjoy the journey without the stress of planning and organizing.

Furthermore, the dimension of a guided tour is important for all types of travelers (Chandralal and Valenzuela, 2015). Whether they are organized tours where travelers are directed by guides or independent travelers using local tour operator services, the presence of a guide can greatly enhance the travel experience.

Guided tours are often preferred by travelers who value convenience, as they take care of all the logistics and arrangements. Tourists can simply show up at the designated meeting point and be assured that their transportation, accommodation, and itinerary have been pre-arranged. This eliminates the stress and hassle of planning each aspect of the trip individually. Tour guides are well-versed in the history, culture, and unique characteristics of the destinations they visit. They are able to provide insightful commentary, answer questions, and facilitate meaningful interactions between travelers and the destination (Sulaiman Al Jahwari, Sirakaya-Turk and Altintas, 2016). In addition to convenience and knowledge, guided tours also offer a sense of security and safety. Traveling in a new and unfamiliar place can sometimes be overwhelming, but having a knowledgeable tour guide by one's side can alleviate any concerns. The role of a tour guide goes beyond simply providing information. They also ensure the well-being and safety of the group, manage logistics, handle any unforeseen situations, and act as a point of contact for any issues or emergencies. Guided tours also contribute to sustainable tourism practices (Pereira and Mykletun, 2012). By working with local communities and employing local tour guides, guided tours support the local economy and promote cultural exchange. They prioritize responsible tourism practices, considering the environmental impact of their activities and working towards the preservation of natural and cultural resources.

Whether exploring historical landmarks, immersing in cultural activities, or enjoying adventure pursuits, guided tours offer a structured yet enriching way to discover the world. The success of a guided tour often lies in finding the right balance between a well-organized itinerary and allowing participants the freedom to enjoy the journey.

### **3.3 New product development process**

In today's highly competitive business environment, the ability to develop and launch successful new products is crucial for organizations to maintain their competitiveness and long-term sustainability. New product development is a complex and dynamic process that involves various stages, activities, and decision-making. In order to navigate this process effectively, organizations must adopt the best management practices in new product development. The purpose of this subchapter is to examine the new product development process and discuss its importance in facilitating successful new product launches.

In today's fast-paced business environment, companies need to continuously innovate and introduce new products to meet the changing needs and preferences of customers. The new product development process involves various stages, from conceptualization to market launch (Pravee Kruachottikul et al., 2023). By following a systematic approach, companies can ensure that their new products are well-designed, properly manufactured, and effectively marketed, therefore this process is crucial for sustaining competitiveness and driving growth in dynamic markets.

Dr. Robert G. Cooper's The Stage Gate<sup>®</sup> model has significantly influenced innovation and product management (Cooper, 2019). This structured approach assists organizations in effectively navigating the challenges associated with introducing innovative products to the market. The model's systematic progression through distinct stages, each punctuated by gate reviews, serves as critical decision points that dictate whether the project advances or is discontinued.

The venture starts with the Discovery stage, seeking to foster and uncover groundbreaking concepts in line with enterprise objectives and market requirements. Progressing to the Scoping stage, attention turns to assessing the practicality and strategic alignment of chosen ideas, paring down those that seem less feasible (Cooper, 2015). The next phase, Business Case Development, encompasses crafting a thorough business rationale for the selected concept, taking into account technical and financial considerations. In the Development stage, a prototype or pilot of the product is meticulously crafted and assessed for both technical and economic feasibility.

During the Testing and Validation phase, the product undergoes meticulous scrutiny to guarantee that it aligns with both quality benchmarks and customer requisites. The subsequent Launch stage marks the unveiling of the product to a select market segment, allowing for the accumulation of real

time feedback and an appraisal of its initial market reception (Cooper, 2015). The Post-Launch Review phase rigorously examines the product's performance in the market, identifying areas that necessitate refinement and potential adaptations.

In the final stage, known as Scale-Up and Rollout, the emphasis lies on strategizing for a widespread market launch and expanding production should the product demonstrate success. Cooper's model incorporates key principles such as gate reviews, crossfunctional team involvement, ongoing customer feedback, adaptability, and rigorous risk management. By upholding these fundamental pillars, organizations can seamlessly progress from conceiving ideas to effectively launching products, achieving a harmonious equilibrium between maximizing market opportunities and mitigating potential risks (Cooper, 2015). Cooper's Stage Gate model serves as an invaluable compass for businesses navigating the intricate landscap of new product development.



Figure 3. Adaptation of The Stage Gate© New Product Development Process (Cooper, 2001)

### **3.4 Creating a digital marketing plan**

In the rapidly evolving landscape of business or digital era, e-marketing has become an indispensable tool for companies aiming to establish a robust online presence and connect with their target audience. Crafting an effective digital marketing plan is a pivotal step towards achieving online success and staying competitive in the digital era (Sintani et al., 2023). This subchapter delves into the key components and strategic considerations involved in formulating a comprehensive digital marketing plan, with a focus on its relevance for contemporary business practices.

An e-marketing plan is a comprehensive strategy that outlines how a business will utilize electronic technology and various digital marketing channels to achieve its marketing objectives (Sintani et al., 2023). E-marketing is defined as the use of information technology, internet, and applications to plan and execute marketing processes that define needs and demands conception, distribution and pricing, goods, and services to create exchanges that satisfy objectives at individual and organizational levels. (Olmos, Ramírez and Gutierrez, 2021) Digital marketing is revolutionizing the way businesses communicate with their audience, providing opportunities to expand into new markets and offer new services and products in a cost-effective and efficient manner. It is a modern technique that helps promote products and services globally, utilizing strategies such as pay-per-click, search engine optimization, social media marketing, and more (Mirza and Ahmed, 2019).

### **3.5 Project Management**

Embarking on a project without a well-structured plan is like setting sail without a map. This is the reason why effective project management is widely recognized as playing a major role in the success of projects. It involves the process of defining project goals, objectives, and deliverables, as well as identifying the tasks and activities required to achieve them. Moreover, project management also involves assigning responsibilities to various team members, defining milestones and critical paths, allocating resources, scheduling timelines, and developing strategies to mitigate potential risks and challenges (AlSudairi, T, A, M., 2013).

Project management is a multifaceted discipline that requires a delicate balance of leadership, organization, and adaptability (Radujković and Sjekavica, 2017). This section explores the complexities of project planning and provides advice and techniques to help and carry out a project successfully according to Joseph Heagney (Heagney, 2016).

Starting a project is similar to conducting a symphony, where careful planning, leadership, and adaptability harmonize to achieve a shared vision that at the end is a melody. At its essence, project management involves the artful coordination of people, resources, and timelines to bring a concept to fruition within predefined parameters, like an orchestra (Kozlovskyi and Tkachenko, 2019).

