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FORTE CULTURA *at* FORTE DI BARD



FORTE CULTURA ANNUAL CONGRESS 2025

27 - 29 MARZO 2025, FORTE DI BARD, ITALIA



Registration Link: <https://forte-cultura-2025-at-Bard.eventbrite.de>



Heritage and Creativity for Sustainable and Inclusive Tourism in Fortified Sites

Concept Note

1. Context and Motivation

As Europe navigates pressing challenges related to sustainability, cultural identity, and community engagement, fortified sites such as Forte di Bard (IT) and the Forts of Avrieux and Aussois (FR) are emerging as key drivers of cultural and economic revitalization. These historic landmarks provide a rich architectural and historical foundation for developing new, community-driven tourism models that balance heritage preservation with contemporary socio-economic needs.

By integrating Creative Tourism strategies, fortified sites can evolve beyond static historical monuments into dynamic cultural hubs, engaging both local communities and visitors in immersive experiences. The FORTE CULTURA Congress 2025 at Forte di Bard will serve as a pivotal platform for exploring best practices, fostering synergies between Central Europe and the Alpine region, and showcasing innovative approaches to sustainable tourism.

A key focus of the congress will be the transformative role of Creative Tourism and the principles of the New European Bauhaus (NEB) in redefining the future of fortified heritage. By aligning cultural sustainability with economic viability, the event will highlight how heritage sites can become anchors of regional identity, creativity, and community resilience in an evolving European landscape.

2. Synergies between the New European Bauhaus and Creative Tourism

The New European Bauhaus initiative, focusing on sustainability, aesthetics, and inclusivity, closely aligns with the objectives of Creative Tourism. Both promote:

- **Community Engagement:** Empowering local communities to actively participate in the cultural and economic life of the region.
- **Cultural Sustainability:** Balancing tourism development with the preservation of local identity, ensuring that tourism strengthens rather than undermines a sense of belonging.
- **Inclusive Experiences:** Transitioning from passive tourism to immersive and participatory experiences, where visitors connect deeply with local traditions and skills.



3. Congress Objectives

The congress will focus on adopting Creative Tourism as a tool to activate the cultural and economic potential of Europe's fortified sites, using Forte di Bard as a best practice model. Specifically, the event aims to:

- Promote Creative Tourism strategies aligned with the NEB vision by integrating cultural, environmental, and economic sustainability into heritage tourism.
 - Discuss how NEB principles can be adapted to create engaging tourist experiences that respect and value local traditions, craftsmanship, and culture.
 - Involve local communities and international stakeholders in developing tourism models that enhance economic resilience and strengthen cultural ties.
 - Reflect on transitioning the cultural offerings of fortresses into more comprehensive and extended experiences, transforming locations from single-day tour stops to multi-day destinations.
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4. Key Themes and Sessions

Key sessions and workshops will address:

- **The Role of Creative Tourism in Revitalizing Cultural Heritage:** Exploring how fortified sites can use Creative Tourism to attract visitors interested in sustainable cultural tourism.
 - **Applying New European Bauhaus Principles to Tourism:** Examining how NEB's focus on "beautiful, sustainable, and inclusive" spaces can be applied to the tourism sector, especially in fortified sites.
 - **Governance and Community Engagement:** Discussing governance models that enable local authorities, cultural organizations, and communities to collaborate in creating and managing sustainable tourism products.
 - **Cross-Border Partnerships and Funding Opportunities:** Highlighting European funding programs and cross-border partnerships to support the growth of Creative Tourism based on heritage.
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5. Expected Outcomes

- **Enhanced Tourism Strategies for Fortified Heritage Sites:** Participants will gain ideas for creating tourism offerings that attract visitors seeking cultural and creative experiences.
 - **Strengthened Regional and European Partnerships:** The event will foster collaborations aimed at enhancing cultural and economic opportunities for fortified heritage sites.
 - **A Roadmap for Sustainable Heritage Tourism:** By integrating NEB values and Creative Tourism principles, the congress will provide a guide for fortified sites aiming to attract and engage visitors sustainably.
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6. Focus on TRANSIT: Presenting Partners and Comparing Alpine and Central European Realities

The congress will showcase partner experiences and the Transit Project as an example of transitioning toward a new cultural tourism offering. This four-season cultural product is a fundamental element for achieving the broader goal of fostering social and economic development through cultural valorization.

The combination of services and cultural proposals forms a new tourist product—a coherent set of cultural activities and hospitality services that collectively create the visitor experience.

7. Participants and Stakeholders

The congress will bring together a wide range of stakeholders, including:

- **Local and Regional Authorities:** Interested in integrating cultural tourism into sustainable development plans.
- **Cultural Institutions and Heritage Managers:** Focused on adaptive reuse and tourism development for heritage sites.
- **Academic Institutions and Researchers:** Studying the impacts of NEB principles and Creative Tourism on community engagement and heritage preservation.
- **Artists, Artisans, and Cultural Organizations:** Playing a direct role in creating visitor experiences through practical activities and local storytelling.

8. Conclusion

The FORTE CULTURA Congress 2025 at Forte di Bard represents a unique opportunity to connect European heritage sites with NEB's vision and Creative Tourism strategies. By centering fortified site tourism around community, creativity, and sustainability, the congress aims to demonstrate how Forte di Bard, along with its surrounding region, can become a cultural anchor and catalyst for regional identity, economic vitality, and intercultural exchange in a more sustainable Europe.