

Development of Yoga Tourism in India- An Overview

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Abstract

Yoga tourism is when people travel to other countries to find salvation and medical care while touring, vacationing, and experiencing the attractions of those countries. People travel because these unique therapies aren't available in their home country. Yoga is a fast-growing health therapy that people are learning to live a healthy life. It has huge potential to generate jobs and foreign currency. India is the birthplace of yoga and has a lot of potential to develop yoga tourism. Yoga tourism in India faces many challenges, however. The present paper outlines yoga tourism in India and discusses opportunities and challenges of promoting it in India with some valuable suggestions to develop India as a global destination for those seeking to learn yoga or live a healthy life by practising it.

Keywords: Yoga, Yoga Tourism, India, Medical Care

Introduction

No physical evidence supports the claim that yoga is as old as humankind. In Mohenjo Daro and Harappa, excavators found soapstone seals with yogi-like figures. These numbers show it originated in India 5,000 years ago. Yoga was born in India, but it evolved through the Vedic, Classical, and Postclassical periods. Yoga grew during these stages. Yoga is a thousands-year-old science. Previously, only yogis practised yoga, but now anyone can. Yoga combines ancient body, mind, and soul theories, observations, and principles. Modern scientists proved it can be used as a body-healing therapy. It makes the body more flexible and relieves stress. People practise yoga to feel fitter, more energetic, and full of gusto. Yoga united body, mind, and soul. It helps us become more aware of our body's posture, alignment, and movement patterns, which helps with flexibility and stress relief. This is one reason people adopt yoga. Yoga is based on ancient mind-body theories, observations, and principles.

Yoga promotes health and wellness holistically. Long-lived saints knew prosperity secrets. Yoga Tours in India teach anyone about yoga. Yoga tours to India take to authentic ashrams and centres to study this holistic science. Learn the exercises, techniques, and poses that will teach proper breathing, one of the keys to health. Quiet

natural surroundings and spiritual science can cure many ailments. Yoga strengthens body, mind, and soul. Rishikesh and Haridwar, where yoga was revived, are popular destinations for yoga tours. The Ganges is a good place to study scientific integrity. Kerala, Tamil Nadu, and Goa have ashrams (*Yoga Tourism in India*).

Yoga Tourism in India

Tourism has become a global industry, contributing 9-10% to global GDP and employment. From 1 billion in 2014, international tourists are expected to reach 1.8 billion in 2030. Tourism is a development strategy worldwide. Tourism is motivated by many factors. Medical and wellness are booming. Goodrich & Goodrich (1987) define medical tourism as an effort to attract tourists by promoting health-care services and facilities. People cross the border for healthcare services because they are unavailable or very expensive in their own country. Yoga tourism is a growing niche in wellness tourism. "Yoga Tourism" is travelling to another destination to learn yoga or receive yoga-based healthcare. In recent years, more tourists have travelled to do yoga while exploring the country's beauty. Yoga tourism is considered a type of wellness tourism where people travel to practise yoga. Yoga tourism is much more than that; people travel to learn yoga by taking degree or diploma courses to become a yoga instructor or to find salvation by meditating.

India offers affordable healthcare and rejuvenation services to medical tourists. Yoga, meditation, ayurveda, allopathy, naturopathy, unani, etc. make India a unique healthcare tourism destination. Alternative treatments that naturally heal the body are gaining popularity. In India, a department focuses on education and research in these therapies. In recent years, yoga has gained global popularity. People outside India now practise Yoga to heal their body and mind. The Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, has also initiated to make proper plans and policies to promote Yoga as a main Tourism Product((PDF) *YOGA TOURISM IN INDIA*). Yoga tours combine yoga and travel, relax by the sea, visit interesting places, and do yoga several times a day. Body and soul need rest.