Every successful project has a clearly defined life cycle, as we will see when we explore the field of project management. Every stage of the process, from the initial idea to the meticulous planning, executing out, monitoring over, and ultimate closing, necessitates strategic thinking and close attention to detail.

The roles and duties in a project serve as compass points. Every team member, stakeholder, and contributor will understand their specific role in guiding the project ship toward success if there is a clear definition of who does what. However, communication is still the key to successful project management. Clear lines of communication, frequent team meetings, and feedback channels serve as the project's essential, minimizing misunderstandings and promoting teamwork (Barros, Duarte and Machado, 2022).

Project managers need to keep a close eye on potential risks in order to navigate the unpredictable environment of the field. A skilled project manager builds resilience in the face of unforeseen setbacks by anticipating possible difficulties, carrying out comprehensive risk assessments, and creating backup plans (Kozlovskyi and Tkachenko, 2019). It becomes clear that scope management is an essential compass for guiding the project away from the dangerous situations of extent. Teams can stay on course and guarantee that the project's goals are met by precisely defining and managing what is included in the project scope.

Management of time and resources comes into play when the project moves forward. Proactive monitoring, effective resource allocation, and realistic timetables all provide the project with the extra push it needs to reach its goal. Quality assurance acts as guardian of project deliverables. Along with meeting stakeholder expectations, well-defined standards, frequent reviews, and strong quality assurance procedures help protect the project against possible risks (Barros, Duarte and Machado, 2022). One constant in the world of projects is change, which calls for an organized approach to change management. modifications that are evaluated, approved, and implemented in a controlled manner avoid unplanned modifications that can jeopardize the integrity of the project.

Metrics and key performance indicators (KPIs) are an essential component of the project, and measuring success turns it into a creative effort (Kozlovskyi and Tkachenko, 2019). Project managers can identify areas of concern and make data-driven, well-informed decisions to maintain the project's intended course with the support of regular assessments.

Stakeholder management emerges as the dynamic connection of the project management. Positive relationships are cultivated via consistent involvement, open communication, and skillful problem solving, which guarantees that the project will smoothly merge with larger organizational objectives (Meredith, Shafer and Jr, 2017). A moment of introspection is provided when the project curtain unfolds. Post-project analysis offers insights that are critical to continuous development. Enhancing future projects by documenting lessons learned, getting feedback, and using these insights improves the organization's total project management expertise.

Mastering project management requires a holistic approach that combines technical skills with interpersonal and strategic capabilities (Meredith, Shafer and Jr, 2017). By adhering to these principles and best practices, project managers can navigate the complexities of their projects with finesse, delivering successful outcomes and contributing to the organization's overall success.

## **4 Short Layover, Long Memories in Helsinki: Crafting guided tours for cruise ship travelers with a short layover**

This is the empirical section's first chapter. The project's background is given by the author, who also outlines the product's concept, current objectives, and important characteristics. The following part contains a thorough explanation of the stages of product development for this particular product: A guided tour for cruise ship travelers with short layover, which is also based on the theoretical aspect.

### **4.1 Idea of the product**

The author of this thesis came with the idea of creating a guided tour for people traveling on cruise ships with short layovers in Helsinki, since this kind of travelers are one of the biggest groups visiting the Finnish capital all year round and most of the time this niche has been underestimated. They have time restricted to visit the city and they want to make the most of it during the short layover they have during their trip. This is based on the work experience, feedback gotten by customers and direct observation of the author in the field of tour guiding within the last two years in Helsinki.

Also there has been research in 2018 that highlighted the need for comprehensive strategies to enhance the mobility experience of cruise passengers, including clear signage, multilingual information, and assistance services at key locations in Helsinki (Paananen and Minoia, 2019). The same research suggested that poorly planned tourism can have negative impacts on vulnerable urban areas, particularly historical centers, leading to residential issues and conflict, also technology, such as mobile applications or digital platforms, can play a role in facilitating the mobility of cruise passengers and providing real-time information on transportation options and tourist attractions (Paananen and Minoia, 2019). Especially when time is limited, and tourists want to get to know more about the places they visit during the layovers.

### **4.2 Product goals and objectives**

In the pursuit of crafting a guided tour tailored for cruise ship passengers with short layovers in Helsinki, the primary goal is to enhance the overall visitor experience. Envisioning a seamlessly organized itinerary aligned with cruise ship schedules, the aim is to provide passengers with an opportunity to immerse themselves in Helsinki's unique charm without feeling rushed. The emphasis relies on ensuring comfort and accessibility, with the goal of offering a tour that caters to the diverse preferences of cruise travelers, providing not just a tour but a memorable journey through the heart of Helsinki.



A secondary objective is to highlight the distinctive features that make Helsinki stand out. The vision is to design a tour that encapsulates the city's rich cultural and historical identity, introducing passengers to architectural marvels, cultural landmarks, and hidden gems that define Helsinki's character (Åström, 2023). The aim is to go beyond conventional offerings, ensuring that every passenger experiences the authenticity and uniqueness that Helsinki has to offer.

To achieve this, the tour is designed to maximize cultural and historical insights. Tour guides play the role of storytellers, weaving narratives that transport passengers through Helsinki's heritage. Through interactive elements and engaging commentary, the goal also is to provide not just a tour but an educational and immersive experience, leaving passengers with a deeper appreciation for the cultural tapestry of Helsinki.

Optimal time management becomes a key objective in this endeavor. The guided tour is meticulously planned to align with cruise ship schedules, allowing passengers to explore key attractions without the constraints of time weighing on their experience. From efficient transportation to seamless logistics, the objective is to make every moment count, enabling passengers to savor the essence of Helsinki within the confines of their short layover.

Recognizing the diverse interests of passengers, personalization becomes a guiding principle. Technological integration, such as mobile apps or audio guides, empowers passengers to tailor their experience based on individual preferences. Thematic variations of the guided tour are introduced, offering options that cater to specific interests, transforming each tour into a personalized and enriching exploration of Helsinki.

As the journey unfolds, sustainability and responsible tourism also take center stage. The guided tour is designed with an eco-conscious approach, incorporating eco-friendly transportation options and educational components that raise awareness about Helsinki's commitment to environmental conservation (Åström, 2023). The objective is not just to showcase Helsinki but to do so with a commitment to responsible tourism.

In summary, these product goals and objectives encapsulate the vision for creating a guided tour that transcends the conventional, offering cruise ship passengers with short layovers in Helsinki an immersive, personalized, and responsible experience that lingers in their memories long after they have sailed away.

### 4.3 Product development process

#### 4.3.1 Product levels and features

As it shows in Figure 2 where are exposed the five different product levels in tourism according to Kotler's, here is elaborated more accordingly to the product that is proposed in this thesis by the author. Because in the realm of crafting guided tours for cruise ship passengers with brief layovers in Helsinki, the concept of product levels emerges as a pivotal consideration.

