Trabajo de grado

“The difference and comparison of the French tourism sector and the Colombian tourism sector, analyzing the advantages of the tourism in France and why the tourism has been growing over the years, giving recommendations to improve tourism in Colombia”.

Presentado por

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1. INTRODUCTION:

1.1 General context:

“The role of tourism to the economic growth and to the progress of modern societies has become a common awareness in political authorities worldwide. For this reason many attempts are being made in order to develop tourism, being amongst the most important sectors of economic activity, to the benefit of their economies as quickly and as affectively as possible. The fact that tourism is an economic activity of primary value and importance for many countries is an accepted fact by all.” (Dritsakis)

The tourism is one of the most important tools for the countries to make money and even more important than that, to create development for their selves. This is how all this journey begins, the tourism has been one of the most ancient and interesting activities for the people all over the world, and believe it or not, this activity has been also one of the first instruments for the develop of the countries and that is going to be shown in this project in which France a first world country is going to be studied and at the same time Colombia a country of the third world or in developing. Another important factor that is also going to be analyzed carefully is the differences between these two countries and why one has been really successful on the tourism sector and the other is still learning.

Is really important to understand the two different points of view of each country and more than that of the cultures, because even that France and Colombia are countries of the western culture, they are really different from each other in a lot of aspects that are also going to be shown in this research project.

France is one of the most important countries in the world because of their economic situation and history, but also because France is one of the most significant countries in the tourism sector taking into account that Paris the capital city is the most visited city in the world and France receives every year around 80 million tourists.

In the other hand there is a country in South America, Colombia, that had a lot of internal problems in the 80’s and in the 90’s but now that has changed drastically, and they want to improve their tourism sector because first it can help to the economy of the country, second if the people goes to Colombia they will see the reality of the things and they are going to realize that Colombia is a great place to be.

The main objective of this work is to understand why France is one of the best countries in the tourism sector, and how it can be apply if is possible, to the tourism sector in Colombia. Because that can be a possibility too, and of course that will be shown on this project.

The specific objectives are:

- Classify the different type of tourists that go to France and the ones that go to Colombia and divide them in segments.

- Identify the advantages of the tourism in France and understand the reasons why France is actually the first tourism destination.

- Exam if Colombia can apply some of the French techniques for tourism with a successful result or not. Because maybe Colombia is not able to apply the French experience.

These objectives are going to be developed on this project to realize if Colombia can apply the French case study or not that is the main objective, and also to understand how France has become in the first country in the tourism sector all over the world in the last years, and to follow the steps France has done to reach the top. It is imperative to follow this order because that gives this work logic to follow and a real perspective of the things.

In conclusion this project is going to give not just an economic perspective, but a cultural and also a political perspective because is important to understand that this is not only an economic matter, but a development matter and this variable is one of the most important to understand in this work. There is going to be also some important point of views from the Colombian perspective from people that work in government agencies in different countries like Chile and the United States that are going to help in this work, and to give their opinions if this French tourism aspect can be done in Colombia. Now it is time to start this journey and define if we Colombia can do it or not and why.
2. HISTORY:

2.1 Contextualization:

The history of the tourism goes a long time before our age. And it can have more than 1000 years since the people start to go from one place to another just for leisure and for know different places. But this project is going to take a recent history that is going to have a direct relation with the recent tourism in France and in Colombia.

For this study the point of start is going to be the last century the from the year 1925 when the United Nations² found an agency called The World Tourism Organization, which is an agency that is located in Madrid, Spain and basically their work is to collect information on international tourism, this is the biggest organization around the world of tourism.

This organization was founded because there were uncovered needs on the economic and tourism sector because the countries started to realize that the tourism is one of the biggest sources of income for them.

“UNWTO plays a central and decisive role in promoting the development of responsible, sustainable and universally accessible tourism, paying particular attention to the interests of developing countries.

The Organization encourages the implementation of the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism, with a view to ensuring that member countries, tourist destinations and businesses maximize the positive economic, social and cultural effects of tourism and fully reap its benefits, while minimizing its negative social and environmental impacts.

Its membership includes 161 countries and territories and more than 390 Affiliate Members representing the private sector, educational institutions, tourism associations and local tourism authorities.”³ (Organization), 2008)

This big agency started in 1925 to keep all the statistics and relevant information of the tourism in the countries and to help them to develop the tourism in an efficient and sustainable way. Since those times until now a lot of things have changed on the tourism sector here are some important key figures that show that.

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² international organization whose stated aims are facilitating cooperation in international, international security, economic development, social progress, human rights, and the achieving of world peace
³ http://www.unwto.org/aboutwto/index.php
2.2 Key numbers:

- From 1950 to 2005, international tourism arrivals expanded at an annual rate of 6.5%, growing from 25 million to 806 million travelers.

- The income generated by these arrivals grew at an even stronger rate reaching 11.2% during the same period, outgrowing the world economy, reaching around US$ 680 billion in 2005.

- While in 1950 the top 15 destinations absorbed 88% of international arrivals, in 1970 the proportion was 75% and decreased to 57% in 2005, reflecting the emergence of new destinations, many of them in developing countries. (Organization), 2008)

Current developments & forecasts:

- Worldwide arrivals reached 842 million in 2006, representing a 4.6% year on year growth.

- 2007 looks set to be the fourth consecutive year of sustained growth for a global tourism industry that continues to show its resilience to any natural or man-made crises.

- UNWTO predicts a 4% growth of international tourist arrivals in 2007, in line with its long-term forecast growth rate through to 2020 of 4.1%.

- By 2020 international arrivals are expected to surpass 1.5 billion people. 4 (Organization), 2008)

It is very interesting to analyze these statistics and to understand how the tourism has been growing all over the world in the past decades; the tourism had a great change worldwide in the last 60 years, after the Second World War everything changed at least in a big part of Europe (France) that was really hurt after all the bombs and attacks, Paris the great French capital was not damaged as other cities like Berlin.

It is very motivating for the new developing countries (like Colombia) that the international arrivals are expanding to all over the world and going to places that for many reasons before just were not part of the “plans”. Still the top 15 destinations have their big mass of tourism and like in the case of France; Paris is the destination number one and every year the number of arrivals is increasing which is great for the economy and the development of the country.

The most attractive thing to analyze here is that the tourism is giving the opportunities to develop the countries of the “third world” like some people call them and also at the same time is maintaining the great moment that countries like France, United States, Spain and China are living in the tourism sector, so that is generating develop for a lot of different countries no matter if they are rich or not.

**Table 1: International tourist arrivals 1950-2020**

![International tourist arrivals in million, 1950-2020](image)

*Source: UNWTO, Tourism Highlights, 2008*
2.3 Tourism since 1950 and projections:

In the graphic on the last page is possible to understand and see that the tourism in the early 50’s to the late 60’s only was important in Europe and in North America (more than Latin America) and almost the other regions of the world were just not take into account. That is twenty years of develop only for 2 regions in the world, that is definitely a break point between the most powerful countries in the world and the others that are in development, and the tourism is a sample of that gap between them.

Between the 70’s and the late 80’s happened and interesting change because the Asian market started to open their borders to the international tourism and of course this is related to the development of China and India the two big emerging markets. Especially China has an important place in this increase of tourism in Asia. Going back to Europe and America (France and Colombia) in this period the increase or tourism in Europe was huge compared to the last decades which gave Europe more and more specialization and experience on the tourism sector, in the case of America (north, central and south) the tourism increased but in a different speed and of course with few tourists than Europe.

From the 90’s until today (2010) it is possible to see that the tourism in the Middle East and Africa have got more and more power and the tourists see these places like new options to go for their vacations, business and other reasons. In the case of Europe the tourism has been growing constantly without stop since 1950, which is remarkable because that fact put Europe in the first place of tourism around the globe. America is loosing has a small but also constant increase; anyway Asia in less years has got the same position than America putting them in the second place (Asia and America).

