

Artículo: The meaning of rental second homes and places: the owners' perspectives

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Abstract

This paper is based on a review of owners' perspectives of two sun and golf destinations – Albufeira (in the south of Portugal) and Islantilla (in the south of Spain), using a cross-regional sample, based on owners' descriptions collected from ownersdirect.co.uk (online vacation rental platform). The aim is to understand the owners' vacation rentals descriptions depicting their perspectives in categories such as sense of place, hospitality and house facilities. This exploratory research departs from grounded theory, which means that no presuppositions were set. The qualitative feedback from the study reaffirms that the sense of place is not a static concept, as Albufeira and Islantilla owners' descriptions bring together emotional and cognitive elements personalizing their properties and the surrounding environment. The results suggest that togetherness, relaxation, continuity and place attachment are the most highlighted points when announcing their properties, particularly in Albufeira. The analysis of this phenomenon through an innovative design that puts together textual analysis of the owners' online vacation rental description and the virtual environment is one of the main contributions of this paper. The limited descriptions of the destination give rise to the absence of the sense of place from a local perspective to the owners of a second home in those destinations. This may be one of the reasons that they opted to rent their homes.

Keywords

Online vacation rentals, second home owners, sense of place, qualitative approach, Islantilla, Albufeira

Introduction

Tourism space implies an interaction between individuals and a physical location. This should not be approached under a simplistic perspective (Graham, 1998). Graham, S. (1998). The end of geography or the explosion of place? Conceptualizing space, place and information technology, as places need to be studied in relational terms, as Massey (1993). Massey, D. (1993). Power-geometry and a progressive sense of place. In J. Bird, B. Curtis, T. Putnam, G. Robertson, & L. Tickner (Eds.), *Mapping the futures: Local cultures, global change* (pp. 59–69). suggests: 'articulated in networks of social relations and understandings' rather than as "areas with boundaries around'. Tourism benefits from the relatively free flow of people, capital, and talent across international borders and allows transnational investments that drive tourism development as part of a global neoliberal agenda, which is also criticized as culturally

homogenizing and economically neo-colonial (Lew, Hall, & Williams, 2014). Lew, A., Hall, M., & Williams, A. (2014). *The Wiley Blackwell companion to tourism* (1st ed.). However, it is important to keep in mind that globalization also empowers local populations, building local capacity to respond to external influences through knowledge, networks, and the effective use of information technologies (Lew, 2008). Lew, A. (2008). Long tail tourism: New geographies for marketing niche tourism products.

Relationships between second home ownership, 'host' community, tourists, or places still remains poorly understood. These concerns are often based on stereotypical visions of casual tourists, in contrast to the phenomenon of second home owners, who usually have frequent interaction with the local setting (Stedman, 2006). Stedman, R. (2006). Understanding place attachment among second home owners. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 50(2), 187–205.

The relationship between owner and (rental) second home may evolve and develop different levels of 'sense of home' in an intricate relation with place. Places, like forms of attachment to places, are not static. A sense of place is not an inert concept, it changes in response to both inside and outside community influences and changes of meaning also result from individuals' life experiences (Davenport & Anderson, 2005). Davenport, M.A., & Anderson, D.H. (2005). Getting from sense of place to place-based management: An interpretive investigation of place meanings and perceptions of landscape change. *Society and Natural Resources*, 18(7), 625–641; Kianicka, Buchecker, Hunziker, & Müller-Möker, 2006). Kianicka, S., Buchecker M., Hunziker N., & Müller-Möker U. (2006). Locals' and tourists' sense of place: A case study in a Swiss Alpine village. *Mountain Research and Development*, 26(1), 55–63.

Moreover, the growing movement between primary and second homes is only one example of how mobility has become an increasingly normal part of contemporary life style (Quinn, 2004). Quinn, B. (2004). Dwelling through multiple places: A case study of second home ownership in Ireland. In C.M. Hall & D.K Müller (Eds.), *Tourism mobility and second homes. Between elite landscapes and common ground* (pp. 45–59). Clevedon: Channel View Publications. As Urry (2000). Urry, J. (2000). *Sociology beyond societies: Mobilities for the twenty-first century*. argues, contemporary forms of dwelling almost always involve diverse forms of mobility.

Ownersdirect.co.uk offers a holiday rental marketplace for both private property owners to display their properties and potential guests to choose their accommodation and contact the respective property owner. Homeowners publicize their properties by posting photographs and brief descriptions of place and property. Thus, this paper intends to explore the phenomenon of online vacation rentals (OVRs) from the owner's perspective, exploring how they persuade tourists to choose their properties. As mature sun and sand tourism destinations tend to be perceived as undistinguishable, this research uses a cross-regional sample to assess the level of homogeneity these similar destinations possess from the perspective of the second home proprietors.

Studies about mobility, changing patterns of residence, social organization and orientation to places in relation to the ownership of second and 'multiple' home platforms (such as OVRs, which are a good example of this) are increasingly catching the attention of researchers (Casado-Díaz, 2001). Casado-Díaz, M.A. (2001). *De turistas a residentes: la migración*

internacional de retirados en España (PhD thesis). University of Alicante, Spain.; Coppock, 197710. Coppock, J.T. (1977). Second homes: Curse or blessing; Cuba, 198912. Cuba, L. (1989). Retiring to vacationland. *Generations*, 13(2), 63–67.; Hall, 200624. Hall, C.M. (2006). Space-time accessibility and the tourist area cycle of evolution: The role of geographies of spatial interaction and mobility in contributing to an improved understanding of tourism. In R. Butler (Ed.), *The tourism life cycle: Conceptual and theoretical* (pp. 83–100). Clevedon; Kauppila, 2010; King, Warnes, & Williams, 200030. King, R., Warnes, A.M., & Williams, A.M. (2000). *Sunset lives: British retirement migration to the Mediterranean*; Lew et al., 201435. Lew, A., Hall, M., & Williams, A. (2014). *The Wiley Blackwell companion to tourism* (1st ed.); Müller & Marjavaara, 201143. Müller, D.K., & Marjavaara, R. (2011). From second home to primary residence migration towards recreational properties in Sweden 1991–2005.; Müller, 2002b42. Müller, D.K. (2002b). Reinventing the countryside: German second-home owners in Southern Sweden. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 5(5), 426–446.; Overvag, 200944. Overvag, K. (2009). *Second homes in Eastern Norway from marginal land to commodity* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Faculty of Social Sciences and Technology Management; Willams, King, Warners, & Patterson, 200068. Willams, A.M, King, R., Warners, A., & Patterson, G. (2000). Tourism and international retirement migration: New forms of and relationship in southern Europe. *Tourism Geographies*, 2(1), 28–49.