At its core, the guided tour represents more than a mere excursion; it encapsulates an immersive experience carefully tailored to meet the diverse expectations of visitors within a limited timeframe. At the foundational level, Helsinki's guided tours offer more than just a surface exploration of the city's landmarks (Haanpää and Hanni-Vaara, 2023). Cruise passengers, seeking a taste of Finnish culture, find themselves engaged in narratives that delve beyond the historical facets. The core product becomes a journey through time, navigating the stories embedded in iconic sites like Senate Square and the Helsinki Cathedral.

Moving beyond the core, these tours embrace the facilitating product level. Helsinki's efficient public transportation system seamlessly integrates into the tour experience, ensuring that passengers traverse the city with ease. The use of local guides proficient in multiple languages acts as a facilitator, bridging any language barriers and enhancing the overall accessibility of the core product.

As the guided tour experience evolves, the supporting product level adds an extra layer of value. Helsinki's culinary scene, celebrated for its Nordic flavors, becomes an integral part of the tour. Passengers not only witness the city's landmarks but also savor authentic Finnish cuisine, transforming the guided tour into a holistic sensory encounter (Åström, 2023).

The augmented product level elevates the experience further by incorporating elements that go beyond expectations. Exclusive behind-the-scenes access to cultural events, interactive sessions with local artisans, or even personalized mementos contribute to an augmented experience that lingers in the memories of cruise passengers, distinguishing Helsinki's guided tours from conventional offerings (Miles, 2019).

In essence, Helsinki's guided tours for cruise ship passengers unfold as more than a mere itinerary. They embody a narrative carefully woven to encapsulate the essence of the city within the constraints of a short layover. The core, facilitating, supporting, and augmented product levels collectively create an experience that transcends the conventional, offering a memorable snapshot of Helsinki's rich cultural tapestry to every cruise visitor.

To sum up, understanding various levels of Helsinki's guided tour product for cruise ship passengers is essential to creating and promoting successful travel offerings. Tourism businesses can ensure that their products meet the needs and expectations of their customers and create a memorable and satisfying experience for cruise passengers who have short layovers in Helsinki by understanding and attending to every level, from the core experience to possible future adaptations (Haanpää and Hanni-Vaara, 2023).

#### **4.3.2 Destination attractions**

In the intricate design of guided tours tailored for cruise ship passengers with brief layovers in Helsinki, the product levels weave a narrative that transcends conventional sightseeing. At their core, these tours extend beyond the mere exploration of historic landmarks, such as the iconic Helsinki Cathedrals, which dominate the city's skyline. Cruise passengers find themselves immersed in narratives that unfold the rich history of both the Lutheran Helsinki Cathedral and the Orthodox Helsinki Cathedral Uspenski, offering panoramic views of the city and its picturesque harbor (Paananen and Minoia, 2018).

Moving through the layers of the guided tour experience, Helsinki's cultural hubs become vibrant focal points. The Design District, more than a collection of shops, encapsulates the city's innovative spirit. Guided tours here delve into Helsinki's design philosophy through boutique visits and galleries, revealing the pulse of the city's creativity. The Kiasma Museum of Contemporary Art acts as a beacon of modern creativity, introducing cruise passengers to Finnish and international contemporary art, creating a dynamic cultural experience (Nurmi, 2013).

Waterfront wonders unfold as guided tours immerse visitors in the sensory delight of Helsinki's Market Square (Kauppatori) and the dynamic Helsinki Harbor (Paananen and Minoia, 2018). Beyond bustling markets, these areas offer insights into local flavors, crafts, maritime history, and panoramic views of incoming ships, creating a layered experience against the backdrop of the city's scenic waterfront.

Architectural marvels, such as the unique Temppeliaukio Church (Rock Church) carved into solid rock, and the harmonious blend of classic and modern architecture at the National Library of Finland, become integral components of the guided tour. These sites offer serene spaces for reflection and cultural journeys, showcasing Finnish ingenuity and the significance of literature in society (Åström, 2023).

Green oases, like Esplanadi Park and Toolonlahti Bay, are not merely green spaces but cultural hubs and peaceful retreats, inviting cruise passengers to recharge amidst their exploration.

The culinary delights of the Old Market Hall and the historic Karl Fazer Café offer flavorful introductions to Finnish cuisine, enriching the guided tour with gastronomic experiences deeply rooted in tradition.

Local experiences, like the Helsinki Sauna Experience, introduce visitors to Finnish traditions, offering unique cultural immersion at places like Allas Sea Pool or Löyly. Innovative spaces, exemplified by the Oodi Central Library and the Amos Rex Museum, become cultural nuclei that blend literature, technology, art exhibitions, and immersive experiences, shaping Helsinki's contemporary identity (Vilkuna, 2018).

In essence, the product levels in guided tours for cruise ship passengers in Helsinki are a tapestry of experiences that transcend the conventional, offering a multi-layered exploration of the city's rich history, cultural vibrancy, architectural prowess, natural beauty, culinary delights, and innovative spirit. By providing a well-rounded exploration that captures the essence of the city through historic landmarks, cultural hubs, waterfront wonders, architectural marvels, green oases, culinary delights, local experiences, and innovative spaces, these guided tours promise to leave a lasting and memorable impression.

#### **4.3.3 Destination facilities, services and accessibility**

The success of these tours relies not only on the selection of compelling attractions but also on the infrastructure and support systems that enhance the overall tourist experience. The careful selection of destination amenities, services, and accessible features that distinguish the visitor experience is prioritized over attractions when creating guided tours specifically for cruise ship passengers with short layovers in Helsinki.

Helsinki, known for its maritime charm, strategic places departure and arrival points that are easily accessible from various ports and terminals. For instance, the South Harbor, a bustling hub for cruise arrivals, serves as a pivotal departure point for guided tours, ensuring the seamless transition of passengers from ship to tour (Paananen and Minoia, 2018).

Ensuring a smooth transition from ship to tour is further complemented by information desks strategically positioned at these points. These desks provide not only clear directions but also a wealth of information about the city, its attractions, and the details of the guided tour. An exemplary case is the presence of information kiosks at the harbors and cruise ship terminals, equipped to offer immediate assistance and information to cruise passengers embarking on guided tours.

Efficient transportation services become a crucial element in the layover experience. Collaborations with reliable transportation services, such as the use of local trams, buses, or even boats, facilitate not only seamless transfers but also a unique opportunity for passengers to experience the city's efficient and eco-friendly public transport system (Åström, 2023).

Guiding services take center stage in providing a cultural bridge for cruise passengers. Multilingual guides, often proficient in languages ranging from English to Mandarin, ensure that the rich stories of Helsinki are accessible to a diverse array of visitors. For instance, the use of multilingual guides during tours to landmarks like the iconic Helsinki Cathedrals ensures a holistic cultural experience for visitors (Paananen and Minoia, 2018).