The projections for the next ten years are really interesting because the tendency is going to be almost the same as the last 10 years, with some few differences first Asia (China and India mostly) is going to increase their tourism and going over America that is not going to have a big increase on their tourism, Europe is going to increase more than people can expect which is really interesting because with the increase of Asia maybe some tourists rather prefer to go there than go to Europe nevertheless the “old continent” as some people call Europe is going to be in the first place of tourism in the world.
Table 2: International tourist arrivals by region (million)

Source: http://blog.pocketvillage.com

In this graphic that is more specific than the last one, the numbers are more detailed and are from the last 15 years to next 10 years, which is a very interesting period of time because is really actual and permits to see what is really happening. It is really captivating to analyze in this graphic how the development of the countries is stretch related to the tourism, because Europe that is the main region in the world speaking in terms of development in their economy, culture and politics is increasing their tourism every time more but is important to take into account that Europe is going to have and actually is having the smallest rate of growth compared to the other regions of the world, nevertheless the difference between Europe and Asia that is the second region most visited in the world is almost 300 millions of people, which is going to be a hard number to catch.

America in the other side is in a really bad position and in this graphic is shown that because they have the second worst growth rate after Europe and they also in this year are in the third place behind Asia which can be a sign of alarm because those two regions are competing for the second place of tourism in the world and they have to attract the new tourists that want to go to different places a new destinations, so this can be an
opportunity for a country like Colombia that of course is smaller than China or India but they can attract different kind of tourists which is going to be explained later.

Table 3: The growth of the world tourism industry

![The growth of the world tourism industry](http://newsimg.bbc.co.uk/media/images/38221000/gif/_38221410_world_tourism_300graph.gif)

Source: [http://newsimg.bbc.co.uk/media/images/38221000/gif/_38221410_world_tourism_sm_300graph.gif](http://newsimg.bbc.co.uk/media/images/38221000/gif/_38221410_world_tourism_sm_300graph.gif)

Another relevant aspect to learn off is the fact that the tourism now is having the great “Boom” if it can be called like that. Because the increase of tourists in the last 15-20 years especially and the projections of increase for the next ten years are very optimistic which is a very good news. In the last 15-20 years there have been a lot of changes in the world and of course in the world of tourism too, especially the creation of the euro that made easier being in Europe and travel in the region, which of course is a big advantage for all the countries.

It is important to remark that the tourism has been growing even some big events that had happen in the world in the last years, for example the tragedy on the 11 of September
2001 in New York City, where the tourism was really touched and almost some of the big airlines in the world like American airlines almost disappeared. Another big terrible event was the attacks of terrorists to the train system of Madrid in 2004 and of course the attacks to the London transportation system in 2005. All those attempts against these countries of course made the tourism slow down because

**2.4 The creation of the Shengen Area (Europe):**

The creation of the Shengen area in Europe starting in 1995 was a big progress for the tourism in Europe, because that gave the region a big impulse attracting more and more tourists from all over the world that see a really good possibility of going to Europe and know a lot of different countries with any restriction of traveling, of course with the Shengen visa in most of the cases. In this case France is receiving direct visitors that want to go directly to France and also the other tourists that have other destinations in Europe but they go to France because they are already in Europe and how to miss a good chance to know such a wonderful country as France. That is why Europe had developed a lot their tourism sector against the other regions of the world, next is presented the board with all the members of the Shengen area that is different of the members of the European Union.

**European Countries members of the Shengen area:**

Belgium  
France  
Luxembourg  
Netherlands  
Portugal  
Spain  
Germany  
Italy  
Austria  
Greece  
Denmark  
Finland  
Iceland  
Norway

**Facts:**

These 25 countries members of the Shengen Area and some of them also of the European Union had agree some important points that benefit the tourism like:

1. **Travel without internal border controls.**  
2. **Regulation of external border controls.**

Those aspects make easier things for tourists because if they want from one country to another they do not have to stop in customs (case of the airports for example) just to pass a normal check in to take their flight.
Sweden
Czech Republic
Estonia
Hungary
Latvia
Lithuania
Malta
Poland
Slovakia
Slovenia
Switzerland


This treats are important treats that should be adopted by another regions in the world in this case in America and especially in South America would be really important for the development of the tourism, but that is another subject.

At this point there are two main interesting points to think about, first that the world tourism is increasing more and more and in the 2020 the statistics says that there is going to be 1.500 millions of tourists in the world which is a huge market so in terms of economy the demand is high it is the opportunity for countries in develop like Colombia to take advantage of that aspect for sure. Another interesting aspect is that the tourism in every region of the world (except Oceania) is going to increase considerably taking into account the past of every region; Europe is going to be the leader for long time, but the quantity of tourists if going to decrease considering past decades and years in the next graphic is possible to analyze specifically the Western Europe and South American case taking into account the recent years from now to 5 years ago.
Table 4: International tourist arrivals (% change over same period of previous year)

Source: World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) ©

Source:
http://www.moodiereport.com/images2/UNWTO_intl_tourist_arrivals_world.jpg
Now is possible to understand and analyze if the big regions in this case the ones that are going to be studied Europe and America are defragmented in semi-regions which has been the real impact on the case of France and Colombia. Western Europe has one of the worst statistics of all and it is normal because Western Europe always has been the destination number for the international and national tourists (European tourists), but now the tourism is changing and people also want to go to new destinations and discover places that are “new” on the tourism sector, like South America that have a lot of potential with countries like Colombia, Brazil, Argentina or Peru everyone offering different things and attractions for the tourists.

France and Colombia have a lot of challenges for the future one of them for keep the leadership in the tourist sector (France), and the other one to improve their qualities as tourist destiny for the next decade (Colombia). This project is going to discover if they can do that. There are some important variables that have to be taken into account for this research for the two markets France and Colombia, and they have to be the same because it is important to know that the main objective in this project is to know if Colombia can apply the whole French model, a part of it or definitely is not possible for Colombia to apply anything.

France and Colombia have a lot of differences and that is why is going to be really interesting to understand what is going to be the conclusion of the study, nevertheless is imperative to analyze deep into the two countries and look into the most important aspects, like the history, the institutions of each one for develop the tourism and their economy and the offer, what is the offer of each country for the tourists, is essential to analyze first which are the tourists that go to France and after which are the tourists that should go to Colombia. Now it is the time for start the French case study and understand what are they doing to maintain the growth of their tourism sector and of course also to see which are their problems and barriers as well.
3. FRANCE CASE STUDY:

3.1 Introduction and History:

France, one of the most developed countries in the world; is recognized because of their cities, language, traditions and customs. France also is known by other things of course like the big monuments, the cuisine and of course Paris. But why is that? France has become in the last decades in a place that every person wants to be, even if it is for visit or stay for studies or business.

The French people know this and from all over the years they have been developing some interesting ideas to become in the place number one for tourism in the world. This is not easy at all. Here are some examples of the past and also the reasons why France is a very developed country because develop and tourism goes hand by hand. The next examples had helped France to develop as a country and their tourism sector as well.

- 1552: Charles Estienne publishes the guide to the roads of France, the first portable guide for use by travelers. (Guerin, 2004)
- 1822: First seaside resorts in France established in Dieppe, Boulogne ECT. (Guerin, 2004)
- 1850-1860: Construction of the major railway networks in France. (Guerin, 2004)
- 1883: Foundation of the Alliance Française. (Guerin, 2004)
- 1889: First tourist office opens in Grenoble. (Guerin, 2004)
- 1910: Creation of the National Tourist Office. (Guerin, 2004)
- 1936: Act on paid holidays. (Guerin, 2004)
- 1950: Club Mediterrannée opens its first village. (Guerin, 2004)

These are important organizations that had been made all over the centuries until the last decades in France when another important organizations where made that are going to be presented more detailed later. The point here is that France always has been working on
their development as a country and of course also developing their tourism sector which is really important for them; France had an important advantage in this field and is that they were one of the first countries in the world that start working on this field seriously, this means creating chain of resorts, tourist offices in the cities and national and the commissary general of tourism. These are important organizations that exist for more than 70 or 80 years which is a lot of time but enough time to understand the needs of the tourists and more important what they want and what they are expecting to find. Reviewing this concept it is important to say that France has been working constantly on two strong points in the last 2 centuries:

1. **Development as a country**: economic, cultural, political, social.
2. **Economy, culture, politics and social aspect** = Tourism

### 3.2 Main institutions:

This is a very interesting part because this is how the development and the tourism go hand by hand as it was proposed before. Nevertheless it is really important to understand that the tourist is just a part of each component of the four components mentioned before. The important point to understand here is that France has made an excellent job promoting they culture and social aspect abroad and inside France for people to get interested in their country with the institutions that were mentioned before this is one of the main reasons of tourism in France because the people want to know more about they culture, that is why it is important to make an overview of each of these important institutions.