Tourism is an integral part of these changes and, along with their mutable nature, is responsible for the mobility demonstrated in the various ways in which places are being created, changed and ‘consumed’ by tourists and leisure users (Hall, 200523. Hall, C.M. (2005). *Tourism: Rethinking the social science of mobility*. Sheller & Urry, 200455. Sheller, M., & Urry, J. (Eds.). (2004). *Tourism mobilities*. London: Urry, 199566. Urry, J. (1995). *Consuming places*. Urry, J. (2000). *Sociology beyond societies: Mobilities for the twenty-first century*. Both tourism and second homes are forms of mobility. The technology, information and communication attained by OVR platforms are the vehicle which facilitates and allow owners, tourists and second homes to be part of the same process.

The second home phenomenon is not new, although in the recent times it has been increasing a lot, due to the ageing of western societies and extension of active retirement; the uncertainty and mobility of labour market; the increase of available flights, mainly from low-cost airlines; increased welfare and participation in tourism consumption; improved transportation and communication; the global crisis that compromises the payment of mortgages are some of the issues that justify the increasing of importance of the second home rental markets.

A review of research on second home owners allows us to conclude that they do not consider themselves tourists but rather a part of the local community (Aronsson, 20042. Aronsson, L. (2004). *Place attachment of vacation residents: Between tourists and permanent residents*. In C.M. Hall & D.K. Müller (Eds.), *Tourism, mobility and second homes: Between elite landscape and common ground* (pp. 75–86).; Müller, 2002a42. Müller, D.K. (2002b). Reinventing the countryside: German second-home owners in Southern Sweden. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 5(5), 426–446.; nevertheless, owners’ motives are in fact touristic as they perceive their second home as a leisure escape that offers the possibility to relax in well-known surroundings, spend time with family/friends and enjoy nature (Aronsson, 20042. Aronsson, L.

(2004). Place attachment of vacation residents: Between tourists and permanent residents. In C.M. Hall & D.K. Müller (Eds.), *Tourism, mobility and second homes: Between elite landscape and common ground* (pp. 75–86); Jaakson, 1986. Jaakson, R. (1986). Second home domestic tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 13(3), 367–391.; Müller, 2002. Müller, D.K. (2002a). German second home development in Sweden. In C.M. Hall, & A.M. Williams (Eds.), *Tourism and migration: New relationships between production and consumption* (pp. 153–168).

With a strong emotional attachment to the second home and its location, a second home is often part of the owner's personal identity, and ownership may last for many years, even generations, with the reminiscence of childhood and/or close family relations (e.g. Jaakson, 1986. Jaakson, R. (1986). Second home domestic tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 13(3), 367–391.; Kaltenborn, 1998. Kaltenborn, B.P. (1998). The alternate home – motives of recreation home use. *Norsk Geografisk Tidsskrift - Norwegian Journal of Geography*, 52(3), 121–134.; Quinn, 2004. Quinn, B. (2004). Dwelling through multiple places: A case study of second home ownership in Ireland. In C.M. Hall & D.K Müller (Eds.), *Tourism mobility and second homes. Between elite landscapes and common ground* (pp. 45–59).

In other words, the Away is also determined by the owner's motivation and this has been identified by, for example, Chaplin (1999. Chaplin, D. (1999). Consuming work/productive leisure: The consumption patterns of second home environments. *Leisure Studies*, 18(1), 41–55, and Quinn (2004. Quinn, B. (2004). Dwelling through multiple places: A case study of second home ownership in Ireland. In C.M. Hall & D.K Müller (Eds.), *Tourism mobility and second homes. Between elite landscapes and common ground* (pp. 45–59)., who argue that a second home is a 'free area' where all activities and chores are done of one's own free will and where life moves at a slower pace.

The second home includes a high degree of continuity and recognisability seeing that it is repeatedly visited (e.g. Chaplin 1999. Chaplin, D. (1999). Consuming work/productive leisure: The consumption patterns of second home environments. *Leisure Studies*, 18(1), 41–55.; Jaakson, 1986. Jaakson, R. (1986). Second home domestic tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 13(3), 367–391.; Quinn, 2004. Quinn, B. (2004). Dwelling through multiple places: A case study of second home ownership in Ireland. In C.M. Hall & D.K Müller (Eds.), *Tourism mobility and second homes. Between elite landscapes and common ground* (pp. 45–59). Emotional attachment to the second home or the area is also present and is often very strong and may exceed that of the first home, the second home becoming part of the owner's personal identity (e.g. Jaakson, 1986. Jaakson, R. (1986). Second home domestic tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 13(3), 367–391. Kaltenborn, B.P. (1998). The alternate home – motives of recreation home use. *Norsk Geografisk Tidsskrift - Norwegian Journal of Geography*, 52(3), 121–134.; Quinn, 2004. Quinn, B. (2004). Dwelling through multiple places: A case study of second home ownership in Ireland. In C.M. Hall & D.K Müller (Eds.), *Tourism mobility and second homes. Between elite landscapes and common ground* (pp. 45–59).; Svenson, 2004. Svenson, S. (2004). The cottage and the city an interpretation of the Canadian second home experience tourism. In C.M. Hall & D.K. Müller (Eds.), *Tourism mobility and second homes. Between elite landscapes and common ground* (pp. 55–74). Clevedon: Channel View Publications.