Rest nonstandard and interesting. Yoga tour combines beach vacations, sightseeing tours, and classes. Even if never done yoga, try it out. If bored with hotel and beach stays, try a yoga tour. Each day is fresh and new. Unique tour, not mass recreation. You want to relax with friends and like-minded people. In a small group (4 to 35 people), you can find interesting personal communication. Good for solo travellers. In a group, relaxing is more fun and interesting. You want to learn the country's culture and customs. On a yoga tour, we learn more about culture and traditions, religions, and the country's history than on an ordinary excursion. India is one of the most interesting countries for yoga tourism because it preserves ancient traditions and culture. We love India and choose routes that aren't on regular tours. To improve health, Yoga is for all ages and physical abilities. You can tone your body with soft stretch marks and simple postures. Yoga is natural for the body and starts all its mechanisms working again after serious operations and accidents. No violence, it's easy and pleasant, and you'll see results. If you want to reduce stress, recharge during the holidays, bring your thoughts. Yoga, anti-stress breathing, and massages help relax. After a vacation, you feel relaxed and energised. Our tourists have "burning eyes" You want to evoke many feelings. India, a country of contrasts, is amazing and shocking every day.

International Yoga Day

On December 11, 2014, the 193-member United Nations General Assembly unanimously

adopted a resolution designating June 21 as the "International Day of Yoga." The belief on this day arose following Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's call for the adoption of June 21 as the International Day of Yoga in a speech to the UN General Assembly on September 27, 2014, suggesting June 21, which is one of two surprises, International Narendra Modi Day Yoga. He stated that this date is the longest day in the northern hemisphere and is especially significant in many parts of the world. On June 21, 2015, the world celebrated the first International Yoga Day. In Rajpath, New Delhi, approximately 35,000 people, including Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and other dignitaries, performed 21 asanas (yoga positions) for 35 minutes. The yoga day in Rajpath, which was watched by millions around the world, established two Guinness World Records: the largest yoga class, with 35,985 people, and the majority of nationalities participating in the group, with eighty-four(Kumar).

Opportunities of Yoga Tourism in India

India can promote yoga tourism by offering international-standard medical and wellness facilities at low prices and by starting new yoga courses. Some Indian states promote yoga tourism. Yoga tourism holds promise as one of the world's oldest medical treatments. India is recognised for Yoga & Meditation as much as its Taj Mahal and tigers of Ranthambore. The Beatles' 1969 vacation to Rishikesh with Maharishi Mahesh Yogi is a renowned example of India's weight in a world concerned with mental, physical, and spiritual wellbeing. Mia Farrow, Steve Jobs, and Oprah visited Indian Yoga and meditation retreats to transform their lives. Prince Charles and Camilla spent time in an ashram near Rishikesh in November 2013. Wellness travel makes for 14% (or \$439 billion) of the \$3.2 trillion tourism sector. Susie Ellis, CEO of the Global Spa & Wellness Summit, said healthier lifestyles at home are influencing travel and vacation behaviours. Now, they want to use vacation time and money to improve their fitness. Yoga, meditation, spa, and massage can relieve stress and promote health holistically. India is a wellness tourism destination because of Ayurveda, Yoga, and Meditation. It's one of the world's fastest-growing wellness destinations, with a 22% annual growth rate.

The US, the biggest wellness tourist destination, is expected to rise 5.8% each year. All 193 countries of the globe passed the UN resolution to celebrate June 21 as World Yoga Day unanimously, and 177 countries co-sponsored it. Since 2002's 'Incredible India' marketing campaign, which targeted wealthy travellers, tourism in India has risen substantially. India's sacred towns promise what everyone wants today: ancient recipes for perpetual vitality.

India's government is promoting yoga tourism. Last year's International Yoga Day at Rajpath set two Guinness World Records. 35,985 people participated in the world's largest yoga class. It's also the most diverse yoga event ever. 84 nations participated. The Ayush and Tourism Ministries are pushing India as a "Yoga Tourism" hotspot where people can repair their bodies and minds. "India, Land of Yoga" is their catchphrase. It's tied to medical tourism in India and encourages holistic health treatments. India's Ministry of Tourism distributes a list of authentic Yoga establishments and advertising material featuring yoga poses globally. The government of India gives tourist visas and e-tourist visas to foreigners who desire to take short-term Yoga classes, medical treatment under Indian systems of medicine, recreation, sightseeing, and business or social visits. 16 Indian airports offer e-tourist visas to 150 countries. They can travel to India with a printout of an email visa acceptance and get it stamped at arrival. India grants Japanese 30-day visa-on-arrival.