Considering the transient nature of layovers, facilities for resting and refreshment become essential components. Rest areas strategically identified along the tour route, such as those within Esplanadi Park, offer not just physical reprieve but also a chance for cruise passengers to immerse themselves in the local ambiance. Quick culinary experiences during the tour, exemplified by stops at the Old Market Hall, provide a flavorful introduction to Finnish cuisine.

Information and interpretation centers are thoughtfully placed along the tour route to enrich the educational aspect of the layover experience. Helsinki, proud of its cultural heritage, boasts centers like the Helsinki City Museum, which offer detailed insights into the city's history, culture, and architecture. Interactive displays within these centers engage visitors, creating memorable learning experiences (Vilkuna, 2018).

Accessibility takes precedence in Helsinki's commitment to inclusivity. Wheelchair accessibility along tour routes and at attractions is exemplified by the universally accessible Suomenlinna Sea Fortress. Additionally, sensory considerations, such as quiet spaces and accommodations for passengers with sensory sensitivities, are embedded in the layover experience.

Safety measures are seamlessly integrated into the tour experience. First aid stations, placed strategically along the route, ensure immediate assistance for minor medical needs. Comprehensive training on emergency response protocols for guides and staff underscores Helsinki's commitment to the safety and well-being of cruise passengers (Paananen and Minoia, 2018).

Informational materials, including brochures, maps, and digital platforms, serve as invaluable resources for cruise visitors. Examples include the distribution of informative brochures at the different harbors and terminals, offering maps, attraction details, and contact information for easy reference. Digital platforms or mobile apps provide real-time updates and additional information, creating an interactive and dynamic experience for cruise passengers (Haanpää and Hanni-Vaara, 2023).

In Helsinki, the guided tour should not be just a journey through attractions; should be an immersive exploration, a cultural embrace, and a lasting memory etched in the hearts of every transient visitor.

#### **4.3.4 Competitor Analysis**

Competitor analysis is a critical component of crafting a strategic and differentiated guided tour product for cruise ship passengers with short layovers in Helsinki. For the purpose of this thesis, this analysis has been done considering the information provided by one of the most popular online travel provider reviews: TripAdvisor (Appendix 3). Understanding the landscape of competing tour operators provides valuable insights for positioning and enhancing the offerings.

In the competitive landscape of Helsinki's tourism market, a comprehensive competitor analysis reveals the diverse array of key players vying for the attention of cruise ship passengers during their short layovers. Prominent among these are established entities such as Helsinki Expert, Stromma, Green Cap Tours, Taiga, Ataman, Hop on Hop off, and Happy Guide Helsinki, each contributing to the rich tapestry of guided tour experiences in the city.

Examining market share, Helsinki Expert, Stromma, and Green Cap Tours emerge as dominant players, each offering a unique flavor to the tourist experience. For instance, Stromma, with its all-encompassing packages, not only provides transportation and guides but also includes entrance fees, streamlining the entire experience for passengers. In contrast, Helsinki Expert distinguishes itself by focusing on cultural and historical themes, showcasing the city's rich heritage.

Delving into thematic tours, competitors like Happy Guide Helsinki stand out by providing a holistic mix of history, culture, and local insights, emphasizing small-group sizes for a more personalized encounter with Helsinki. Green Cap Tours takes a step further by offering customizable private tours, catering to individual preferences and time constraints, providing a differentiated approach within the market.

Pricing strategies also play a pivotal role in the competitive landscape. Stromma's all-inclusive packages, Helsinki Expert's tiered pricing for different tour durations, and Green Cap Tours and Ataman positioning themselves as premium services reflect the diverse approaches taken to cater to varied passenger preferences.

Customer reviews and satisfaction serve as a valuable barometer of competitors' strengths and weaknesses. While Happy Guide Helsinki, Green Cap Tours, and Lomatka receive commendations

for small-group sizes and interactive approaches, some competitors, like Stromma, occasionally face critiques regarding punctuality.

Collaborations and partnerships underscore a strategic aspect of the competitive environment. Stromma's partnerships with major cruise lines facilitate direct booking options for passengers, creating a seamless booking experience. On the other hand, local collaborations with businesses by Happy Guide Helsinki and Green Cap Tours enhance the overall tourist experience, showcasing a network that extends beyond guided tours.

Technological integration emerges as a key trend, with Helsinki Expert and Stromma utilizing user-friendly online booking platforms to streamline reservations. Stromma takes it a step further by incorporating mobile apps, featuring interactive maps and historical information to enhance the overall tourist experience.

The strategic implications of this analysis for crafting guided tours in Helsinki lie in product differentiation, optimized itineraries, customer engagement, flexible booking options, and quality assurance (Private Custom Helsinki Tour, s.a.). To stand out in this competitive arena, crafting unique experiences, introducing themed tours, ensuring efficient routes, offering varied tour durations, engaging passengers interactively, and implementing continuous improvement strategies become essential components for success in Helsinki's dynamic guided tour market.

#### **4.3.5 Cost and profit calculations**

This analysis encompasses various financial aspects, from initial investment considerations to ongoing operational expenses and revenue streams. The financial figures are only set as an example for this proposal (Appendix 4). To clarify, the author expresses they are illustrative and for explanatory purposes only. They are hypothetical and not based on specific financial data from real businesses, since actual figures would imply thorough research and consultancy with financial experts, which is not the main goal of this proposal for a new tourism product.

Starting the crafting of guided tours tailored for cruise ship passengers with short layovers in Helsinki needs a comprehensive understanding of the financial landscape, encompassing initial investments, operational expenses, variable costs, revenue streams, profit margins, and sustainability initiatives (Anttikoski, 2020). The initial investment, totaling €300,000, focuses on acquiring a fleet of modern buses or boats to ensure comfort and efficiency during the brief layovers. An annual commitment of €15,000 per vehicle covers maintenance, insurance, and fuel, reflecting the city's commitment to sustainable and well-maintained transportation systems.

Guide and personnel costs, amounting to €50,000 in initial investment and €120,000 annually for salaries, benefits, and continuous training, underscore Helsinki's dedication to a well-trained and multilingual workforce. The city's rich cultural tapestry demands guides who not only possess historical and cultural knowledge but also fluency in multiple languages to cater to the diverse backgrounds of cruise passengers.

Marketing and promotion, a vital aspect of attracting cruise visitors, involves an initial investment of €50,000 and an annual commitment of €20,000 for ongoing efforts. Helsinki's strategic approach may draw inspiration from successful city-wide campaigns, such as the "Helsinki Secret" initiative, which leverages online advertising and partnerships with travel agencies to promote hidden gems and unique experiences.