In recent decades, social scientists have developed a variety of concepts to describe people–place relations. Tuan (1980). Tuan, Y.F. (1980). Rootedness versus sense of place. *Landscape*, 24, 3–8., a humanist geographer, introduced the broadest definition of the concept, a ‘sense of place’, which incorporates in its definition the meanings, attachment and satisfaction that an individual or group associates with a particular place (Stedman, 2003). Stedman, R. (2003). Is it really just a social construction? The contribution of the physical environment to sense of place. *Society and Natural Resources*, 16(8), 671–685.

The construct of place attachment emerged as an umbrella concept encompassing place relations as diverse as ‘at homeness’ (Seamon, 1979). Seamon D. (1979). *A geography of the life world: Movement, rest and encounter*, ‘place dependence’ (Williams, Patterson, Roggenbuck, & Watson, 1992). Williams, D.R., Patterson, M.E., Roggenbuck, J.W., & Watson, A.E. (1992). Beyond the commodity metaphor: Examining emotional and symbolic attachment to place. *Leisure Sciences*, 14(1), 29–46. and ‘place identity’ (Proshansky, Fabian, & Kaminoff, 1983). Proshansky, H.M., Fabian, A.K., & Kaminoff, R. (1983). Place identity: Physical world and socialization of the self. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 3(1), 57–83.; Twigger-Ross & Uzzel, 1996). Twigger-Ross, C.L., & Uzzel, D.L. (1996). Place and identity processes. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 16(3), 205–220.

A sense of place is the meaning and emotion humans assign to a geographic space (Stedman, 2003). Stedman, R. (2003). Is it really just a social construction? The contribution of the physical environment to sense of place. *Society and Natural Resources*, 16(8), 671–685. and it involves awareness about a place and attributes that differentiate it from other places (Tuan, 1980). Tuan, Y.F. (1980). Rootedness versus sense of place. *Landscape*, 24, 3–8.. Historical, cultural, social, ecological and also physical attributes may all contribute to the creation of place meanings.

According to the social sciences (Gieryn, 2000). Gieryn, T. (2000). A space for place in sociology. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 26(1), 463–496., p. 465; Soja, 1996). Soja, E. (1996). *Third space: Journeys to Los Angeles and other real and imagined places*. London: Blackwell.

View all references), place has at least three fundamental features: (1) geographic location (a place is a unique spot in the universe); (2) material form (place has physicality); and (3) investment with meaning and value, identification or representation by ordinary people. A place is not only a place.

The relationship between place attachment and other place concepts such as place meanings and a sense of place is still controversial. Place attachment seems particularly well suited to measuring the strength of personal emotional bonds (e.g. meaningfulness or sentiment) and individual differences in the strength of attachments to a specific place (Williams & McIntyre, 2012). Williams, D.R., & McIntyre, N. (2012). Place affinities, lifestyle mobilities and quality of life. In M. Uysal, R. Perdue, & J.J. Sirgy (Eds.), *Handbook of tourism and quality-of-life (QOL) research: Enhancing the lives of tourists and residents of host communities* (pp. 209–231). Springer Publications.

The vacation property evokes fond memories of past vacations and strong sentimental attachments. Both tourists and owners have the potential to feel this experience. Holidays can

bring back memories of simpler times along with the sense of the security of childhood or the carefree feelings of being young, without the worries and stress which are always present in our daily lives. Most often, holidays remind us of people who have played important roles in our lives and the activities we shared with them. This is one reason why people who are away from home are especially likely to feel nostalgic during the holidays and why so many people travel to be with family and friends. (Batcho, DaRin, Nave, & Yaworsky, 2008). Batcho, K.I., DaRin, M.L., Nave, A.M., & Yaworsky, R.R. (2008). Nostalgia and identity in song lyrics. *Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity and the Arts*, 2(4), 236–244.

The concept of sense of place entails a set of meanings, beliefs, symbols, values and feelings that individuals or groups associate with a particular location. Authors, such as Cresswell (2006). Cresswell, T. (2006), Kyle and Chick (2007). Kyle, G., & Chick, G. (2007). The social construction of a sense of place. *Leisure Sciences*, 29(3), 209–225. Stedman (2003). Stedman, R. (2003). Is it really just a social construction? The contribution of the physical environment to sense of place. *Society and Natural Resources*, 16(8), 671–685. Torkington (2012). Torkington, K. (2012). Place and lifestyle migration: The discursive construction of ‘glocal’ place-identity. *Mobilities*, 7(1), 71–92., and Tuan (1980). Tuan, Y.F. (1980). Rootedness versus sense of place. *Landscape*, 24, 3–8, also perceive different levels of sense of place in their research. To study something as multifaceted as a sense of place, or the individual and sociocultural meanings of place, qualitative and interpretative methods have increasingly been adopted, as is the case of this research.

The strategy for this research is influenced by grounded theory, which provides a systematic procedure for collecting and analysing qualitative data. Grounded theory recognizes the importance of people in ‘shaping the worlds they live in through the process of symbolic interaction’ and the interrelationship between peoples’ perceptions and actions. We intend to study the OVR phenomena using the owners’ perspectives or voices, collect and analyse data simultaneously and refine the theory using a range of data (Glaser & Strauss 1968). Glaser, B., & Strauss, A. (1968). *The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson.. Goulding, C. (2002). *Grounded theory: A practical guide for management (Business and Market Researchers)*. In grounded theory, coding strategies are adopted as a way of breaking down OVR owners’ descriptions into ‘distinct units of meaning’ (Goulding, 2002). Goulding, C. (2002). *Grounded theory: A practical guide for management (Business and Market Researchers)*. Coding conceptualizes ‘data by constant comparison of incident with incident, and incident with concept, to emerge more categories and their properties’ (Glaser, 1992). Glaser, B. (1992). *Basics of grounded theory analysis: Emergence vs forcing*. Mill Valley, CA: Sociology Press.