1. **Alliance Française**: Is an organization that was made in 1883 by some important French men as Louis Pasteur, Jules Verne, Ernest Renan, Armand Colin and Ferdinand de Lesseps, The idea was to promote the French culture and language inside and outside France.

2. **Maison de la France**: Created in 1987 and placed under the authority of the Ministry of Tourism, Maison de la France, also known as the French Government Tourist Office, is responsible for the promotion of France as a holiday destination, with 33 offices in 28 countries around the world. (Guide, 2008)
3. **French national tourist office:** This is an organization that was made for help all the people that wants to go to France giving them all the information about, places to visit, accommodation, transportation, activities and cultural sites in France. It is very useful because this kind of organizations make easier the job of the tourist who loves to be good treated and to find easy the information they required.

4. **The Michelin guides:** These guides started in France in the 1900’s with André Michelin for giving tourists all the information they need about lodging and restaurants. This guide right now in 2010 is almost all of the important cities of Europe and in some cities around the world like New York City or Tokyo.

5. **Ministère des Affaires étrangères:** This French institution is one of the most important institution in France because is in charge of promoting traveling to France for holidays or studying or for investment, they are also the sponsors of almost all the tourist and cultural events in France as the ministry of tourism as well.

6. **Ministère du Tourisme:** This ministry is part of the ministry of economy, industry and employment, and is dedicate to work only in touristic affaires, and to search how to improve the French tourism sector more and more important to maintain the same tourism level of the last decade and to improve it as well.

7. **Rendez-vous en France:** Web page created to help tourists from all over the world given them facilities to find everything they want concerning France and especially Paris. In this page the tourist can find from hotels to the best art guide you can find online. A complete web page full of useful information about France and their customs this is the web page for more information. [http://www.rendezvousfrance.com/](http://www.rendezvousfrance.com/).
These are some of the most important organizations here in France for the promotion of the economic and cultural growth inside and outside France and of course the development of the tourism that has been really successful in the last decades, these organizations makes France a very structured country with a complete “team” of French institutions that always are helping to the development of France as a “brand” which is a very interesting and important point here. Because they are selling France as the best destination in the world and they are doing things to make people believe that. But the next question is what has France to offer to the tourists that makes that country so interesting to visit?

3.3 Reasons:

The reasons of why the people go to France can be divided in 3 groups:

1. **Specific reasons (man made for French people and tourists):**
   - Infrastructure (parks, streets, buildings, transportation systems)
   - Amenities (ski resorts, hotels)
   - Paris

2. **Non specific reasons (some man made but without tourist interest)**
   - Monuments

3. **Others:**
   - Business aspect
   - Natural aspect: Landscape (diversity of weather)
   - Cultural aspect: Museums, expositions, concerts, Cannes film festival etc.
   - Sport Events: Roland Garros (tennis), Tour de France (Bicycle), Paris marathon, Grand Prix of Monte Carlo formula 1, etc.

These are the main reasons for people to visit a country especially a country like France that has a lot of diversity in all the aspects so it is imperative to analyze these aspects and see what they have to offer to the people.

1.1 **Specific Reasons - Infrastructure:** This group is really important because here is all the “structure“ of France for being the country it is right now. “France enjoys one of the most sophisticated infrastructures in the world developed through the government heavy investment in the field and made possible by advanced technology. A network of various modes of transportation blankets the whole country, including air, land, and rail
transportation. Transportation is also possible via rivers. The technologically advanced rail system utilizing some of the fastest trains in the world is operated by the French National Railways (SNCF), a state-owned company.”

“There are a total of 31,939 kilometers (19,846 miles) of rail lines in the country. There are approximately 828,000 kilometers (514,605 miles) of roads in France, all of which are paved. About 47 per cent of the waterways are heavily used. There are a total of 474 airports in France, many of which serve international traffic. The major airline is Air France, which provides service to all corners of the globe. Many of the ports and harbors are equipped to handle the needs of freight as well as passenger ships. The major port cities are Dunkirk, Bordeaux, Marseille, Nantes, Rouen, Le Havre, Boulogne, Cherbourg, Dijon, La Pallice, Lyon, Mulhouse, Paris, Saint Nazaire, Saint Malo, and Strasbourg.”

(Encyclopedia, 1999) Is possible to understand and see that France has been developing for the last 2 centuries their infrastructure in transportation systems in all the fields air, water and earth the French people has been really smart in use their geographical position as an ally and they have been using all the resources they have to improve basically the quality of life and of course the development of the country that gives them indirectly more tourists.

**Land transportation system (Trains):** Companies like ALSTOM had helped to the development of the transportation systems especially with the trains of high speed as the TGV and AGV (ALSTOM, 2007) the last release of ALSTOM in Europe. These kinds of trains help the people to travel in this case between France and the closest countries like Belgium, Germany, Switzerland, Spain and England, Which is a very good way to attract tourists from the neighbor countries sometimes trains can be cheaper that airplanes so they are a good option for people that want to travel from one country to another really fast and with now queues or lines like in the airports. Travel by train is easier and sometimes more comfortable. France is equipped by a lot of train stations in the whole country which make easier the transportation in the country for the French people and of course tourists.
Land transportation system (Regional and international buses): The bus transportation system in France is not as important as the trains, nevertheless the buses also play an important roll. Companies like Eurolines travel from France and to France from all Europe people can go from Portugal to France and then from France to Hungary in this buses of course that the trains are more comfortable and fast, but for the students that sometimes have low quantities of money this transportation system is perfect. The buses are slower but cheaper, so people sometimes just prefer to arrive to their destination some hours later but for less money.

Air transportation system: The last but not the least is the air transportation system that plays an essential roll in France with more than 474 airports in the whole country the airplanes are the unique transportation system overseas, the people that goes to France from America, Asia or Oceania have to take airplanes to get to Europe. The most important airline in France is Air France that was created in 1933 and is one of the most respected airlines in the whole world. They have alliances with other airlines which belong to the SKY TEAM, Air France fly to almost all the continents in the world and have their operational center in Charles de Gaulle airport in Paris, the most important Airport in France and one of the most important in Europe as well. France also has other airlines like Aigle Azur, Air Méditerranée, and Atlantique Airlines which are the most important ones.

These three transportation systems are the most important here in France and the interesting part is that they are segmented for different types of customers, the buses are the cheapest transportation system for students and people that prefer to pay less and to travel more time because they have time and they are not in hurry. The next transportation system are the trains which power in France is huge they travel almost to each city in France and to a lot of different cities in Europe which definitly makes easier the flow of people in Europe to France and in France. The last transportation system and most developed is the airplanes which bring a huge part of the percentage of tourists that go to France. This is the most important
transportation system just for one reason: Every person in the world can go to France by airplane even if they are in Belgium or in Australia.

Table 5: French airport traffic 2000-2007

![French airport traffic 2000-2007](chart)


This chart represents clearly that since 2004 when France and especially Paris began to be one of the most visited cities and countries in the world the increase of landings in French airports has been going up and incredibly in 2007 Paris has received more than 80 million people and receives more than the 50% of tourists that go to France that is why is so important to analyze Paris more in detail later. As it is possible to see the air transportation system is really big and important in France this means that almost all the tourists go to France by airplane, the bus and the trains are more for the transportation inside the country.

**Infrastructure: parks, streets and buildings:** This is another important aspect in France that differentiates the whole country to other places in the world, the French architecture can be divided in some sub-categories which are:
The gothic period: This is the first and one of the most important periods in the architecture of the world and especially in France this period is started in the twelfth century, France was a country that was increasing the commerce with their neighbors so in this period is important to take into account that France received a lot of money that came for the commerce trades, so they started to built many cathedrals like the famous Notre-dame cathedral in Paris. France was the first country imposing they style in all Europe.

The renaissance period: This period was a change in the whole world that started in Italy and expanded thru Europe, getting into France with a lot of important Italian artists like Leonardo Da Vinci. The Loire valley was the first zone where the Italians get helping to built such beautiful places as the castles of Chambord or the castle d’Amboise. Then the gothic period was leave behind in the sixteenth century to give the renaissance his place in the world and in France. Master pieces like the Cour Carree of the Louvre in Paris were designed in the renaissance period.

The baroque and rococo period: This was one of the most influent periods in the architecture of France, taking place in the seventeenth century; the French baroque took an important place in the high French society with the kings especially Louis XIV (1643-1714) who loved the style. In Paris is possible to see a lot of French baroque architecture, starting with the Palais du Luxembourg which is a classical construction in the baroque period in France. Other important constructions that even today are visited for the tourists are the Versailles castle, the Louvre that was enlarged in that period and the church of Sorbonne in the most important buildings to mention.