Operational expenses, including guide salaries and benefits, transportation maintenance, administrative costs, marketing expenses, and insurance and licensing, collectively demonstrate the city's dedication to ensuring the seamless operation of guided tours. Administrative costs, at €25,000 annually, reflect the investment in providing a conducive office space for managing tour logistics, aligning with Helsinki's commitment to efficiency and professionalism.

Variable costs, such as fuel and transportation fees, guide expenses, and culinary experiences, encapsulate the dynamic nature of crafting guided tours. With a cost of €500 per tour for fuel and transportation-related expenses, Helsinki strives for transparency and high-quality services. The culinary experiences, costing €200 per tour, align with Helsinki's emphasis on showcasing its renowned local food and beverage offerings.

Revenue streams, crucial for the sustainability of guided tours, encompass tour fees, exclusive experiences, and collaborations. With a standard pricing of €50 per person for a standard tour and an additional €20 for exclusive experiences, Helsinki positions itself competitively while providing passengers the option to tailor their experiences. Collaborations, offering a 10% revenue share, foster a symbiotic relationship between guided tour operators and local businesses or cruise lines, exemplified by successful collaborations seen in the city's tourism industry (Anttikoski, 2020).

Profit margins, with a target of 20%, indicate Helsinki's commitment to financial sustainability. The break-even analysis, aiming for 5,000 passengers within the first year, is a testament to the city's strategic planning and focus on achieving profitability while meeting the unique needs of cruise passengers with short layovers.



In terms of pricing strategy, Helsinki's commitment to competitive monitoring, value-added services, and seasonal adjustments mirrors its dynamic approach to meet the evolving demands of the tourism industry (Anttikoski, 2020). Drawing inspiration from successful models in the city, such as tiered pricing structures for exclusive experiences and adjustments based on seasonal demand, ensures a flexible and customer-centric approach.

Lastly, sustainability initiatives, with an investment of €10,000, underscore Helsinki's dedication to eco-friendly practices. Inspired by the city's commitment to sustainable urban living, such initiatives could include the introduction of low-emission vehicles and waste reduction measures, aligning guided tours with Helsinki's broader environmental goals (Anttikoski, 2020). As Helsinki explores opportunities for product diversification, themed tours, special events, and collaborations with local festivals, it ensures that its guided tours remain not only financially viable but also culturally enriching and sustainable for years to come.

This financial blueprint serves as a foundational guide for businesses entering the guided tour market in Helsinki, offering insights into pricing strategies, investment priorities, and the delicate balance between revenue generation and cost management (Anttikoski, 2020). As the tourism landscape evolves, regular revisiting and adjustment of these financial considerations will be crucial for sustained success in this dynamic industry.

#### **4.3.6 Risk evaluation**

When creating guided tours specifically for cruise ship passengers with short layovers in Helsinki, a comprehensive risk assessment becomes essential to guaranteeing a smooth and enjoyable visit for guests. Helsinki has a number of difficulties that require careful thought because of its distinct geographic and seasonal features.

Operational challenges, such as Helsinki's unpredictable weather, require proactive measures. The city, known for its distinct seasons, experiences fluctuations that might impact outdoor activities. Crafting contingency plans, including alternative indoor activities or flexible scheduling, becomes crucial to adapt swiftly to sudden changes and ensure passengers' comfort (Heikkinen and Kaivo-oja, 2022).

Market fluctuations, driven by seasonal variations and the competitive landscape, demand dynamic strategies. Helsinki's distinct seasons, marked by long winters and vibrant summers, necessitate tailored approaches. For instance, during the winter season, the city transforms into a winter wonderland, offering opportunities for unique experiences like snowmobiling or witnessing the Northern Lights. Dynamic pricing strategies and targeted marketing efforts during peak tourist

seasons ensure that guided tours remain competitive and appealing (Heikkinen and Kaivo-oja, 2022).

Navigating regulatory compliance, particularly in licensing, permits, and environmental regulations, is pivotal. Helsinki, as a city committed to sustainable practices, requires adherence to stringent environmental standards (Heikkinen and Kaivo-oja, 2022). Crafting guided tours with eco-friendly practices aligns with the city's ethos and ensures compliance with evolving environmental regulations.

Ensuring customer satisfaction involves managing expectations transparently and upholding service standards. Helsinki's rich cultural heritage and diverse attractions demand accurate portrayals in marketing materials (Heikkinen and Kaivo-oja, 2022). By setting realistic expectations and implementing stringent quality control measures, the city ensures that guided tours meet or exceed the visitors' expectations.

Health and safety concerns, particularly in emergencies or crises, underscore Helsinki's commitment to passenger safety. The city, renowned for its efficient emergency services, ensures that guides undergo first aid training and comprehensive emergency response protocols are in place (Heikkinen and Kaivo-oja, 2022). Helsinki's collaborative efforts with local emergency services contribute to a robust crisis management system.

Collaboration risks, arising from partnership reliability and negotiation challenges, emphasize the importance of due diligence. Helsinki, known for its collaborative spirit, exemplifies this through partnerships with local businesses and agencies (Heikkinen and Kaivo-oja, 2022). Engaging in transparent negotiations, prioritizing mutual benefits, and establishing clear agreements contribute to successful collaborations.

Technological issues, including system failures and cybersecurity concerns, highlight the necessity of reliable technological infrastructure. Helsinki, as a tech-savvy city, ensures the regular maintenance and testing of technological tools to prevent disruptions. Robust cybersecurity measures, including encryption and regular security audits, safeguard customer data and maintain the integrity of guided tours.

Global events and crises, such as pandemics or natural disasters, require adaptable business models. Helsinki, having weathered global events with resilience, exemplifies this through flexible approaches (Heikkinen and Kaivo-oja, 2022). Contingency plans for tour cancellations or rescheduling during unforeseen circumstances showcase Helsinki's commitment to passenger safety and satisfaction.

When it comes to managing the various risks involved in creating guided tours for passengers on cruise ships in Helsinki, the city's proactive measures, cooperative spirit and dedication to sustainability and safety provide excellent standards. For cruise ship visitors with brief layovers, Helsinki's diverse cultural heritage and adaptability guarantees that guided excursions are not only entertaining but also resilient in the face of unforeseen difficulties. This makes for a genuinely enriching experience.

#### **4.3.7 Marketing Product and commercialization**

Navigating the landscape of marketing and commercialization for guided tours tailored to cruise ship passengers with short layovers in Helsinki requires a thoughtful approach rooted in the city's unique offerings. The success of such endeavors relies on an intricate blend of understanding the audience, fostering collaborations, honing a robust online presence, crafting engaging content, leveraging customer testimonials, implementing strategic pricing, building a distinctive brand, and cultivating customer engagement (Soloveva and Valkonen, 2022).