The first stage of this process, ‘open coding’, aims to open up the owners’ description data by fragmenting it, identifying concepts and using constant comparison to scrutinize the data for every meaning (Glaser, 1992). Glaser, B. (1992). *Basics of grounded theory analysis: Emergence vs forcing*. Mill Valley, CA: Sociology Press.. Constant comparison is ‘the exploration of similarities and differences across incidents in data’ (Goulding, 2002). Goulding, C. (2002). *Grounded theory: A practical guide for management (Business and Market Researchers)*. and occurs where incidents are coded for properties and categories that connect them (Glaser, 1992). Glaser, B. (1992). *Basics of grounded theory analysis: Emergence vs forcing*.. Initial

codes are labelled 'to generate concepts' which are 'clustered into descriptive categories' (Goulding, C. (2002). *Grounded theory: A practical guide for management (Business and Market Researchers)*).

Once concepts have been identified they are analysed in more depth and are grouped under more abstract 'higher order' concepts (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Strauss, A., & Corbin J. (1998). *Basics of qualitative research -techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory..* At this stage, incidents are compared to incidents recalled from experience, memos written during the data collection and analysis process, and from the literature. This 'systematic comparison' sensitizes the researcher to properties and dimensions in the data that might have been overlooked (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Strauss, A., & Corbin J. (1998). *Basics of qualitative research -techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory.*

The strategy of our research was to capture the multiplicity of owner's voices and add depth, meaning and reflexivity. Thus, the research area is characterized by a complex web of relationships and a range of tangible and intangible factors. Fonseca (2002), Medd (2001). Medd, W. (2001). *Critical emergence: Complexity science and social policy. Social Issues, 1, 2* [online] Retrieved 12 September 2013, from: <http://www.whb.co.uk/socialissues/tb.htm>, Mitleton-Kelly and Subhan (2002). Mitleton-Kelly, E., & Subhan, N. (2002). *Experiencing complexity thinking in practice (a narrative)*. London: LSE Complexity Research Programme, and Shaw (2002). Shaw, P. (2002). *Changing conversations in organizations: A complexity approach to change.* argue that complex social phenomena are affected by a range of factors, many of which are not tangible: in our study we found physical characteristics of the environment and the location, their affect and meanings, the activities afforded by the place and the (social) interactions associated with the place, such as affiliation and sense of past (Belk, 1990). Belk, R.W. (1990). *The role of possessions in constructing and maintaining a sense of past.* In M.E. Goldberg, G. Gorn, & R.W. Pollay, (Eds.), *NA – Advances in Consumer Research (Vol. 17, pp. 669–676)*, as salient categories mentioned by OVR owners under analysis.

This research has been developed by collecting posts from the owners.com platform about properties with similar characteristics in two similar sun and sand destinations. For our study we chose Islantilla and Albufeira. Islantilla is a seaside town located in Andalusia, Spain. It belongs to a tourist region called 'Costa de la Luz' and Albufeira is a coastal village, one of the oldest tourist destinations in the Algarve. We use ownersdirect.co.uk where the perspectives of owners are more than evident; to conduct cross-sectional research, we used two different regions usually perceived as direct competitors, or perfect substitutes (Portugal and Spain). Ownersdirect.co.uk is one of the few websites where owners present extended descriptions of their homes and the surrounding environment. This platform is specialized in advertising privately owned holiday accommodation direct from the owner and the online vacation channel has advertised holiday properties since 1997. Their web site summarizes over than 55,000 villas, apartments, chalets, farmhouses and cottages-all types of holiday accommodation in countries throughout the world. We selected ownersdirect.co.uk as our epistemological site because UK visitors are the largest group of tourists in the Algarve and Andalusia. Half of UK overseas home owners have properties in Mediterranean coastal locations (Savills International Research Rentals, 2011). Savills International Research

Rentals, Autumn (2011). UK second homes abroad Spotlight. in www.savills.co.uk/research. (last accessed 12 Jan 2014)] These figures are visible on our research site, since both English tourists and owners are the most representative on the ownersdirect.co.uk platform (owners and tourist members) and have consistently shaped its reality. In order to understand how owners describe the sense of place, the statements collected were categorized into physical characteristics of the environment and location, their affect and meanings, the activities afforded by the place and the (social) interactions associated with the place, as suggested by Kianicka et al. (2006). Kianicka, S., Buchecker M., Hunziker N., & Müller-Möker U. (2006). Locals' and tourists' sense of place: A case study in a Swiss Alpine village. *Mountain Research and Development*, 26(1), 55–63. A total of 72 descriptions were extracted, 36 for each destination (Islantilla and Albufeira) collected in May 2013.

The owner's own profile, why he/she chose this location and the benefits of the property were collected directly from ownersdirect.co.uk website. The descriptions followed a specific and narrow textual genre: each owner presents themselves and most describe themselves, mentioning how long they have known the place, some of them relate the number of their children, or grandchildren and they usually mention their occupations and where they live.

The sample selection followed a theoretical sample procedure (Eisenhardt, 1989). Eisenhardt, K.M. (1989). Building theories from case study research. *Academy of Management Review*, 14(4), 532–550.; Woodside, MacDonald, & Burford, 2004. Woodside, A.G., MacDonald, R., & Burford, M. (2004). Grounded theory of leisure travel. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 17(1), 7–39.

Theoretical sampling procedures presuppose considering all the possible combinations of cases, with four to seven attributes distinguished (Woodside et al., 2004). Woodside, A.G., MacDonald, R., & Burford, M. (2004). Grounded theory of leisure travel. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 17(1), 7–39, the minimum acceptable number of observations stipulated for each case being between five and eight (McCracken, 1988). McCracken, G. (1988). The long interview; Woodside et al., 2004. Woodside, A.G., MacDonald, R., & Burford, M. (2004). Grounded theory of leisure travel. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 17(1), 7–39.