The New Tourism Policy, 2015, released on May 15, 2016, mandates the National Tourism Board to boost Indian tourism. Now, the government has a 'single window gateway system' for tourists. To promote responsible and sustainable tourism, we must create and maintain infrastructure, ensure tourist safety, increase connectivity to remote places, and use e-tickets. Yoga, which promises self-realization, is also promoted. To do this, it connects yoga centres with travel companies. The focus is also on establishing physical structure and skill sets (with aid from state governments) that can make these centres more attractive to foreign tourists, such as visitor handling and language orientation. Yoga will be promoted on social media and public places. Indian Association of Tour Operators President Subhas Goyal commented, "Well begun. Yoga excursions are

growing in popularity worldwide. The government's initiative is welcome."

Yoga is performed in India to achieve physical, mental wellness and spiritual enlightenment. The government seeks to restore an ancient Indian health method. The HRD Ministry has ordered schools to make yoga a daily practise. Yoga gives rapid reward and permanent transformation, so most individuals who do it in India return to learn more. Both are vital when packaging yoga tours. Tourists can be discouraged by too little progress. To attract their interest, we must highlight yoga's long-term health benefits and include quick-results workouts and practises. Everyone can benefit from yoga tourism. Classes exist for all ages and fitness levels. Modern yoga studios are full of kids, teens, fitness freaks, bodybuilders, athletes, middle-aged housewives, and the elderly. Yoga is all-inclusive, unlike other activities.

Yoga's focused training helps create calm and tranquilly. Yoga helps us relax, de-clutter our minds, and create a space for ourselves where we may be happy and at peace. Depending on one's choices and lifestyle, there are different types of "yoga." Relaxation yoga emphasises breathing exercises and meditation; hot yoga or Bikram Yoga eliminates toxins by doing exercises in a hot room; power yoga increases stamina and resistance power; prenatal yoga is for pregnant women; and Hatha Yoga is for beginners who want to learn basic postures at a comfortable pace. Yoga can be practised regardless of body fat, fitness level, or health history. It means Yoga trip operators can attract unlimited clients.

"Yoga" for Indians and foreigners is different. Many American yoga students are self-reliant. Some find yoga a non-strenuous approach to shed fat or relieve stress. Others practise yoga to become more flexible, firm their abs, or gain slim muscle. Others may be hoping to reverse diabetes and arthritis. Yoga must be commodified to be profitable today. June 21 gives India's travel and tourism industry a chance to enhance incoming tourism. Regular yoga excursions have clients from France, the US, Germany, Russia, and other nations. Featuring World Yoga Day branding, Yoga is now known worldwide, and specialised tourism products with Yoga packages will do well. Yoga and spiritual

tourism have great potential, says Mehul Gor, MD of Mumbai's Amigo Travel Services. We lead Russian and American Yoga tours to India. More than a lakh people came to India for Yoga last year." Yoga tourism benefits ashrams and the hospitality industry. Mauritius Tourism's Anuj Singhal said majority of their Yoga clients remain longer. They want quality guesthouses or serviced flats. Corporate houses and companies from India and outside use Yoga as offsite training for employees. Tourism workers have greater opportunities. Warning however. Yoga tourism can only grow with quality, despite branding and marketing efforts. Many countries want to capitalise on the trend. Yoga is widespread on Bali, Indonesia. Thailand, Laos, and Cambodia are popular yoga tour destinations. Morocco, Turkey, Fiji, China, and Sri Lanka also offer Yoga tours.

India's excursions are modestly priced and offer affordable possibilities. It's also where Yoga originated. If you can give world-class services and real results to wellness tourists, you'll perform well as a Yoga tourism operator, trainer, or service provider. Offer Yoga packages that double as spiritual tours, Taj Mahal visits, Indian experience tours, and adventure trips to make it huge (*Employment News*).

