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Itinerary Preparation and Tour Packaging (MTTM 302)

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BLOCK- 1**Itinerary - Meaning, Nature and Scope**

In the current tour operation business environment we find ourselves in fastest changing era, it is critical that we maximise our key business asset, namely our clients. Many businesses are finding that the only way to gain a competitive edge is through the effective and efficient management of tour package. Whether you are a tour operation manager or marketing manager, you must be aware about the requirements of tourists , this block will give you the necessary background about the itinerary: meaning, concept, nature and scope.

Moreover, the block will cover the tour itinerary –meaning, nature, scope significance, components, elements and approaches in the Indian tourism industry. It will explain and clarify how a well-structured and planed approach to itinerary can deliver substantial benefits to all stakeholders: tourists as well as tour operators. This block comprises the following units:

Unit 1 focuses on defining Itinerary and Travel Plan, understanding differentiation and, scope. Finally the unit discusses the significance of tour itinerary in tour operation industry Significance.

Unit 2 of the course entitled “components and elements of an effective Tour Itinerary” describes the meaning and concept of tour itinerary, explain the main components of tour itinerary and finally understanding of elements of effective tour itinerary

Unit 3 deals with discussion of Information and research input required in preparation of tour Itineraries. In this unit you will learn about the various sources of travel information used to develop tour itinerary. Further, the unit describes research input required in preparation of tour Itineraries.

In unit 4 we will describe about the approaches for Itinerary preparation. The unit also discusses constraints and grey areas involved in preparation of innovative tour Itineraries.

Block Objectives: After studying this block, you will be able to:

- Describe the tour itinerary concept.
- Discuss various types of itineraries
- Explain the scope of tour itinerary ,
- Discuss the significance of tour itinerary,
- Understanding Information and research input Required in Preparation of Tour Itineraries,
- Describe Systematic Approach for Itinerary preparation
- Explains constraints and Grey areas involved in preparation of innovative Itineraries
- Explain the main components of tour itinerary.
- Understanding of Elements of effective tour itinerary

UNIT 1: ITINERARY AND TRAVEL PLAN: DEFINITION, DIFFERENTIATION, SCOPE AND SIGNIFICANCE

Structure

- 1.0 Objectives
- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Tour Itinerary - Concept, meaning, definition
- 1.3 Types of tour itinerary
- 1.4 Scope and Significance of Tour itinerary
- 1.5 Summary

1.0 Objectives

After reading this unit, you will be able to:

- Understand meaning and concept of itinerary
- Discuss various types of itineraries
- Explain the scope of tour itinerary ,
- Discuss the significance of tour itinerary

1.1 Introduction

In the world of real estate, it is well established that the three most important factors that determine property value are, “location, location, and location.” Similarly, in the world of travel, location – or knowing where to find points of interest – is critical. Depending on a traveller’s particular interests, he will seek information on local attractions and activities that meet his needs. The word “itinerary,” means, “the route of a journey or tour, or the proposed outline of one.” Anyone who has planned a trip would appreciate the importance of having some idea of what they plan to see and do at their destination. In fact, that kind of knowledge could determine the selection of the tourist destination itself. Also, suggested itineraries can be very helpful for independent travellers once they arrive at their destination. Traditionally, self-guiding pamphlets and guides serve this purpose. Itinerary development can be a powerful tool in organizing information about an area’s attractions and presenting that information to visitors in an appealing manner. In tourism, this could be called “tourism product development.” In this unit students will be able to understand Itinerary and Travel Plan also describe differentiation, scope and significance.

1.2. Tour Itinerary - Concepts and Meaning

An itinerary is a key and significant component of a tour package. It may be an initial itinerary or a final itinerary. Basically it is designed to identify the

origin, destination and all the enroute stopping points along with the transportation, accommodation and other services on a travelers trip an itinerary has various portions and these portions are known as segments. Practically, these segments are dependent on the type of journey undertaken by the tourist. Moreover, itinerary shows the sequence of the various tour ingredients and provides essential information such as assembling point, departure point, days of departure, duration of a tour, legal requirements, features of a destinations, optional activities, and meal and perhaps can be called as a central point for the success of a tour company. To be more effective tour company needs to develop separate and distinctive itineraries for the tourists, tour managers, tour escorts, vendors and tourist itineraries. The key features of tour itinerary include:

- Grass roots travel using all forms of local public transport where possible.
- Using small scale locally owned accommodation and homestays were available and using local Restaurants and markets for dining.
- Employing western leaders who facilitate the company's values to travellers and local communities, educating them in sustainable tourism practices. Intrepid also employ local guides to aid travellers understanding of local culture and etiquette.
- Having maximum group sizes of twelve, which allow travellers to experience, cultures at a grass roots level offering greater opportunity for cross-cultural understanding.