The sample was stratified based on property characteristics that may introduce a different meaning to the surrounding environment, which in its essence may also be different. The first attribute considered is apartments and villas, as villas and apartments represent quite a different interaction with the local community (Belisle & Hoy, 1980). Belisle, F.J., & D.R. Hoy. (1980). The perceived impact of tourism by residents: A case study in Santa Marta, Columbia. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 7(1), 83–101. Tourism development on Vancouver Island: An assessment of the core-periphery model. *The Professional Geographer*, 40(1), 32–42. The second is closeness to the beach (as sun and sand tourists have been perceived as different from the others (Gray, 1970). Gray, H. (1970). International travel – international trade; golfing owners have been also perceived as different from the common herd (Correia, Barros, & Silvestre, 2007). Correia, A., Barros, C.P., & Silvestre, A. (2007). Golf tourism repeat choice behaviour in the Algarve: A mixed logit approach. *Tourism Economics*, 13(1), 111–127.; Kim, Chun, & Petrick, 2005). Kim, S., Chun, H., & Petrick, J.F. (2005). Positioning analysis of overseas golf tour destinations by Korean golf tourists. *Tourism Management*, 26(6), 905–917.

Readman, 2003⁵¹. Readman, M. (2003). Golf tourism. In S. Hudson (Ed.), *Sport and adventure tourism* (pp. 165–201). Binghamton, NY:

There is no villa, nor apartment set on a golf course on the beach announced in our epistemological site ([ownersdirect.co.uk](http://www.ownersdirect.co.uk)⁴⁵. Ownersdirect.co.uk Retrieved May 2013, from: <http://www.ownersdirect.co.uk/> in either location. Most golf courses either in Albufeira or in Islantilla are located slightly away from the coastline. The sample is therefore composed of 72 properties, with 36 profiles each from Albufeira and Islantilla.

The owners' descriptions were transcribed to re-engage with their content, which enabled thoughts and concepts to develop. Segments of text were colour-coded and line-by-line analysis was used to identify key words or phrases to develop coding categories. Manual analysis enabled the researcher to repeatedly revisit and be immersed in the data, recoding and capturing patterns or themes as they emerged. Open coding was used to break down data into distinct units of meaning and these units were then labelled to generate concepts. Constant comparative analysis enabled the researcher to develop the codes further as the process continued, which directed further data collection (Glaser, 1978¹⁷. Glaser, B. (1978). *Theoretical sensitivity*.; Goulding, 2002²⁰. Goulding, C. (2002). *Grounded theory: A practical guide for management (Business and Market Researchers)*; Strauss & Corbin, 1998⁵⁹. Strauss, A., & Corbin J. (1998). *Basics of qualitative research -techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory*.

This study relies on a qualitative-explorative research methodology in order to capture the multidimensional meanings presented by the owners' profiles, place motivations and descriptions listed on OVR platforms in different contexts, applying the theoretical construct of sense of place of the data at hand enables to compare the Albufeira and Islantilla owners' descriptions, throughout a code book depicted by literature. Six dimensions were considered (landscape; leisure activities; global affiliation (sense of past; sense of home tangibles/intangibles) and location (Campelo, Aitken, Thyne, & Gnoth, 2014⁶. Campelo, A., Aitken, R., Tyne, M., & Gnoth, J. (2014). *Sense of place: The importance for destination branding*. *Journal of Travel Research*, 53(2), 154–166. The findings include the authors' assessment of different places' characteristics and research data generated from Albufeira and Islantilla. The owners' platform descriptions as has already been described above, are divided in two sections: the first section was about the owner and the second section focused on why this location? The results therefore originate from an assessment of these questions.

From ownersdirect.co.uk website and through owners' descriptions collected, it was found that the owners are mainly English families who live in England, with small children or already with grandchildren (a second generation is often present); the investment in the properties (villas or apartments) is shared in some cases by parents or in-laws; a few owners are retired and most of the homeowners mentioned childhood memories or particular stories (honeymoon, marriage) and repeated holiday experiences over long periods as in (Davenport & Anderson, 2005¹³. Davenport, M.A., & Anderson, D.H. (2005). *Getting from sense of place to place-based management: An interpretive investigation of place meanings and perceptions of landscape change*. *Society and Natural Resources*, 18(7), 625–641.; Kianicka et al., 2006²⁸. Kianicka, S., Buchecker M., Hunziker N., & Müller-Möker U. (2006). *Locals' and tourists' sense*

of place: A case study in a Swiss Alpine village. *Mountain Research and Development*, 26(1), 55–63; Turner & Turner, 2006. Turner, P., & Turner, S. (2006). Place, sense of place, and presence. *Presence: Teleoperators and Virtual Environments*, 15(2), 204–217. that argued that past reminiscence is often present to represent the place attachment. These properties are also used by their owners, renting is regarded as an investment, commonly referred in residential tourism research (Paris, 2009). Paris, C. (2009). Re-positioning second homes within housing studies: Household investment, gentrification, multiple residence, mobility and hyper-consumption. *Housing, Theory and Society*, 26(4), 292–310. Affluence, mobility, and second home ownership (Housing and society series). New York, NY: The owner descriptions and their structural configuration (emotional plus cognitive dimensions) shadow the strong place attachment they have with the place. This structure of announcements reinforces the need to have a strong attachment to the place to entice the second home to be bought, as outlined by (Quinn, 2004). Quinn, B. (2004). Dwelling through multiple places: A case study of second home ownership in Ireland. In C.M. Hall & D.K Müller (Eds.), *Tourism mobility and second homes. Between elite landscapes and common ground* (pp. 45–59).