To effectively reach potential tourists, delving into the demographics of cruise ship passengers visiting Helsinki is key. By analyzing passenger data, including age groups and preferences, marketing materials can be tailored to highlight attractions and experiences that resonate with the majority. For instance, if retirees constitute a significant demographic, emphasizing leisurely-paced tours and historical attractions could be a strategic approach (Soloveva and Valkonen, 2022). Helsinki's appeal lies in its cultural richness, showcased through iconic landmarks like the Suomenlinna Sea Fortress and the Helsinki Cathedrals, making it essential to align marketing strategies with these historical and cultural facets.

Digital advertising emerges as a potent tool in reaching cruise enthusiasts. Platforms like Facebook and Instagram can be leveraged to run visually appealing ads showcasing Helsinki's unique offerings and the efficiency of guided tours (Soloveva and Valkonen, 2022). An example could be captivating visuals of the bustling Market Square (Kauppatori) and its sensory delights, providing a glimpse of the vibrant atmosphere against the backdrop of the city's scenic waterfront. The aim is to captivate potential tourists and instill the desire to explore the city within the constraints of their layovers.

Collaborative partnerships play a crucial role in expanding the reach of guided tours (Soloveva and Valkonen, 2022). Establishing collaborations with major cruise lines, such as Royal Caribbean and Viking Line, ensures visibility in pre-arrival communications and onboard promotions. Additionally, local businesses, especially popular restaurants like in the Old Market Hall, can be valuable collaborators, offering exclusive dining experiences as part of the guided tour package. These

collaborations bring an authentic touch, allowing tourists to immerse themselves in Helsinki's culinary delights.

An online presence is non-negotiable in the digital era. Developing a user-friendly website with comprehensive tour itineraries, customer testimonials, and a straightforward booking system enhances accessibility. Utilizing online booking platforms like Viator or GetYourGuide broadens the audience reach and simplifies the booking process. Examples from Helsinki, such as the Oodi Central Library, exemplify the city's commitment to innovation and technology, providing inspiration for crafting an engaging online platform (Heikkinen and Kaivo-oja, 2022).

Engaging content creation adds a personal touch to marketing efforts. Captivating video series showcasing snippets of guided tours, along with enthusiastic testimonials from previous cruise passengers, can create a visual narrative that resonates with potential tourists. Storytelling through blog posts or social media content adds depth, narrating the unique stories behind Helsinki's landmarks and the local experiences embedded in guided tours (Heikkinen and Kaivo-oja, 2022). For instance, stories about the historic significance of the Temppeliaukio Church (Rock Church) and its unique architectural feat carved into solid rock can evoke a sense of intrigue.

Customer reviews and testimonials serve as powerful endorsements. Actively encouraging customers to leave reviews on platforms like TripAdvisor or Yelp contributes to social proof. Positive snippets from reviews can be strategically displayed on the website and in marketing materials, underlining the satisfaction of cruise passengers who have experienced the guided tours in Helsinki (Paananen and Minoia, 2018). Examples can include testimonials highlighting the professionalism of guides and the personalized, small-group experiences offered by tour operators like Green Cap Tours.

Pricing strategies that offer competitiveness and added value are crucial. In comparison to guided tours in other European cities with similar layover durations, maintaining competitive pricing ensures attractiveness. Introducing early booking discounts or bundling guided tours with other local experiences, such as museum tickets or transportation passes, provides added incentives. This approach aligns with Helsinki's reputation for offering diverse and enriching experiences beyond the standard tourist offerings.

Branding and establishing a unique selling proposition (USP) create a distinctive identity. Crafting a logo and brand imagery that reflects the efficiency and cultural richness of guided tours in Helsinki establishes a visual identity (Soloveva and Valkonen, 2022). Emphasizing exclusive offerings like "Behind-the-Scenes Access" or tours led by local experts as part of the USP adds allure. Real-life

examples, such as collaborations with local artisans or exclusive access to cultural events, can be woven into the brand narrative.

Customer engagement and loyalty programs foster a sense of community. Running interactive social media campaigns and loyalty programs, where repeat customers enjoy discounts on future tours or exclusive access to new offerings, enhances the overall customer experience and builds lasting connections (Paananen and Minoia, 2018). For instance, interactive campaigns showcasing the beauty of green spaces like Esplanadi Park and Toolonlahti Bay can resonate with cruise passengers seeking a serene retreat.

In summary, crafting a marketing and commercialization strategy for guided tours in Helsinki involves a deep understanding of the target audience, strategic collaborations, a robust online presence, compelling content creation, leveraging customer reviews, strategic pricing, distinctive branding, and fostering customer engagement and loyalty. By tailoring these strategies to the unique characteristics of Helsinki and its offerings, guided tours can position themselves as a must-experience highlight for cruise ship passengers with short layovers, offering a seamless blend of cultural richness and efficient exploration.

## **5 Discussion**

Creating guided tours tailored for cruise ship passengers with limited layovers in Helsinki demands a careful balance of efficiency, cultural immersion, and accessibility. This thesis has explored various facets of this unique tourism niche, from ideating the tourism product, checking the process of its creation, understanding the market, elaborating a competitor analysis to product levels, destination attractions, facilities, and marketing strategies. This concluding chapter for “Short Stop, Long Memories in Helsinki: Crafting guided tours for cruise ship travelers with short layover” synthesizes key insights, draws conclusions, sharing learning outcomes from the author and offers suggestions for future endeavors.

### **5.1 Key findings and suggestions**

Helsinki's tourism canvas is a vibrant yet competitive tapestry, especially since it caters to cruise ship passengers. A deep understanding of industry trends, competing offerings, and the complex preferences of cruise travelers is essential to designing guided tours that go above and beyond. The product works well when it is enhanced with interactive elements, culinary delights, and cultural cues. It succeeds on different levels, from core experiences to augmented features. When carefully chosen, the city's many attractions, which range from cultural centers to historic sites, offer cruise visitors an immersive experience.

The accessibility, facilities, and services offered at the destination are all crucial to the success of guided tours. The foundation of the tours is built up of accessible facilities, knowledgeable guides, and effective transportation, all of which greatly boost their appeal. Attracting cruise passengers requires marketing and commercialization strategies that are emphasized by focused approaches, cooperative partnerships, and a strong online presence. When these elements are combined skillfully, they create an exquisite composition that enhances the traveler's experience in the short time while visiting Helsinki.

The key to successful product development is still constant innovation; new experiences should be explored, changing tourism trends should be monitored, and customer feedback should be actively sought out to inform continuous improvements. Increased cooperation, especially with cruise lines and local companies, could provide customized packages and broaden the range of experiences.

The implementation of new technologies has great potential. Using innovative mobile apps or virtual reality components, for example, can improve the consumer experience by embracing emerging technologies. Additionally, using data analytics to comprehend consumer behavior and preferences can provide subtle insights that support more focused and customized marketing campaigns.