1.3 Types of tour itinerary

An itinerary is a day to day plan of a journey. It includes all the activities and destinations that the tourist will engage in or visit during his or her journey. An itinerary is generally based on a client profile.

A client profile gives the travel agent an idea of the person or persons they are drawing up a tour plan for. A tourist route that includes visits to various historical sites, places of cultural interest, or natural attractions—an itinerary undertaken for cultural, educational, health, or sports purposes. Tour itineraries may be worked out by tourist agencies and organizations or by the tourist's they. In terms of their directional orientation, the various types of itineraries include linear, circular, and radial ones. Itineraries are also distinguished in terms of mode of travel.

For example, walking, cycling, automotive means, or water transport; in terms of time of tour operation—year-round, seasonal, or one-time itineraries; and in terms of the different arrangements that may be involved for group and individual itineraries. Tourists may follow organized, or pre-planned, tour routes (on the basis of tourist organization travel vouchers), or they may work out their own independent itineraries. Organized tour routes are specially designed and equipped to offer tourists such services as excursions, tourist centers, and camp sites.

There are essentially two types of itineraries:

1. A **General Itinerary** that is aimed at and marketed to a wide variety of clients. It is an open itinerary taking in to consideration a wide range of Interest.

2. A **Personalized Itinerary** that is specially drawn up for a specific client according to that clients needs and interests.

The following information should be kept in mind when planning an itinerary:

- Always have an interesting and attractive heading for your itinerary
- Show the date and time clearly
- You must draw special attention to your highlights
- Always break your itinerary up into paragraphs with new dates
- Provide as much information about the attractions and activities included in your tour plan, as possible
- Always us the 24 hour clock,
- Allow sufficient time for each highlight
- Place each highlight in logical order. Remember you need to save your client traveling time and cost
- Try to finish each day with a special highlight, if possible
- Distance must be realistic, try to use the 100km per hour rule
- Never make promises in your description that you may not be able to keep, (e.g. don't say, "**You will enjoy a glorious sunny day at the beach**", it could pour with rain on that day). To avoid this, provide the Client with alternative that they could pursue if the plans have to change.

Contents

- Write clearly and to the point.
- The client must want to travel immediately to their preferred destination when they read your itinerary.
- It must however leave the client wanting to travel in order to discover the destination for them.
- Give them just enough information to wet their appetite.
- Never use the word etc in an itinerary
- If your itinerary is for five days or more, you can include one day at leisure but be sure to suggest a variety of things to do on that day, that would match the clients profile
- You must be clear about accommodation, transport, attractions, and activities that the tourist is paying for.

The itineraries may be ready-made or made on request. The ready-made itineraries are made in advance without knowing when and who will buy. It is similar to produce clothes, shoes and display in a shop. It is prepared to suit maximum number of potential travelers. It must be salable and should be focused on the potential market segmentation. While preparing ready-made itinerary, a travel agent should consider its capacity, market, marketing strategy,

competitor's policy, future company policy, pricing policy etc. They are used for packaging tours, so these are also known as package tours.

Special or tailor-made itineraries are made on request to suit the individuals. They are made on request or on demand of the particular customer. While preparing these types of itineraries, two way communication is possible so that we can ask and prepare as per the requirement. In this type of itinerary, duration, places of visit, date, hotel plan, type of service required is known. We know who and when will buy the tour.

Tour Itinerary may be prepared on the basis of the following points.

- * **Single or multiple destinations:** To include only one destination or to include more than one destination in one itinerary.
- * **Special interest package:** For example adventure package, cultural package, holiday package, etc.
- * **Tour package:** An itinerary prepared for pleasure, relax.
- * **Travel package:** An itinerary especially for travel.
- * **Outbound package:** An itinerary prepared for domestic tourists to visit foreign countries.
- * **Inbound package:** An itinerary prepared for foreigners to visit our country.
- * **Domestic tours:** An itinerary prepared for local people to visit own country.

The above package types show that itineraries can be of different types. It can be prepared for different purposes also. An itinerary prepared for manager includes itinerary of different clients. Manager wants to know over all happenings at a time. Transport itinerary includes only transport element to book transport or to inform driver. Tour guide itinerary includes all details points to visit. Guest itinerary includes detail description of the destination, interesting points, some do's and don'ts. Its objective is to motivate tourists to involve in tour.