Descriptions which had similar features or core categories as described in the code-book created for this research in relation to the six dimensions were grouped together and then put in one type and those with other features into another type and so on. This was used directly for constructing the sense of place of Albufeira and Islantilla through an inductive process (Table 1). From Table 1, it is possible to suggested that sense of place comprised (landscape; leisure activities; global affiliation (sense of past; (sense of home tangibles/intangibles); location/accessibilities).

The results suggested that none of these three main options were exclusive, and the criteria were not sufficient to differentiate the places under study, since they share few benefits and attributes. Another curious finding was that, from the 72 owners' descriptions analysed, all have swimming pools, which is clearly a much-appreciated facility for owners and tourists. In this research the local community in the OVR context is often represented by foreigners and some of them describe the Algarve and Spain through what they know and are attached to, as happens in the research of Dias, Ribeiro, and Correia (2013). Dias, J.A., Ribeiro, F.P., & Correia, A. (2013). Online reviews of short-term visits: Exploring sense of place. *International Journal of Culture, Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 7(4), 364–374.

Furthermore, the results also suggest continuity and place attachment motivations, where owners relate to a place over many years/generations, with memories of childhood and/or family relations (Jaakson, 1986). Jaakson, R. (1986). Second home domestic tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 13(3), 367–391.

Thus, owners have a strong emotional attachment to their second home or place (particularly visible in Albufeira). The owner extends not only into the present material environmental, but also extends forward and backward in time (Stedman, 2006). Stedman, R. (2006). Understanding place attachment among second home owners. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 50(2), 187–205. Among the holiday experiences, memories and owners' place descriptions, meanings are revealed (Pearce & Lee, 2005). Pearce, P.L., & Lee, U. (2005). Developing the travel career approach to tourist motivation. *Journal of Travel Research*, 43(3), 226–237.

Personification is frequently applied to characterize their second homes and some owners describe their properties embodied in their personality identity, which may suggest that their decision to buy their second home relies on a sense of place. Further other motivation drivers: Away motivation (Larsen & Halkier, 2011). Larsen, & Halkier (2011). Holiday home – some reflections on research design, Paper for Research Design, Research Methodology and Research Ethics, which includes the desire to be together (with family, friends); an opportunity to be away from everyday life for relaxation (beach, sun, nature) and be away from home are more than evident in their speeches.

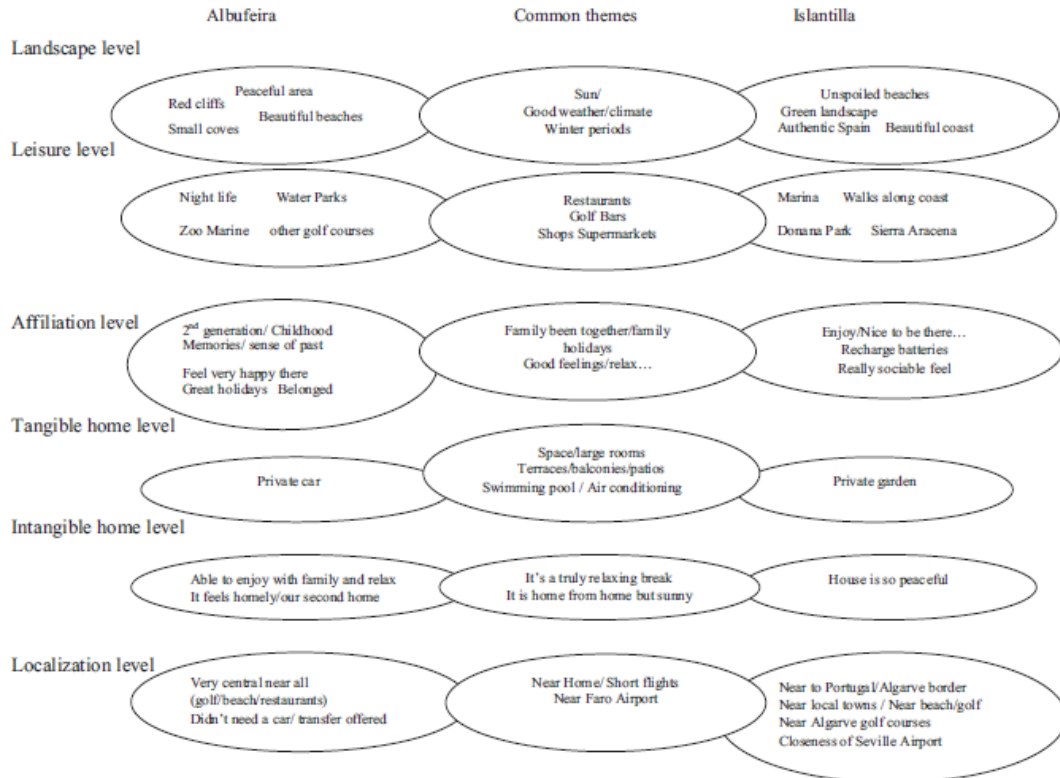
The word cloud (Figure 1) is based on 8368 words from Albufeira and Islantilla owner descriptions; it is possible to summarize the most important motivations mentioned by owners: place and home familiarity (words such as years, holiday, home, villa, area, love, enjoy, family, Algarve, Portugal). The word cloud seeks to improve word readability further via a summary of the two sections (about the owner and why they buy in this location) concerning the owner's profile. Words such as Spain, love, area, live, children, England, both, home are those that are referenced more by homeowners in the Islantilla county. The word cloud makes it even clearer that the narratives of owners are either centred on symbolic aspects or on more practical aspects. The word Algarve is, of course, most evident from its strong reputation as a tourist destination, as it is Islantilla. The word 'area', without specifying any particular area, appears in the cloud as a Spanish destination, as the small county of Islantilla, the area of Andalusia, and with a historical and tourist weight which is much more recent when compared with the Algarve. A set of words is displayed in the cloud to visualize Albufeira's family oriented component (family, holidays, children, home/villa):

and place attachment motivations (e.g. Jaakson, 1986). Jaakson, R. (1986). Second home domestic tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 13(3), 367–391.