The nineteenth century: This was a period of drastic changes for the country and especially for Paris the most important city in France. The nineteenth century means the naissance of classicism and the rebuilt of a big part of Paris by Napoleon III the symbols of the French classic architecture are the Opera Garnier at Paris also one of the most
important Parisian avenues the boulevard Haussmann that cross the centre of the city and in which right now is possible to find luxury stores and fancy restaurants as well. Other important buildings were made by the classic architecture, but another kind of building was made without these parameters it was the Eiffel Tower which was not liked by the French traditional people but after it became a national and a world symbol.

The twentieth century: The last century was a period full of contrasts between a classical country and a new way of architecture. In Paris the big buildings in la Defense make contrast with the classical small buildings. Or even most the pyramid that the former president Mitterrand built outside the Louvre museum represents the contrast between the historical and the new architecture all in one place. Constructions like the national library surprised people because it is very different to what they were used to see but that contrast is what make special Paris and France. The neoclassical architecture is the latest wave of architecture until now.

France is a country that means culture; wherever people go they can find culture, even if they are on the streets, in a museum or in the opera. In a small or a big city, the culture is everywhere and with the architecture in France since the gothic period to our times it is possible to see that. France is a country that always had been really influenced by culture because Europe is the continent of the culture and France especially had developed new techniques and artists that had made important contributions to the world of culture in music, arts and architecture. These characteristics make France to be a really interesting place to visit.

1.2 Amenities – Ski resorts: “Besides infrastructure, the French State and territorial authorities have also been involved, on a massive scale, in the creation of tourism superstructures. The enviable ranking that our country has achieved in the number of visitors to winter sports facilities is largely attributable to implementation of the “snow plan” in the 1960s and 1970s. The State, with the support of the départements in mountain areas, over a period of 20 years have developed and provided facilities for all the major ski resorts in France.” (Guerin, 2004)

As the director of the French agency for tourism (AFIT) says the French know they have a huge potential for tourism and they know exactly how to develop it that is how the success in tourism becomes in a reality for France. The government had always been aware of this fact and since 1960 they had been making plans like the “snow plan” which support the
departments of mountain areas to build superstructures in the mountains. The ski resorts in France are really famous; there are more than 60 ski resorts in the whole country the most important resorts are located in Chamonix, Courchevel, Trois Vallee, Les Arcs and Val Thorens. Here is important to notice that the programs of support that the government gives this kind of business are really important in France and that is why the tourism sector has been developing all over the years for example in the ski resorts. Right now 2010 France has one of the most important structures of Ski resorts in the whole world competing with Switzerland, United States, Austria and Canada.

1.2.1 Amenities - Hotels: “To stay competitive, increase tourism revenues and to remain the world’s number one travel destination, Hervé Novelli, Secretary of State of Commerce, Business and Tourism, recently presented his modernization plan for the French hotel infrastructure.

The 3-year hotel modernization plan features a new voluntary hotel classification system. It introduces a more internationally recognized 5-star category (previously French luxury hotels were identified as 4****L) and stricter standards for all categories from the one to five-star hotel. To encourage hotel owners and chains to apply for the category of their choice and bring their properties up to standards, the French Government, through the public banking institutions Caisse des depots and Oséo will make available special loans.

The loans will be at preferential rates and intended for small hotel owners in particular to facilitate renovations and upgrades to their establishments. Similar loans will be available for the improvement of hotels of all categories. There are over 17,000 hotels in France most of which are family-owned and operated hotels”. (Novelli, 2009)

The plan of modernization of the French Government tourist office is really ambitious but interesting because is going to be a three year plan until 2011, to apply the five star categories in the most luxurious hotels in the whole country. It is important to emphasize that France has a big hotel infrastructure from the ski resorts to the hotels like the Ritz in Paris an example of a five star hotel. The fifth star represents the French excellence so people that pay a lot of money for staying in this kind of places is going to feel the quality and comfort that a five star hotel can give especially in France, This classification is going to be given for five years and then they are going to be evaluated again, but not just the five star hotels but every single hotel in France.
With this the French one more time are reaching the excellence in the tourism treating the tourists in the best way as possible not only people that pay for a five star hotel but the people that pay for one star hotel too. The requirements are really high so these institutions have to work hard to get this recognition.

This law will modernize the regulations for professionals working in the travel business to allow them to be more competitive in the international sector.

The reason why they classify the hotels by categories with the stars, is basically to modernize the hotels in the whole country, so this will create a new economical system that of course will need some resources, there are two important organisms that will help the hotels to get the necessary funds and they are:

- OSEO
- Caisse des depots

The idea of this is to help the hotelier sector so they can improve their services to the international tourists and of course be more competitive around the world. The hotel sector in France is growing more and more and with companies like the Club Med French Company that was founded in 1950 and is in more than 79 cities all over the world they are doing it.

1.2.2 Infrastructure in Paris: It is also really important to analyze Paris like another different piece, because Paris is the most visited city in the world so it is essential to know why the tourists want to go to Paris and what Paris has to offer in terms of infrastructure talking of transportation and lodging.

In the transportation system is important to know that Paris has a very complete metro system with 14 lines that cover the whole city, also RER that are the trains that go to the Parisian suburbs and the two main airports Charles De Gaulle in the northeast and Orly in the south. The metro of Paris is one of the most efficient metro systems in the world being always on the time scheduled in each station, clean and with a lot of information signs for the tourists. This is an aspect to take into account the tourists always pay attention to the details and that is why the Parisian metro is a perfect way of transportation for the people that want to know more Paris underground. But if the people are not in hurry and can take
more time to know the city the buses are another good option or the boats by the Seine River, an amazing experience.

In terms of lodging Paris have a lot of different options for tourists from cheap hostels to five star hotels, all of them located thru the whole city near the metro stations, bus stations or train stations. The city has a very complete system of hotels and lodging places like apartments that can be also good for big families.

2.1.1 Non specific reasons – Monuments: The monuments in France have a special meaning because they have especial meanings for the French culture and more important they represent the French history. The most important monuments in France are:

- Eiffel Tower
- The Arc the Triomphe
- Château de Versailles
- The Mont St. Michel
- The prehistoric caves of the Dordogne
- The Romanesque churches of the Saintonge (Charentes) and of Auvergne
- The gothic cathedrals of northern France: (Paris, Chartres, Reims, Amiens, Rouen, Beauvais, etc.)
- The châteaux of the Loire Valley
- Sacre Coeur

These are one of the most important historic and most prestigious monuments in France; they are located in different parts of France and mostly in Paris, the monuments are a symbol of the country and the history of it. France is a country that has a lot of history and stories to tell, and the monuments are an excellent way to know it.

The big structures like the Arc the Triomphe or the Mont St Michel in the north coast of France are monuments with big messages behind them, the Arc for example symbolize a tribute to all the soldiers that fought for France it was built in 1806 in the kingdom of Napoleon, and it is one of the most impressive monuments in the whole country. By the other side is the Mont St. Michel that was built more than 10 centuries ago is a place with other kind of history it was an abbey first then a prison and after it was declared an
historic monument, the UNESCO\textsuperscript{5} in 1979 gave the award to the Mont St Michel as World Heritage Sites.

Now it is possible to understand how the monuments in France have a great impact on the tourists' mind, because France not only has new big buildings and streets for example like Dubai in the United Arab Emirates but combines historical and cultural monuments with new constructions like the Grande Arche in the business district of Paris, la Défense. The tourists are always looking for a combination of a lot of things, that is why is so difficult to understand all the variables that the tourists ask to see when they go to a new destination, nevertheless Paris and France seems to reach all the expectative of the people that visit the country and the city every year. It is not easy to find a country that offer all the things that France offer to the tourists in terms of lodging, infrastructure and monuments but still there are another important variables that need to be taking into account like the business aspect, natural aspect, cultural aspect and sportive aspect.