Sample Tour Itinerary Pilgrimage and Leh Tour

Duration: 16 Nights / 17 Days

Destinations Covered: Delhi - Lucknow - Sravasti - Lumbini - Kushinagar - Vaishali - Patna - Nalanda - Rajgir - Bodhgaya - Varanasi - Delhi - Leh - Alchi - Lamayuru - Leh - Delhi - Agra - Delhi

Day 01: Arrival Delhi

On arrival at Delhi International Airport, you will be met and transferred to your Hotel. Check into the Hotel and relax. Overnight stay will be at Delhi

Day 02: Delhi - Lucknow - Sravasti

After breakfast, in time transfer to airport to board a morning flight for Lucknow. Arrive Lucknow and check into your hotel. Afternoon, enjoy an excursion to

Sravasti, a place where Lord Buddha spent his last 20 rainy seasons. Visit the ancient villages of Maheth and Saheth, which have the remains of the Jetavana Monastery. These Sravasti villages also have the ruins and relics of Jain temples. Overnight stay will be at Sravasti.

Day 03: Sravasti - Lumbini

After breakfast, we drive to Lumbini, the birthplace of the Lord Buddha, in Nepal. Arrive Lumbini and check into the Hotel. Afternoon, enjoy a visit to the location where Lord Buddha is believed to be born. Overnight stay will be at Lumbini.

Day 04: Lumbini - Kushinagar

After breakfast, we drive to Kushinagar, where Lord Buddha breathed his last. Arrive at Kushinagar and check into your hotel. After freshen up, visit the Mahaparinirvana Temple and Ramabhar Stupa. Overnight stay will be at Kushinagar.

Day 05: Kushinagar - Vaishali - Patna

After breakfast at hotel, we proceed to Patna by surface, enroute visiting Vaishali. Vaishali is one of the important ancient historic cities of India, where Lord Buddha preached his last sermon. Arrive at Patna and check into the Hotel. Overnight stay will be at Patna.

Day 06: Patna - Nalanda - Rajgir - Bodhgaya

After breakfast at hotel, we drive to Bodhgaya visiting Nalanda and Rajgir, enroute. While Rajgir was an ancient capital city, Nalanda is a famous Buddhist site known for its ancient university. Arrive at Bodhgaya and check into the hotel and relax. Overnight stay will be at Bodhgaya.

Day 07: Bodhgaya

After breakfast at the hotel, visit the sacred Mahabodhi Temple - where the Buddha attained enlightenment under a Bodhi Tree after years of search for the truth and knowledge. Afternoon, enjoy a sightseeing tour of Bodhgaya visiting Niranjana River, Sujata Village and many beautiful monasteries. Evening, visit the Mahabodhi Temple for prayer. Overnight stay will be Bodhgaya

Day 08: Bodhgaya - Varanasi

After breakfast at hotel, we drive to Varanasi. Arrive and check into the Hotel. Evening free at leisure. Overnight stay will be at Varanasi.

Day 09: Varanasi - Delhi

Early morning visit to lively Ghats of the Ganges to enjoy the breathtaking view of the sunrise and rituals performed by thousands on its banks. Enjoy an unforgettable boat cruise on the Ganges, indeed a wonderful experience. Afternoon, in time transfer to airport for flight to Delhi. Arrive at Delhi and check into the hotel. Overnight stay will be at Delhi.

Day 10: Delhi - Leh

Wake up early and board a morning flight to Leh. Arrive at Leh and check-in at hotel. Rest of the day free at your leisure for the acclimatization, as Leh is at an altitude of 3,500 meters above sea level. In the evening, enjoy a short walk around Leh market. Overnight stay will be at Leh.

Day 11: Leh

After breakfast at hotel, enjoy a full day excursion to the famous monasteries of Leh. Visit the famous Thiksey Monastery to see the morning praying ceremony. Further proceed to visit Hemis Monastery, one of the most famous and enchanting monasteries in the Ladakh region. Return to Leh, enroute visiting enchanting Shey Palace. Overnight stay will be at Leh.

Day 12: Leh

After breakfast at hotel, enjoy a full day excursion to Khardongla Pass, the highest pass in the world at an altitude of 5,600 meters above the sea level. From the top, enjoy the breathtaking view of snow-capped mountains and valleys. Late afternoon return to Leh. Evening free at leisure. Overnight stay will be at Leh.

Day 13: Leh - Alchi

After breakfast at hotel, we proceed for Alchi, enroute visiting Basgo Palace and Likir Monastery. Arrive at Alchi and check-in at the hotel. After freshening up, visit the amazing Alchi Monastery. Overnight stay will be at Alchi.

Day 14: Alchi - Lamayuru - Leh

After breakfast at hotel, we proceed for Lamayuru via Khalsti (passport checking point). In Lamayuru, visit the enchanting 10th century Buddhist Monastery. Return to Leh. Overnight stay will be at Leh.