View all references; Kaltenborn, 1998. Kaltenborn, B.P. (1998). The alternate home – motives of recreation home use. *Norsk Geografisk Tidsskrift - Norwegian Journal of Geography*, 52(3), 121–134.; Quinn, 2004. Quinn, B. (2004). Dwelling through multiple places: A case study of second home ownership in Ireland. In C.M. Hall & D.K Müller (Eds.), *Tourism mobility and second homes. Between elite landscapes and common ground* (pp. 45–59); Svenson, 2004. Svenson, S. (2004). The cottage and the city an interpretation of the Canadian second home experience tourism. In C.M. Hall & D.K. Müller (Eds.), *Tourism mobility and second homes. Between elite landscapes and common ground* (pp. 55–74). Where owners relate to a place over many years/generations, with memories of childhood and/or family relations, give owners a strong emotional attachment to their second home or place, as Tuulentie (2007). Tuulentie, S. (2007). Settled tourists: Second homes as a part of tourist life stories. *Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism*, 7(3), 281–300. Online reviews of short-term visits: Exploring sense of place. *International Journal of Culture, Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 7(4), 364–374.

View all references) mentioned. This evidence is not so evident in Islantilla County.

A few salient differences were also suggested in the online owners' descriptions in terms of discursive strategies while writing about Albufeira or Islantilla. Owners describe both locations and make the same topics relevant (close surroundings and location; house amenities (particularly space); global affiliation and restaurant recommendations) (Figure 2). The data do not reveal salient expressions of social interaction of these owners with the local community and reveal just two references to the cultural context (Islantilla county) which are the usual dimensions explored in sense of place (Stedman, 2003). Stedman, R. (2003). Is it really just a social construction? The contribution of the physical environment to sense of place. *Society and Natural Resources*, 16(8), 671–685. However, the Islantilla mentions were more diverse and describe points of attractions in both countries (Andalusia and Algarve). Mention of renting a car is more frequent in place descriptions of Islantilla compared with Albufeira, as is possible to identify through a few paraphrased examples described in the code-book (Table 1).



The landscape extracts of Islantilla were more diverse and the Islantilla owners often make references about the proximity of the Algarve; for example, Islantilla is located in Andalusia which is known as the 'Spanish Algarve'. Albufeira references were mainly about the beaches, cliffs and cliff formations, as shown in Figures 1 and 2 and Table 2.

Table 2. Results from ownersdirect.co.uk Albufeira and Islantilla owners' descriptions.

Dimensions	Albufeira	Islantilla
Landscape references		
Albufeira 81	Quiet/peaceful surroundings/area [25%] Beautiful beaches[21%] Red cliffs/wonderful cliffs/cliff top walls [11%] Stunning sea views [11%] The good weather/climate [11%] Real peace of paradise [4%] Small coves [4%] Stunning surroundings [4%] Restaurants [23%] Golf [15%] Night life in Albufeira [15%] Bars [15%] Shops [10%] Mini-markets/supermarkets [9%] Water parks [5%] Different golf courses around [4%] Zoo Marine [3%]	Very authentic/typical area of Spain [30%] Fantasti c/beautiful/unspoiled beaches [28%] The good weather [12%] Costa de la Luz is such a beautiful coast [9%] Fantasti c/stunning/location [7%] Green landscape/ Countryside [5%] Gem in a very well kept Spanish secret [5%] Underdeveloped coast line [4%] Restaurants [28%] Golf [26%] Bars [14%] Mini-Markets/supermarkets [10%] Lots going on [6%] Walks through the coast line [6%] Marina facility is near by [4%] Near Donana Park [2%] Near Sierra Aracena [2%]
Leisure activities references		
Albufeira 79	Second-generation/childhood memories [47%] We love the area/great/relax holidays [32%] We feel very happy there[17%] Family been together/family holidays [19%] We felt that we belonged [8%]	It was a joy, it is so nice to be there,it is magical [30%] Family been together/family holidays [30%] Beautiful beaches [15%] So there is a really sociable feel to the place [15%]
Islantilla 50		
Global affiliation references		
Albufeira 47		
Islantilla 20		

(continued)

Table 2. (Continued)

Dimensions	Albufeira	Islandilla
Affiliation: sense of home tangibles		
Albufeira 54	Swimming pool [46%] Space/large/plenty of room [22%] Terraces/balconies/patios [22%] Air conditioning [7%] Private car [6%]	Terraces/balconies/patios [31%] Space/large/plenty of room [22%] Swimming pool [19%] Private garden [19%] Air conditioning [9%]
Islandilla 32		
Affiliation: sense of home intangibles		
Albufeira 40	Able to enjoy with family and relax [38%] Visit our villa it's a truly relaxing break [2.5%] It feels home/ly/our second home [23%] It is home from home but sunny [15%]	The house is so peaceful [37%] The apartment makes you feel home from day one [37%] Sun, sit, read and relax by the pool [26%]
Islandilla 19		
Location/accessibilities		
Albufeira 38	Very central near all (golf/beaches/restaurants) [47%] Did not need a car [16%] Transfer offered [13%] Short flights [13%] Faro airport near [11%]	Near to Portugal /Algarve border [20%] Closeness Faro Airport [16%] Local towns/Seville /Cadix [16%] Perfect location for beach/golf/leisure holidays [14%] Near Algarve golf courses [14%] Closeness Seville Airport [12%] Near home/short flight [6%]
Islandilla 49		

Source: ownersdirect.co.uk.