3.1.1 Others – Business aspect: The tourism is not only when people goes in the summer somewhere with their families and spend a nice time together, tourism is a lot of different activities that bring profits for a country in a brief definition, this would be analyzed more detailed later. Now is important to know that the business aspect in France is very important and bring a lot of “Business tourists” which basically go to France because of their jobs, and spend a short period of time but their companies spend a lot of money in hotels, restaurants and transportation for them. As the Ministère des Affaires étrangères said:

“Business tourism in France has seen a real transformation in recent years as the result of globalization. A booming market that involves the organization of all events financed by businesses, such as the business trips of their employees, it is a significant driving force in the French economy. A conference by the beach, a trade show in a historic monument, a meeting near a golf course, an evening at a prestigious night club, a seminar at the foot of the ski slopes, any combination is possible for corporate training, motivation or team-building exercises. Some thirty countries from all five continents have already picked France, highly rated for its geographical and cultural assets, and its efficient infrastructure.

\textsuperscript{5} United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.
When we talk about business tourism, we are referring to trips taken for professional reasons that combine the traditional components of tourism (transport, accommodation, catering) with a corporate activity for the company. Seminars, conferences, trade fairs and shows, incentive meetings, product launch and company parties, are all part of business tourism. With 3% of the market, Paris is the world’s top city for conferences and trade fairs. The 400 trade fairs, 380 conferences and other meetings that are held there every year draw between 9 and 10 million visitors and nearly 100,000 exhibiting enterprises to the capital.

Estimated at around 20% of the turnover of overall tourist activities, business tourism has grown apace with the diversification of commercial approaches in the business world. Sectors such as finance, IT, pharmaceutical laboratories, fashion, cosmetics, food and agriculture or the motor industry are, in this field, among the major consumers of corporate events. Training operations or incentive programs for people working within the firm, which involve travel, are very much in fashion, whatever the sector of activity. They can range from a “charm offensive” trip to the French Riviera, tours of great wine regions with their spellbinding vineyards, the search for authenticity in increasingly unusual venues, such as a former swimming pool, very much the in-thing, but also trips with a more sporting theme such as, for example, a course in ice driving, white-water rafting, or a round of golf.” (Ministère des affaires étrangères, 2008)

The business tourism right now in France is one of the most important tourist activities and especially Paris has an important place in the world of the business with all the activities the city offers and also because France and especially Europe is a center of economic activity of all kinds that is why the continent is so developed because they have a strong economic activity that has been increasing all over the years but this new modalities like the business tourism shows how much the tourism has developed in the first world countries like France which is really important to take into account because countries like Colombia are just developing these modalities of tourism it is not easy to make it especially because it takes a lot of time to build all the infrastructure and good will to make business conferences, fairs and special events like in France.
### 3.2.1 Others - Natural aspect: Landscape (diversity of weathers):

Until now there have been many reasons to find why France is such a good country for the tourism, but there are another reasons in this case more intangible: The diversity of weathers and landscapes, this is one of the most important reasons because this is why France can have great ski resorts or beautiful beaches in the south. France is a country that gives the tourist the possibility to explore almost all the weathers from snow to sandy beaches going by the beautiful country side finding forests and rivers, the country is full of diversity, France is surround by two oceans the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean sea which provides different weather conditions.

France like all the countries of Europe has four seasons’ winter, spring, summer and autumn. This gives the country also a special touch taking into account that plus the normal landscapes you have the four seasons is just amazing, being a winter in Paris can be really beautiful or a summer in Nice can be just amazing near the Mediterranean Sea. It is clear that the geographical location has helped France a lot on their development as a country and that is why the agriculture in France is so important and successful as well like the wines.

**Paris:** The most visited city in France has a very nice weather compared to a lot of places and during the whole year is really stable there is few snow on the winter but is very rare to see it, and is not really hot in the summer can be maximum between 25 and 30 that is hot but is good anyway for the tourists that want to enjoy walking or riding a bicycle in the Parisian streets.

In conclusion it can be said that France has different kind of weathers from the Alps to the sandy beaches in the south the French territory is full of diversity which attract the tourists a lot because they can do a lot of different activities in the same place, this is one of the important attributes of the country, is not only the tangible things France has but the intangible like the weather as well.
Table 6: Weather in Paris all over the year

Source: http://www.simplyairlines.com/images/cityguides/paris/climate_chart.jpg

3.3.1 Others – Museums: The cultural aspect is one of the most important points the tourists take into account before going to a country or a place, some people think the culture is museums or monuments but in France the culture goes abroad. All the expositions, events and shows including concerts are cultural activities as well and in France there are a lot of cultural activities as museums. Because yes France has a lot of history and that history must be shown and explain somewhere. The culture in France is a really important issue and the tourists notice that that is why the Louvre in Paris is one of the most visited museums in the world.
The museums in France can be divided in two big groups:

- Art Museums
- Museums of France

France has a lot of cultural diversity because of the history and heritage of the country and especially of Europe the “Old continent”, the art is a very important aspect of the culture in France because in that country were born a lot of main artists like: Claude Monet, Paul Cezanne, Edgar Degas, Francis Picabia and Yves Tanguy. These are just some of the famous artists France gave to the world, but of course there are much more architects, painters and sculptures. The entire legacy that was leaved by them is world heritage that is why the museums take an important place in the modern world, to remember all the great things they had done.

The French people want their culture to remain and that is why there are a lot of museums in France also dedicated to French and European culture in general. That is not usual in countries like Colombia that have more influence of other cultures and countries but that topic will be discussed later. Now on is important to now that this cultural aspect specifically based on the museums attract a lot of tourist year by year and is one of the most important reasons tourists go to France because France is one of the top 10 countries with more museums in the world, with Netherlands, USA, China, United Kingdom, Russia, Japan, Austria and Germany in the most important ones.

3.4.1 Others – Expositions and concerts: The diversity of the French culture not only is located in the museums which the young people is not really close to, but France offers them another interesting cultural activities like concerts and expositions, in Paris, the big place for concerts, and spectacles is the “Palais Omnisport de Paris Bercy” and in the soccer and rugby stadium “Stade de France”. France and especially Paris where the big events take place, has all the infrastructure to offer the artists the best place to make their performances, all the public transportation systems go there so it is very easy for the spectators to go to the expositions and concerts.

These cultural events invite a lot of people from France of course but also from abroad specifically people from countries near France that want to participate in those events and it is also a good way for make tourism.
3.5.1 Other - Cannes film festival: “On the surface, a city such as Cannes perhaps might not strike you as the place to host the world's most famous film festival. It's not a capital city, or even near one. Yes, cinema was invented in France but that was in Paris, not Cannes. And sure, the weather in Cannes may be nice, but that certainly isn't a unique selling point. So just how did a reasonably small resort town end up hosting the most prestigious film festival there is?

Like much of the world as we know it today, the Cannes Film Festival exists as an indirect result of the rise of the fascist regimes in Europe during the 1930s. Its roots date back to 1932 when the first competitive international film festival was held in Venice. In those days, the Mostra di Venezia - and chiefly its awards was as much about the national prestige of the participating countries as it was about the films. As the decade marched on, both the official selection and the prize-winners began to noticeably favour the countries of the fascist alliance, particularly Germany and Italy.

Several locations were initially considered for the festival, but the final choice came down to either Biarritz on the Atlantic coast or Cannes on the Mediterranean. Officially, it was the city’s "sunny and enchanting location" which clinched it for Cannes, however most people acknowledge that the real reason for its selection was the fact that the municipal authorities agreed to cough up the dough to build a dedicated venue for the event.” (Craig, 2010)

After a failed attempt to start the film festival and some other inconveniences the Cannes film festival became in one of the major attractions in France, but what is the magic of the Cannes film festival? The magic is a result of ingenious of some people who had vision and thought the cinema was going to be something really important in the coming years, a fact that certainly happened and now on this festival is really prestigious and important in the film industry, for the French people and of course for the tourists, that want to be there at least once and see why this kind of event is so famous and glamorous.

Festivals as the Cannes film festival, give a lot of importance to the country that is the host, in this case France and also to the city, before the festival Cannes was almost unknown for every tourist in France that only thought of Paris as the unique destination. This is why the festival is so important because gave more importance to a region that was not really known and now in May for the festival especially and in the summer Cannes is a big tourist attraction like the whole “Cote D’azur”.

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3.6.1 Other – Sports Roland Garros: The Roland Garros is one of the most important sport events in the world and in France; even if a person is not a tennis fan he or she will hear about this tournament and also maybe become interested for it. The Roland Garros is one of the fourth grand slams of tennis which means one of the four most important tennis tournaments in the world that takes place every year in Paris.