Compliance with sustainable practices is highly recommended for consideration. Including eco-friendly measures and displaying sustainability initiatives can draw in a growing number of environmentally conscious travelers.

A constant online presence is crucial in the field of marketing. Regularly refreshed websites, active participation on social media, and calculated expenditures on digital marketing channels can guarantee that the guided tours stay accessible and appealing to the tech-savvy cruise visitor. To track and analyze interactions, preferences, and behaviors and to build a community of happy customers and loyalty programs, a strong customer relationship management (CRM) system is advised.

To summarize, designing guided tours for cruise ship guests with short stops in Helsinki requires a complex balancing act involving creativity, strategic thinking, and attention to customer service experience. This thesis has navigated through the complexities of this unique tourism product, shedding light on the nuanced considerations that contribute to its success. As the tourism landscape evolves, the enduring commitment to adaptability, innovation, and a relentless focus on delivering an unparalleled customer experience will be the pivotal point for sustained success in this dynamic and evolving tourism niche.

By implementing these suggestions, the tourism industry in Helsinki can capitalize on the growing interest in cruise ship passengers with short layovers, offering them a diverse range of guided tours that cater to their preferences and provide memorable experiences of the city.

## **5.2 Project success and learning outcomes**

Embarking on the journey of crafting guided tours catering to cruise ship passengers with short layovers in Helsinki has been a deeply enriching experience for the author. Drawing from firsthand insights as a trained tour guide in this vibrant city which now has the honor to call it home. Writing this thesis has been a tremendously positive experience, transcending the boundaries of a traditional academic pursuit.

Through the process of conceptualizing, researching, and developing this thesis has not only deepened the author's understanding of the tourism industry but has also provided valuable insights into the dynamic nature of Helsinki's appeal to visitors. It's crucial to underscore that, as of now, this project is only a proposal, a vision waiting to be realized, and has not been implemented. However, the very essence of the proposal lies in the anticipation and recognition of a niche that has been somewhat overlooked and underestimated.

Moreover, the proposal's merit lies in recognizing the specific needs and constraints of cruise ship passengers with short layovers. The success of this initiative, once brought to life, would be measured not just in terms of traditional tourism metrics but in the depth of engagement and satisfaction it brings to a segment that often finds itself racing against the clock. The possibility of introducing a more customized and proficient approach to guided tours is what makes this concept so successful. It draws more the attention to the creation of an innovative solution to the problems caused by time limits, making sure that each minute of a stopover is transformed into a chance for an engaging and rich experience.

Furthermore, the success of this proposal is not confined to the traditional realms of revenue generation and tourist numbers. It extends to the realm of perception and the enhancement of Helsinki's reputation as a destination that not only recognizes diverse traveler needs but actively tailors its offerings to meet them. As a tour guide immersed in the daily rhythms of Helsinki's tourism, the success of this proposal is deeply personal. It represents a commitment to delivering not just tours but memorable and meaningful experiences. The project proposal's success, when translated into action, would contribute to making Helsinki a standout destination for cruise passengers, fostering a sense of connection that transcends the brevity of layovers.

Crafting a guided tour is not merely about showcasing attractions and landmarks; it's about curating experiences that resonate with the diverse interests of cruise passengers. The success of the proposal hinges on the ability to translate theoretical understanding into tangible moments that stay in the memories of visitors, much like the captivating stories shared during guided tours.

It is worth mentioning that collaborative partnerships play a pivotal role in the success of the project, mirroring the importance of building connections among the tourist industry in Helsinki. Partnering with local businesses and major cruise lines, as proposed, aligns with the spirit of collaboration that enhances the overall tourist experience. Success is not just measured by the number of attractions covered but by the depth of engagement and the genuine connections fostered during the guided tours. Also, the reliability and ethical considerations incorporated in the project are key contributors to its success. Reliability is about being a trustworthy guide, providing accurate information and delivering on promises. By highlighting real-life examples, the proposal does not just outline a plan but offers a reliable guide for implementation. Ethical considerations, from sustainability initiatives to prioritizing customer satisfaction, reflect the responsible tourism practices ingrained in the success of guided tours in Helsinki.

Drawing parallels from the own experiences, the proposal serves as a bridge between the theoretical and the practical. It is evidence to the belief that even within the conceptual field, ideas have the power to shape and enhance the tourism landscape.



The fact that this proposal is yet to see fruition adds an air of anticipation, as it stands as a testament to the forward-thinking approach necessary for the evolution of Helsinki's tourism offerings.

When considering the project as a whole, from the theoretical foundation to the creation of the product, the experience was comparable indeed to leading a group of cruise travelers through Helsinki's heart and soul. Through the historical narratives and cultural peculiarities, the theoretical framework served as a compass. These theoretical ideas become concrete experiences during the product development process, reflecting the dynamic interactions that a guide meets in Helsinki.

For the author as a guide in Helsinki, the learning outcomes go beyond the acquisition of knowledge; they transcend into the realm of a deeper connection with the city. It is an acknowledgment that each tour is not just a transaction but an opportunity to share the love for Helsinki, its stories, and its soul. It is an understanding that crafting guided tours is not just a profession; it is a calling to be an ambassador of Helsinki's charm and uniqueness, ensuring that every cruise passenger departs with not just memories but a piece of the city's heart and soul.

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# Appendices

## Appendix 1. Top 10 Tour Operators in Helsinki (TripAdvisor)

The screenshot displays the TripAdvisor website for Helsinki Attractions. The page is titled "Helsinki Attractions" and shows a list of 54 places sorted by traveler favorites. The top 10 tour operators are listed as follows:

- 1. Green Cap Tours** (4.5 stars, 121 reviews)  
City Tour + Cultural Tours  
By greggk11111  
Our guide, Leo, was really knowledgeable and the tour was very friendly. If you want to see the history of Helsinki and get...
- 2. Talpo Tours** (4.5 stars, 10 reviews)  
History & Camping Tours + Private Tours  
By june2018NY  
I've read a lot about the Finnish wilderness and I was looking for a tour that would take me to some of the best spots. I was not disappointed. The tour was very informative and the guides were very knowledgeable. I highly recommend it.
- 3. Pöytäkiertotours** (4.5 stars, 17 reviews)  
City Tour + Cultural Tours  
By Boozycat  
I have a personal history with Helsinki and it was a fun, tasty experience. (see: Pöytäkiertotours)
- 4. Ajanman Tours** (4.5 stars, 10 reviews)  
City Tour + Cultural Tours  
By AlbiReviews  
Looking up all the city history was great. Especially since we could sit down and have a good discussion with the...
- 5. Happy Guide Helsinki** (4.5 stars, 14 reviews)  
City Tour + Private Tours  
By hooft0000  
My guide was Felipe, a Chilean who lived in Helsinki for over 10 years now. He has plenty of interesting stories...
- 6. Free Walking Tours Helsinki** (4.5 stars, 20 reviews)  
City Tour + Cultural Tours  
By mawell2018FC  
Excellent for a first visit to Helsinki. It was a fun, friendly, and informative tour. The guide was very knowledgeable and the tour was very well organized.
- 7. Rento Helsinki Tours** (4.5 stars, 16 reviews)  
Historical + Heritage Tours + Walking Tours  
By june2018NY  
I was on a holiday in Helsinki and I was looking for a tour to see the city. I was not disappointed. The tour was very informative and the guides were very knowledgeable. I highly recommend it.
- 8. Lomatka Travel Company** (4.5 stars, 10 reviews)  
Multi-Day Tours + Boat Tours  
By Lomatka
- 9. Helsinki Tukitours** (4.5 stars, 17 reviews)  
City Tour + Private Tours  
By FinnRoo  
Excellent tour guide. We got information about the various sights. It was a good tour. It is a good tour. It is a good tour.
- 10. Feel The Nature** (4.5 stars, 10 reviews)  
Sea & Shore Tours + Things to Do  
By mawell2018FC  
We had a great time on the boat. The guide was very knowledgeable and the tour was very well organized. We had a great time on the boat. The guide was very knowledgeable and the tour was very well organized.

## Appendix 2. Table of hypothetical financial figures

Column1	Column2	Column3	Column4	Column5
Financial Component	Initial Investment (€)	Annual Operational Cost (€)	Variable Cost per Tour (€)	Revenue Sources (€)
Fleet and Transportation	300,000	15,000 (maintenance)	500 (fuel and fees)	Tour Fees: 50/person
Guides and Personnel	50,000	120,000	5/person	Exclusive Experiences: 20
Marketing and Promotion	50,000	20,000	N/A	Collaborations: 10% share
Guide Salaries and Benefits	N/A	40,000 (per guide)	N/A	N/A
Transportation Maintenance	N/A	15,000 (per vehicle)	N/A	N/A
Administrative Costs	N/A	25,000	N/A	N/A
Insurance and Licensing	N/A	10,000	N/A	N/A
Fuel and Transportation Fees	N/A	N/A	500	N/A
Guide Expenses	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Culinary Experiences	N/A	N/A	200 (per tour)	N/A
Tour Fees (Standard)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Exclusive Experiences	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Collaborations (Revenue Share)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Profit Margins and Break-Even Analysis				
-----				
<b>Profit Margin Target: 20%</b>				
<b>Break-Even Point: 5,000 passengers</b>				

Appendix 3. Brochure for the guided tour (Side 1)

**Discover  
and Love** *Helsinki*



**Contact Us**

*Helsinki Down Town*  
12 Alexanderinkatu  
Helsinki, 00230  
+358 991111122  
hello@shortstoplongmemories.fi  
www.shortstoplongmemories.fi



*Short Stop,  
Long Memories*  
**in Helsinki**

Made with VISME

Appendix 4. Brochure for the guided tour (Side 2)

# Featuring *Helsinki*

*Jewels of the city*

- Cathedral
- Old Market
- Uspenski
- Oodi
- National Library
- Suomenlinna
- Senate Square
- Design District

*Activities*

- Tailored for all tastes and time
- Finnish delicacies
- Sauna culture
- Design & shopping
- Local immersion
- Interactive



Made with VISME

## Appendix 5. Hypothetical itinerary of the guided tour – Super express version

Short Stop, Long Memories in Helsinki - Express Excursion 🕒 **Duration:** 3 Hours\*

### 1. Efficient Port Pickup:

- 🚢 Prompt pickup at the cruise port.
- 📄 Quick overview of the condensed itinerary.

### 2. Helsinki Cathedrals & Senate Square:

- 🕒 45 Minutes
- 🏰 Explore both of the iconic Helsinki Cathedrals.
- 🏛️ Discover the historic Senate Square.

### 3. Compact Suomenlinna Visit:

- 🕒 1 Hour
- 🏰 Express guided tour of key points in Suomenlinna.
- 📷 Capture the essence of the fortress in a short time.

### 4. Coffee Break at Old Market Hall:

- 🕒 30 Minutes
- ☕ Relax with a Finnish coffee at the Old Market Hall.
- 🍪 Quick bites of local specialties.

### 5. Market Square Meander:

- 🕒 30 Minutes
- 🛍️ Swift visit to Helsinki Market Square.
- 🛒 Grab souvenirs and experience the lively atmosphere.

### 6. Return to Cruise Port:

- 🕒 15 Minutes
- 🚗 Comfortable return to the cruise port.
- 🙋 Bid farewell with a taste of Helsinki.

**\*Note:** This express option is designed for travelers with extremely limited time. Despite the brevity, it encapsulates the essence of Helsinki, ensuring a memorable experience.

## Appendix 6. Hypothetical itinerary of the guided tour – Express version

Short Stop, Long Memories in Helsinki - Tour Itinerary 🕒 **Duration:** 4-6 Hours\*

### 1. Meet and Greet:

- 🚢 Welcome at the cruise port by our friendly guides.
- 📖 Brief overview of the day's itinerary.

### 2. Suomenlinna Sea Fortress Exploration:

- 🕒 1 Hour
- 🏰 Guided tour of the UNESCO World Heritage site.
- 📖 Historical insights into the fortress and its significance.

### 3. Market Square Marvels:

- 🕒 1 Hour
- 🛍️ Visit the vibrant Helsinki Market Square.
- 🍽️ Sample local delicacies and shop for authentic Finnish products.

### 4. Scenic Shoreline Stroll:

- 🕒 45 Minutes
- 🌊 Leisurely walk along the beautiful Helsinki shoreline.
- 📷 Capture picturesque views and landmarks.

### 5. Helsinki Cathedrals & Senate Square:

- 🕒 1 Hour
- 🏰 Explore both of the iconic Helsinki Cathedrals.
- 🏛️ Discover Senate Square and its architectural wonders.

### 6. Lunch at Local Gem:

- 🕒 1 Hour
- 🍽️ Indulge in a delicious Finnish meal at a carefully selected local restaurant.
- 🤝 Enjoy the relaxed ambiance and genuine hospitality.

### 7. Cultural Insights at Design District:

- 🕒 45 Minutes
- 🎨 Discover the unique design and arts scene in Helsinki.
- 🛍️ Browse through boutiques and galleries.

### 8. Farewell and Return:

- 🕒 15 Minutes
- 🚗 Comfortable return to the cruise port.
- 🤝 Bid farewell with cherished memories.

**\*Note:** The itinerary is flexible and can be adjusted based on the cruise ship schedule and traveler preferences. Our guides ensure a seamless experience, maximizing your short layover in Helsinki!