Difficulties in Yoga Tourism in India

- 1) The lack of infrastructure is a key obstacle to yoga tourism in India, including inadequate transit facilities and connectivity issues. India was ranked 134th for ICT readiness components and 34th for travel and tourism competitiveness by the World Economic Forum in 2019.
- 2) Safety and Security is one of India's primary concerns. Theft, credit card fraud, and identity theft are prevalent in India, as are food poisoning, sexual exploitation of women, terrorism, and violence. Regarding safety and security, India was ranked 114th on the 2017 WEF Index. These factors influence the development of yoga tourism.
- 3) Taxes on the entire business, including airlines, hotels, and tour operators, are astronomically high. This is the primary reason why India loses tourism business to countries with lower prices.
- 4) Human resources are necessary for yoga ashrams and studios, as well as hotels, travel agencies, airports, and other locations, in order to support the expansion of yoga tourism. There is a significant labour shortage in the hospitality and tourism industries at present.

- 5) Lack of Promotion: The success of any industry depends on the creation of effective advertising and marketing instruments. Presently, India requires a massive shift from its still-used traditional marketing approaches to a much more modern strategy.
- 6) Taxes on the entire business, including airlines, hotels, and tour operators, are quite expensive. This is the primary reason why India loses tourism business to countries with lower prices.

Suggestions

India must attain a respectable reputation in the global yoga tourist industry. To combat unemployment, the tourism industry requires a massive labour force. There are the following suggestions for the growth of yoga tourism in India to make it a unique yoga destination in the world: Ministry of Tourism and Ministry of Ayush should now engage in international tourism festivals to promote yoga tourism destinations in India. Different types of literature should be written to promote a specific location. Different guidebooks, tour brochures, posters, and folders must be disseminated to inform tourists about the yoga destinations in the country. Prepare a guide and service provider training programme based on the needs of foreign tourists. Set up various language training programmes. The collection of tourist statistics and the analysis of these statistics will assist in identifying the problems of international tourists and the solutions to these issues. Under one roof, services for yoga tourists including rail and aircraft reservations, currency exchange, and an information centre. This collaboration will aid tourists. This cooperation is available in Europe, which is of great assistance to tourists. There must be proper communication between the many government agencies responsible for providing tourism facilities, including information. Also, there should be communication between government offices and travel agencies, which must stay responsible for tourists' specific arrangements. Yoga tourism is a service industry, and service quality varies from location to location. Yoga tourism depends not only on the service of yoga studios, but also on other services such as airport personnel, consumers, guides, etc.

Stability boosts growth. Yoga increases human capital. Yoga reduces economic stress and

promotes happiness, according to studies. India's main export is yoga. The Indian economy requires guidance to thrive through yoga. Culture and literature originated in India. Tourism's success depends on all strategic fronts. India must adapt its traditional market approach to be competitive and modern. India needs a unique market position, brand, and identity. Spiritual, meditative, and yoga-filled India can do it now. Rishikesh Haridwar, recognised as the yoga capital of the world, still has considerable potential to attract tourists, mostly foreigners who come India to practise yoga and relax. The government should create yoga infrastructure including roads, transit, and accommodations to help yoga tourists in India. Government should work with yoga studios and the private sector to expand yoga tourism(*Hospitality and Tourism*).

Conclusion

Tourism is the world's largest employer. India has always drawn tourists to its 5000-year-old civilization. National cultures, religions, languages, fairs, festivals, majestic nature monuments, and many enchanting It can hold the world. These elements offer tourists a unique set of benefits. Tourists are few compared to Bangkok and Singapore. Even during the recent boom, experts say India must upgrade its airports, roads, and other infrastructure to world standards to attract more tourists. Tourism's success depends on all strategic fronts. India must modernise and compete in the market. India needs a unique market position, brand, and image. Spirituality, meditation, and yoga are popular in India. Rishikesh Haridwar, known as the world's yoga capital, still has a lot of potential. They attract tourists, especially foreign tourists who visit India to study yoga and escape life.

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