This event brings in every year a lot of tourists to Paris that goes there just to watch the best tennis players around the world. The Roland Garros is also more than a tennis tournament because the French put their style and they glamour there, also they promote their brands. Lacoste for example provides all the people that work on the tournament with clothes and accessories, Peugeot give more than 20 cars to transport the players from their hotels to the Roland Garros and vice versa, and the BNP Paribas one of the biggest global banking groups is one of the main sponsor of the tournament having all the courts with big signs of BNP and a lot of cash machines.

This is not just because these brands are French this is also because the French are showing the world they have a lot of quality on their products and they can do a big event as the Roland Garros without help from outside companies the tourists keep this on their minds always and this is one of the most important points about the French culture that stays almost intact from other cultures especially the “American culture”, this gives the French culture an special difference the tourists and the people from outside love of France that is unique and people can notice that in events like the Roland Garros.

3.7.1 Others – Tour de France: One of the most important French sport events “Le tour de France” is an event in which a lot of cyclists from around the globe go to France to participate in the challenge of crossing the whole country and end in Paris. This event is very similar to the Roland Garros because bring a lot of tourists for the event and creates a unique experience for the people that go to see that kind of events, first to take another impression of the country because is different to live a sport event like “Le tour de France” than just going for a trip to France for holidays, this events give the opportunity for the spectators to gain another perspective of the event and the country, this is for sure the extra value this kind of events give to a country like France and their tourism, cultural and economical sector.
3.4 Tourist classification:

After a full analysis of the principal reasons why people go to France and why France is one of the top 10 destinations in the world with Paris as the most visited city in the world right now with more than 80 million tourist arrivals per year, is imperative to determine the different kinds of tourists that go to France in order to understand more the success of the French case.

It is possible to say that a country like France has a lot of diversity in the tourist field, so the tourists that go to France can be divided in different categories like this:

- **Business tourism:** This is one big market of the tourists in France, as it was presented before France is a country with a huge economical activity and that is why all the worlds’ big companies are in France. The business tourism moves a lot of money because the companies spend in transportation, good hotels, and fancy restaurants, to make their employees feel good and of course to work and focus on the job. Paris is a epicenter of business and tourist activity like it was presented before in the city there are a lot of congress for companies and fairs promoting new products or new types of business as well. So definitely the business tourism in one of the most important categories in the tourist activity in France.

- **Family tourism:** This is the most common type of tourism that is also really important in France because cities like Paris, Nice and Marseille receive a lot of families every year especially during the summer holidays when the parents have vacations from work. France has a lot of tourist attractions for the families especially in the south were the beaches are and in Paris, which have attractions like Disney world which is one of the most visited attractions in Paris and of course in France.

- **Eco-Tourism:** This new kind of tourism has been increasing in France in the last decades, the Eco-tourism is a different kind of tourist activity that with all the green wave of the planet right now is being increasing more and more, and France has the potential to offer eco- tourism activities with all the “green places” like forests and mountains. The principles of the eco – tourism are this ones:
  
  - *To minimize impact*
  
  - *Build environmental and cultural awareness and respect.*
- Provide positive experiences for both visitors and host.
- Provide direct financial benefits for conservation.
- Provide financial benefits and empowerment for local people.
- Raise sensitivity to host countries' political, environmental, and social climate. (society, 2010)

- **Students tourism (young people – low budget):** The students tourism is always important because besides is a low budget tourism and the students do not have the same money as their parents is a mass tourism so when the young people go abroad in this case to France to make some studies they have their budget controlled for the period of stay which means they cannot expend more of what they have. Nevertheless they are massive tourists because the education in France is recognized of having a good quality so they receive every year a huge quantity of young tourists that go to study their careers or French so that is why this is a really important segment of tourists in France.

- **Excursion tourism (older people – big budget):** Is the opposite to the young tourism this is a big mass tourism as well but with some differences first the budget this kind of tourist is the tourist that is almost always from far, not from Europe. Especially from Asia and America and what they do is that they buy packages with tourist companies for the holidays and they go with a translator so they stay in big groups and usually they are one or two days at maximum in one city but they go to spend money on department stores and fancy restaurants as well. It is a big business and significant for the tourist sector of the countries because this type of tourism has been since decades.

- **Winter tourism (season tourists):** In France this is a must, being one of the top 5 countries to make winter activities makes France a perfect destination during the winter season, as it was showed before France has one of the most important superstructures on ski resorts in the world financed by the government in the late 70’s. This kind of tourists just go to practice their winter activities and then they go back home they are season tourists.
All of these categories are the most important tourist categories in France after the whole study of the French case. In conclusion these are the most influent categories but it is important to understand that in the world are a lot of different tourist categories, nevertheless in France the most important ones are this six categories.

3.5 Tourist destination number 1:

This is why France is the destination number one in the world thanks to the combination of development, history and tradition, the French territory is the favorite for the tourists from around the world at least for now and from far of the second place with a gap of 20 million people with the second country (Spain) which is more interesting this ranks had maintain until 2009.

Table 7: Top ten countries for tourist destinations

Source: http://www.unwto.org/facts/eng/barometer.htm
4. COLOMBIA CASE STUDY:

4.1 Introduction:

Colombia one of the most beautiful but unknown countries in the world, but also has a bad reputation of “dangerous place” because all the internal problems they had in the past. The drug Traffic and the guerrillas had been a problem in Colombia since more than 50 years ago, but in the last decade a lot of things had change there, there is more security the people can drive safety on the highways from city to city without danger, all the touristic places are safe and of course the cities as well. But sadly only locals and people that are in contact with the country know this.

Colombia is not a developed or a “first world country” but is on his way to it, of course the road is long and there must be a lot of years to almost reach the half that a country like France for example has reached in terms of economy, culture, quality of life for they people and of course the touristic aspect that is essential for having more income because the tourists bring a lot of money to the country and most important they talk about their experience.

This South American country has some interesting advantages like the location is on the north part of South America so the country is the entry to the continent, also has a big part of the Amazonas rainforest and is surrounded like France by two oceans in this case is the pacific and the Caribbean.

With the coffee and the flowers Colombia is also recognized around the world because they have the first quality and the country is also trying to improve those aspects that are very important for the economy and for the good will of the country on the international ambit.

But besides this great things almost the rest of the world thinks that Colombia can be dangerous and that is just because they do not have the right information, the media newspapers and TV channels sometimes give less news or they miss important information, which is a big problem for the country because if the possible tourists do not have the right information they wont go to Colombia. The idea is to change that image of the country and convert it in one of the newest tourist destinations in the world.
4.2 Main institutions:

In this aspect Colombia is improving their institutions because the tourism in the country is increasing as the investment as well, so the government has to work hard to gain the confidence of the people and especially convince the tourists to travel to Colombia and see the true of the country. The government had created important institutions recently to reach that goal. And the institutions are:

1. **Ministry of industry, commerce and tourism:** Is the most important institution of tourism in Colombia they are in charge of the other institutions of tourism which are smaller than the ministry. The ministry had created an interesting plan called: “Plan sectorial de turismo 2008-2010 Colombia destino turistico de clase mundial” which means plan of tourism between 2008 and 2010 Colombia tourist destination of world class. One of the most aggressive plans for improving the tourism in Colombia in the next years looking for results in 2020 this is going to be analyzed after.

2. **Colombia travel:** This is one of the main institutions that the government has created in the last decade to improve the tourism especially on internet because now internet is one of the most powerful keys that connect the world so the ministry of tourism had created this “web institution” that helps the tourists giving them practical information about the country, guides for where to go and more. The main link is this one: http://www.colombia.travel/en/

3. **Colombia is passion:** Another new institution that was created by the ministry improving the tourism in the webpage of the institution is possible to find interesting and positive information about the country in many aspects since the latest news from products they sell to promote the country as well. This institution is also a company that is starting to create stores and like a “movement” about positive aspects of the country with 100% Colombian products made by Colombian artists promoting the country. One of the best ideas of promoting a country with a marketing point of view.
4. **Calidad turística**: Another important organization that is trying to improve the quality of the tourism as the name translate it, all of this organizations are managed by the minister of tourism and the government as well. This institution what is trying to do is to increase the quality of the tourism in Colombia so tourists can have the best tourist guides on their hands and improve their visit to the country.

5. **PROEXPORT Colombia**: This is possibly after the minister of tourism the main organization working right now on international investment and tourism towards Colombia, PROEXPORT is a government agency as the others and what they do is that they have offices around the world especially in North America and Europe and the main objective is to promote the Colombian exportations of national products and with that make links for tourism especially business tourism.