Concerning leisure activities, it was possible to understand how the hedonistic quality of holidaying was a major theme in these descriptions. It seems that 'relaxing' or being 'away from daily life' and the affordances of leisure activities (such as playing golf, nightlife, eating out in restaurants) are much appreciated from the owners' point of view, as is listed in Table 2 and reinforced in Turner and Turner (2006). Turner, P., & Turner, S. (2006). Place, sense of

place, and presence. *Presence: Teleoperators and Virtual Environments*, 15(2), 204–217. When it comes to the dimension global affiliation, which means a general feeling of familiarity, security and safety and statements characterized by feelings, this sense of place is more than evident in sentences such as ‘It feels homely’ or ‘I have been blessed to be able to visit Portugal many times since childhood’. In Islantilla people's emotions are not directly associated with the accommodation/location/town, but are related to the overall emotional experience. Most of the extracts refer to an English environment: British friends, British journals; cable TV; and sentences likeaway from our terrible weather...it could tentatively suggest that owners are escaping from their daily life. This tentative conclusion was also suggested by Dias et al. (2013). Dias, J.A., Ribeiro, F.P., & Correia, A. (2013). Online reviews of short-term visits: Exploring sense of place. *International Journal of Culture, Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 7(4), 364–374.

Even if it seems that these findings points to paradoxical behaviour in that there is a strong need for affiliation, that is for being ‘home away from home’ and also being at home in the second home, it seems that the main reason for these owners buying a property abroad by is not related to understanding or knowing the place. But it is undeniable that these places that evoke sense of place, sense of belonging or sense of past (Belk, 1990). Belk, R.W. (1990). The role of possessions in constructing and maintaining a sense of past. In M.E. Goldberg, G. Gorn, & R.W. Pollay, (Eds.), *NA – Advances in Consumer Research* (Vol. 17, pp. 669–676). Provo, UT: Association for Consumer Research.

Conclusion and implications

Resulting from a narrow textual genre based mainly on the brief owner's profile, location's benefits, property features and fun and leisure affordances (local and surroundings) these descriptions combined two different types of information in emotional and cognitive types. Emotionality as well cognitive abilities may contribute to the acquisition and retrieval of owners’ memories, which humanize and personalize the OVR information. It is also suggested that second home motivations are inextricably linked to owners’ own experiences, particularly those who had past holiday memories (in childhood) of a particular place. OVR platforms reflect different levels of ‘sense of place’ and ‘sense of home’ through owners’ descriptions.

Qualitative results from Albufeira and Islantilla clouds and content analysis reveal that familiarity plays a major role among the owners analysed and there are indications that some of them return and repeat what their parents did before them. This pattern is more visible in Albufeira. Six sense-of-place dimensions were identified: physical characteristics of the environment and location; leisure activities; global affiliations; sense of past; sense of home tangibles; and sense of home intangibles. These are consistent in both places analysed. However, the Albufeira sense of place compels with its emotional and cognitive dimensions. The sense of place is mostly much more centred on the individual and family stories and varies little in physical, social and cultural terms. The owners’ descriptions will tend to internalize the virtual recommendations made by them (their peers), in their mother tongue, and eventually bring closer opportunities to make contact with the local community. This behaviour is consistent with the motivation expressed by most homeowners when they decide to buy a

second house – on one hand, they expect to transfer with them feelings of familiarity and on the other hand, they wish to take advantage of periods of relaxation and fun away from the routine of their daily lives. The motivation for exploration, a desire to learn and discover is very low in this community. The view of places as a series of locales or settings (Agnew, 1987). Agnew, J.A. (1987). *Place and politics: The geographical mediation of state and society*. London: Allen and Unwin. has also been identified, but in these cases [of closed [cultural] communities], few examples of interaction in social settings from everyday life help to structure social interaction, nor do they help forge values, attitudes and behaviours.

If this is the case, might the investment in a second dwelling on the part of foreign owners act as an inhibitor of a greater diversity of tourist experiences?

Albufeira is a mature tourist destination, compared to Islantilla. Albufeira presents a diversified offer at the level of catering, bars and water parks, among others, and many of these services are already exploited by the English community. This causes the opportunities of contact with the local community to become potentially scarcer. From the analysis of our descriptions we can understand that a pool is a highly valued facility, both by the owners and by tourists. This will reinforce the trend by allowing it to form closed communities (English–English), of foreigners for foreigners. Golf is another good example of this behaviour. It can be considered that strategies should be rethought to increase opportunities for interaction of local residents with owners and also tourists (respecting their preferences) but trying little by little to captivate them and showing them other ways to enjoy the tourist destination. As mentioned earlier, this community will eventually assume roles that theoretically should be performed by a tourist guide and the function of the local residents will naturally tend to be to pass on information about the places that they usually go to and enjoy, hoping their peers will, too. There is little research on resident–visitor interaction in tourist destinations and much less on the interaction between hosts (albeit foreigners) and visitors in tourist destinations. These can have a decisive influence on the experience that visitors have when visiting tourist destinations through their hospitality and direct or indirect intervention in the planning and management of the tourist destination. Finally, it is considered an important mission for those responsible for the development of tourism in Albufeira and Islantilla with their ocean views not to neglect these potential stakeholders and invest in policies and strategies that minimize the negative impacts of tourism and maximize its benefits, stimulating social contact between residents, foreign visitors and hosts. The implementation of these strategies will contribute to the sustainable development of these destinations. The analysis of the phenomenon of OVR owners from this perspective is very recent, and owners are not likely to regard themselves as tourists, nor are they seen as such by others as place marketers, but they do in fact play both roles.

This research also shows the strength of virtual networking, in which these homeowners unveil their sense of place through their descriptions and illustrating a lower sense of the importance of destination in an era of destination dominance in tourism marketing. Thus, further triangulation of data and methods is needed e.g. investigating descriptions from homeowners and reviews from tourists through other web sites originating in other countries.

We consider, in future research on this virtual community, as Bødker and Munar (in Lew et al., 2014:35. Lew, A., Hall, M., & Williams, A. (2014). *The Wiley Blackwell companion to tourism* (1st ed.). West Sussex: John Wiley & Sons. the suggestion of involving actor network theory (Latour, 1993:33. Latour, B. (1993). *We have never been modern*. London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, as a potential methodology suited to the study of the growth of IT and its social consequences for tourism and tourists, its influence on personal and place encounters and identities.

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