These are the most important organizations in Colombia about tourism right now, it is worth to say that 3 of them were made in the last decade this is a sign that shows Colombia as a potential country for tourism in the next decades which is really interesting to study because the country have a lot of potential now it is time to see why it has potential for being a great place for tourism.

4.3 Reasons:

The reasons why people go to Colombia can be divided in some specific reasons:

1. **Specific reasons:**
   - Tourists attractions
   - National celebrations
   - Biodiversity of the country
   - Developing economic center in Latin America
   - Currency exchange

4.3.1 **Tourist attractions**: The tourist attractions for sure are one of the main reasons why tourists go to Colombia they are different kind of attractions, not like the ones people can find in a country like France, this are more “new” touristic attractions more ecological because Colombia is trying to develop the “green tourism”.
National park of the coffee: The first “green destination” which is really interesting to get into is the national park of the coffee it is located in the coffee region of Colombia to the south west part of the country. This is one of the most interesting tourist attractions because it impulse all the coffee region in Colombia, and also three important cities in that region Armenia, Pereira and Manizales.

4.3.2 National celebrations:

January: Carnaval de Negros y blancos: this is one of the most important festivities in Colombia during the start of the New Year it was originated when the Spanish ruled in Colombia the slaves where allowed to celebrate just on the 5ft of January and their masters joined them. (Lonely Planet, 2009)

The “feria de Manizales”: Is a big fair during the start of the year when the bullfights take place in Manizales a city in the Colombian coffee region. This fair is the second most important after the fair of Cali.

February: Carnaval de Barranquilla: The biggest carnival in the country and the second most important after the Carnaval of Rio de Janeiro in Brazil. This is a national tradition and it is celebrated during a whole week, and the tourists and the locals join for having an amazing party of one week straight.

March and April: These months are very special during the year in Colombia because of the religion (catholic) they celebrate the holy week and it is a very special date in Colombia because there are two cities where there are big catholic rituals that are really interesting to see and really ancient as well those cities are Popayan and Mompox.

August: The fair of the flowers is one of the most interesting and creative events in Colombia when a lot of “silleteros” persons who carry a big draw on their back made of flowers, a beautiful event that promotes the flowers in Colombia which are really famous and in the other side they promote the tourist to Medellin one of the most important cities in Colombia and with a lot of potential for the international investment which brings a lot of business tourists every year.

September: The “festival mundial de la salsa” takes place in Cali another important city in Colombia which is the heart of the salsa music and which every year receives a lot of
contesters from different parts of the world especially from countries of the Caribbean which also practice the salsa music. This festival is a great opportunity for the tourists to know more the culture of the country.

These are one of the most important festivals, fairs and holidays in Colombia, now it is possible to understand that Colombia starts to be different of France in a lot of things even if they are countries from the west part of the world. Colombia has a lot of festivities is a country with a lot of traditions that are connected with the country touristic part, this kind of events are unique in the world and the tourists love to see new things everywhere they go.

Definitely Colombia is a country with a lot of traditional cultures and customs as well, that are really different as the customs and celebrations in France in Colombia thinks are more folkloric and that is why the fairs and festivities are really different to the other.

4.3.3 Biodiversity of the country:

Colombia is a country with a lot of biodiversity and fauna, the country have from an important part of the Amazonas jungle to a big dessert in the north part of the country, being in South America especially in the north part makes the country unique in terms of weather because there they do not have the four seasons as in France, there are just 2 main weather climates which are sun and rain basically.

Eduardo Uribe says: “Colombian biodiversity experts argue that the country’s diverse ecosystems are still underrepresented in this apparently large system. The forty-three national parks have different kinds of economic potential, depending on their environmental and biogeographic nature. Some are valued mainly for their role protecting endemic species and unique ecosystems, where as others are valued for their scenic richness and ecotourism potential”. (Uribe, 1996)

As there is possible to understand the ecotourism in Colombia has a lot of potential not only because of the fauna but of the infrastructure of the national parks as well, these parks have been protected since they were built many years ago, and the government and the authorities are very strict on applying the law when they have to protect the national parks and the jungle of the Amazonas which is the biggest one in the world and is called worldwide the “lung of the world”. Basically Colombia is trying to promote and take advantage of this biodiversity that in the industrialized countries is not that big for understandable reasons of industrial development.
4.3.4 Developing economic center in Latin America:

Right now Colombia is making more and more business with a lot of countries around the world especially with the countries in Latin America, the national companies are diversifying and expanding to other countries making the Colombian market really competitive in the regional market which attracts the attention of many investors from all the corners of the world which see and advantage in the country where the security is better and the trust on the government is high and in the growth of the economy that was better some years ago but right now is still growing.

**Table 8: Colombia’s GDP in the last 5 years**

![Chart showing Colombia's GDP growth rate from 2006 to 2010.](source: Departamento Administrativo Nacional de Estadística)


In this chart is possible to see how the gross domestic product has been increasing in the last years with an exception of 2009 when it was a negative rate, anyway this year the economy is growing again not a very high rates but compared to the countries of the region is really good and actually the world crisis was not really strong in Colombia. It is important to take this rates into account because the tourists pay a lot of attention to this (business tourists) so in this case we are talking about companies that want to invest in the country and send people to work to Colombia as well which belongs to another sector of tourism as it was explained before on this work.
4.3.5 Currency Exchange:

The currency exchange is also one of the most important issues at the time to travel or invest in another country especially for the families and the powerful companies in the world. The vacations in a country like Colombia for people that live in Europe or in North America are cheaper than going to any other place; in this case the COP (Colombian Peso) is really devaluated compared to the dollar or the Euro, besides the life in Colombia in terms of power of acquisition is cheaper as well, so with less money you can buy more things.

Table 9: USD-COP exchange rate during the last 3 years

![USD-COP Exchange Rate Chart](http://www.tradingeconomics.com/Economics/Currency.aspx?Symbol=COP)


With this chart is possible to analyze what is the tendency of the dollar against the peso and it is clear that in the last year it has been lower, but it is important to take into account that the dollar will be still above the peso because of the exportations and importations that is not a concern for the people that want to go to have nice holidays in Colombia because the prices will be lower than in the United states or Europe as well, so that is definitely an advantage for tourists they can go more time and spend the same money having more fun knowing different places and getting into the culture of the country which is one of the most interesting things.
4.4 Tourist classification:

After the whole study and making the questionnaires to some expert people that work in PROEXPORT in Miami, New York and Santiago de Chile, it is a fact that Colombia right now has only two big tourist markets in which they have to focus. Those big markets are:

- Business tourism
- Family tourism

These are the two main markets in which the Colombian tourism is making more efforts for many reasons; first, Colombia is just starting to develop their tourism in a medium scale in which is really important to segment very good the type of tourism they are offering to the people.

- **Business tourism:** The business tourism is one of the most important categories for tourism in Colombia even more than the other types, it is imperative to understand that Colombia have a very important geographical location for the region because the country unify South America and Central America and is close to Panama that thanks to the channel has become a business center. Cities in Colombia like Bogota, Medellin, Cali, Cartagena and the cities in the Coffee area are the important places in the country for doing business the cities in Colombia have a good infrastructure for fairs and big events which attract every year a lot of business tourists (companies) and individuals.

Cartagena is famous for being the most touristic city in Colombia but that is not only for the family tourism but for the congress and events the government and companies make there every year inviting more companies from abroad to invest in the country and in the region, this brings thousands of business tourists every year just to Cartagena.

With out doubts Cartagena and the Caribbean coast of Colombia have a great potential for business because that area is the one that is developing the most right now in Colombia. Nevertheless, it is important to remember that the big companies are located in Bogota and Bogota is by excellence the business center in the country.
Family tourism: The family tourism other important way of tourism in Colombia that is being developed really strong in the last decade. The security and trust in the country gave by the government of the president Uribe had make more people to go to Colombia nevertheless the country is still in a warning list for the North American country has a dangerous destination but organizations as PROEXPORT in Miami where Viviana Mora (person that made the questionnaire) works in the positioning of Colombian tourism, is working really hard in that aspect to change the image of the country and promote it as well.

Of course it is not an easy job but is working and every year the families especially from all America and Europe are going to Colombia to the Caribbean coast when they can take cruises from there to the Caribbean or from the Caribbean that end in Cartagena or Santa Marta another important city in the coast which is great because the regional governments are working together with international companies like royal Caribbean a cruises company, and that is how they bring more tourists, besides no North American or European citizen need visa to go to Colombia which make more easier things and the airlines like air France, Iberia or American airlines have flights everyday especially to Bogota but also there are flights Cartagena – Miami straight which means that the tourism in growing and the people that go to Colombia is increasing every year more.’

In conclusion the tourism in Colombia can be divided in these two specific groups which the country must emphasize more and more doing a lot of promotion with all the touristic institutions outside the country this is one of the most important aspects to generate more tourism and economic growth in the country, which is the main idea, all the study with the people that was interview think that the media is a really important tool to promote the country as a unique destination in America and in the world which offers different things that countries like France so in this case Colombia could target another kind of markets even if the business tourism and the family tourism are the strongest markets like in France.
5. COMPARISON BETWEEN COLOMBIA AND FRANCE:

After analyzing the main aspects of tourism in France and Colombia, the reasons, institutions, advantages and the segmentation of the tourists that go to France and Colombia and the strongest points of each one. It is possible to compare some important facts of each country.

### Comparison between France and Colombia in the touristic sector

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FRANCE</th>
<th>COLOMBIA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Institutions:</strong> Have different main touristic institutions around the world that promotes tourism and investment in France. More infrastructure and money.</td>
<td><strong>Institutions:</strong> In Colombia the touristic institutions are in process of growing and creation. Colombia has less economic resources for the investment in new institutions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reasons to go to France:</strong> France is a country with too much history and culture which makes the country a perfect place to visit, also France has a big economic development which makes the country a centre of economic activity in Europe and in the world.</td>
<td><strong>Reasons to go to Colombia:</strong> In the other hand Colombia is a country that reached the independence a few centuries ago so the history of the country is newer than in France and that is why the country has to develop other strategies for tourism like ecotourism.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France has more infrastructures to receive millions of tourists so everything is well managing in the country the transportations systems are really effective and in general France is a country where everything works in order.</td>
<td>Colombia is in a period of growth so is possible to say that is living a transition on some important fields like the public transportation which actually is not really good in the main cities just Medellin has metro system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The weather in France is totally different that in Colombia in France</td>
<td>Colombia is located in the tropic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
they have seasons which is an advantage in certain cases because they can enjoy in winter the alps and that attracts different kind of tourists and in summer also another kind of tourists that go to the south of France. This gives diversity of tourism to the European country and more chances of take advantage of the weather of the country which give the country another kind of weather really different to the weather in France, there are no seasons but there is a big jungle the Amazonas and also big dessert in La Guajira in the north part of the country, this gives more possibilities of another types of tourism for the country to develop, and of course take advantages of the 2 oceans that surround the country.

The reality is that these two countries are very different they have their similarities of course they are western countries the culture is the same, even the language is really similar French and Spanish come from Latin both, but they are in different periods of time with this expression I want to express that France is a first world country with a lot of advantages in the economic, political, social and cultural aspect which are the aspects that influence the most on tourism. Also is important to take into account that past of Colombia with the internal problems has been an issue for the country because they are trying to change the image of the country abroad that is not easy. Meanwhile France does not have any internal problems so they do not have to worry about that kind of issues which is really important.
6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

After the whole study analyzing the case of France and Colombia is really interesting to see the result of it.

- First, France has been the country number one in the tourism sector at least until this year, is clear that France have an amazing structure in transportation but also in lodging not only in Paris but in the whole country which of course is normal to think that the tourism (of all kinds) is centralized in Paris but is not like that. Regions like the South of France have a lot of importance for tourism, of course Paris is the heart of tourism in France that is totally truth but is important not to forget the other cities and regions that make that country so complete in the tourism aspect.

- Colombia is definitely a country that have to emphasize in diversify their segmentation of tourism because right now they have only (business and family tourism) they can take advantage of the eco-tourism in which Colombia have all the resources to improve that segment of tourism the “green tourism” is now one of the most popular in the world so Colombia should take advantage of this with all the flora and fauna of the country.

- France is a country that is totally developed on the tourism sector they have all the necessary infrastructure for receive the 81 million tourists the are receiving just in Paris every year since 2007, which is one of the most incredible statistics because the second country that is Spain receives 20 million less than France so definitely is not only a matter of infrastructure but also logistic and marketing, the French know how to promote their country abroad and more important than that is their culture they are so proud of their culture and that is the key to understand the success of the tourism in France which set the bases in a “nationalism” which tourists love when they go to France because everything is “French” with this they mean without a lot of North American influence that is everywhere in the world especially all America.

- The biggest problem of the tourism in Colombia is the image the country has abroad, it is the most difficult thing to change the image that is in the mind of the
people because the people does not know actually the truth of the situation of the country so this is the fact in which the institutions of Colombia have to work more to promote Colombia as a safe country for going for vacations or also to invest.

- Colombia have to improve especially their public transportation system for increase the quality of the country for the tourism, because as we saw in the French case one of the main reasons for the succeed of the tourism in France is the public transportation system which is really complete with trains, metro, buses and airplanes as well.

- It is imperative for Colombia to learn from the French success example in a effective way inviting to Colombia some French tourism experts that can give conferences about how France get the their position on the tourism sector and also would be a positive thing if in Colombia the ministry of tourism can hire a French expert for work there for a period of time and give them his impressions about the country about the positive and the negative things as well.

- The tourism is a result of the economic, political, cultural and social environment is more complex than the people think is not only people travelling to another country tourism has many different segmentations and has a big impact on the countries especially in the economical and cultural part.

- Right now in Colombia is not possible to implement a tourism system as the same that is in France because Colombia is missing the infrastructure that a country like France has, first is important as I said before to improve the transportation systems and the amenities which are good but not enough to increase in a big percentage the tourism in Colombia. The country of South America has to work a lot on these 2 aspects first and on the public image of the country for expecting better results on the tourism.

- The increase of tourism will take time because improving the transportation and the amenities in a country is not easy so Colombia will have to work really hard the next 10 to 20 years to increase their economy and their tourism as well, this is not a thing that cannot be done in 5 years or less it has to take a big period of time
because it is not only to build things but to change the peoples mind which is not easy.

- Colombia have all the resources to be a touristic country in the next decades is imperative to understand that they will have to make a lot of changes especially on tangible and intangible things as I explained before, this can be an successful story as the French one, but different of course Colombia is not going to be the first touristic destination in the world that is a dream, but can be one of the main destinations in America in the next 10 years.

- Colombia can learn about the French experience applying and adapting the main positive aspects to their country having some advice that is very important and acquiring experience sending the leaders of the Colombian industries (transportation, lodging) and the directors of the main touristic institutions abroad to learn more about the how they can apply the theory and convert that into reality.

- The European countries tend to be the most visited countries in the world, in America there is only Mexico and United States as top destinations but in south America there is no country top ranked which is really, an opportunity for Colombia to develop and improve tourism on their region by making deals with flight companies and partnerships like the partnership with the cruise company Royal Caribbean that goes to 2 cities in Colombia and bring a thousands of tourists every year.

- It has been really a good experience to understand how two different countries like France and Colombia have things in common and of course big differences. Is logic that those two countries are in different periods of development but is impressive how the experience of a country like France can help the growth of other country like Colombia in the tourism sector. There are a lot of variables on the equation and of course it is not possible to apply them all to the formula, but I think if Colombia applies 2 or 3 important variables like I explained before (infrastructure and change of mentality basically) then they will see a big chance in 10 years on their tourism sector talking especially about the economic and cultural perspective.
Bibliography


Appendix A:

Questionnaire about tourism in Colombia:

Please fill the following required data:

Name:
Surname:
Age:
Charge:
Nationality:
Phone number (Mobile):
City of Residence:
Company:

This questionnaire is for a thesis work of a student of the Rouen Business School in France. Please be so kind and answer the following questions.

1. What is your perspective of the tourism in Colombia in this moment:
2. For you which are the 3 most important steps to develop tourism in a country like Colombia?

1. 

2. 

3. 

3. Which is the core market (people: young, old, families) that Colombia should target from your point of view and why?
4. Which are the strongest points of Colombia talking about tourism and which are the weaknesses of the country?

5. Are the partnerships important for the countries to develop their tourism sector? Why?
6. Which is the most important contributions tourism can make for a country like Colombia?

7. Which are the industries that develop more because of tourism in a country?
8. Do you think it is possible to copy a successful tourism case like the French for developing tourism in Colombia?

This is the end

Thank you very much for your cooperation and time.