Day 15: Leh - Delhi - Agra

After breakfast at hotel, in time transfer to domestic airport for flight to Delhi. Arrive at Delhi and we straightaway drive to Agra. Arrive at Agra and check into the hotel.

Day 16: Agra - Delhi

After breakfast, visit the Taj Mahal - the most beautiful monument in the world and the magnificent Agra Fort. After lunch, we proceed to Delhi by road. Arrive at Delhi and check into the hotel. Overnight stay will be at Delhi.

Day 17: Delhi - Tour Concludes

After breakfast at the Hotel, enjoy a morning sightseeing tour of old Delhi. Visit and see the magnificent Red Fort, Jama Masjid (Biggest mosque in India), Chandni Chowk Bazaar (oldest market of Delhi) and Raj Ghat (Mahatma Gandhi memorial). Afternoon, enjoy a sightseeing of New Delhi visiting India Gate, President House, Parliament House and Laxmi Narayan Temple. Evening free for Shopping. After dinner, in time transfer to international airport to board the flight for your onward destination or way back home with sweet memories of India. Overnight stay will be at Agra.

Tour Itinerary Arrangements

- **Accommodation:** All accommodation used by Trendsetters Travel is screened for quality. The following criteria are of utmost importance for our hotel selection: cleanness, safety, comfort & location. We will be able to secure excellent

accommodation group rates on your behalf no matter what destination you select.

-Flights: Since the most expensive component in traveling is usually the flights, we take care to get as many quotations as possible for each tour. We have good relationships with all major airlines and are able to secure the best available group fares.

-Transportation: We only use good quality, modern air-conditioned executive coaches. We include all necessary empty runs, driver's accommodation and meals.

- Meals: Our programs will include all breakfasts as standard. However we can also include other meals (lunches and dinners) as per your requirements.

- Excursions: One of the most important aspects on each tour is to allow the learners to see and experience as much as possible in the foreign country! Each itinerary will include various excursions as per your requirements. Your Trendsetters consultant will be more than happy to assess your needs and make recommendations for suitable excursions.

- School visits / University visits: We usually include one or two school visits or University visits to our academic tour itineraries. From experience we have learned that this is often one of the highlights on a tour, especially if the learners have the opportunity to interact with the foreign students. These visits do not only broaden their horizons in terms of cultural exposure but it is often very enjoyable to all tour participants.

- Matches: An important element of a successful sports tour requires fixtures against teams with similar skills and of equal strength. Through our relationships with local schools and clubs we will source evenly matched competition. Our clients range from professional senior sides to social teams, universities, clubs and schools. A typical international sports tour lasts 2 weeks and includes 3 to 6 fixtures (depending of the sporting discipline).

- Training sessions & coaching sessions: At Trendsetters Travel we realize that the purpose of a sports tour is not only to compete in fixtures and have a great time, but naturally to improve the team as a whole and to learn new tactics, movements and skills. That is the reason why all our sport itineraries will include training sessions at top facilities. In addition to this we have fantastic contacts with many professional coaches in foreign countries and we would be pleased to organize professional coaching sessions for your group.

- Host families / Billeting: Upon request, we can add a few nights of billeting (staying with host families) in the foreign destination. The billeting does not only add value to the group's learning experience but would also expose the group to the local customs and cultures and give them the opportunity to socialize with their opponents and peers on a personal level.

- Special Interest Groups: We often encounter a group that has a special interest or unique requirements. We find it challenging and rewarding to plan

customized itineraries around your needs...even if your request is really something out of the ordinary! We will arrange that art lesson for you in an artist's studio in the middle of the lavender fields of France, organize that cooking lesson for you in the beautiful countryside of Tuscany or arrange anything to satisfy your requirements, regardless of how outrageous and eccentric they are.

- **Guides:** Trendsetters Travel includes a tour guide on all our tours to ensure that the highest level of quality is maintained throughout the trip.

- **Comprehensive group travel Insurance:** It is compulsory to take out travel insurance on all our tours. Trendsetters Travel strongly suggests that you consider groups insurance instead of individual insurance to minimize administration. We offer comprehensive group travel insurance through AIG Insurance as standard on all our youth tours. However, the choice of suppliers remains with the client. Please note that the AIG gold package that we offer covers medical emergencies, baggage, third party liability and lost travel documents.

- **Tour Fundraising:** We know that very few teachers or coaches have time to devote to fundraising. Therefore we have partnered with an events company that will be happy to assist you with any fundraising projects. The responsibility of organizing an event or fundraising project will remain with this company and they will take the burden from your shoulders while you can simply reap the benefits.

- **Passports & Visa Requirements:** Our tour quotation will clearly reflect if a visa is necessary for the specific destination, and if so, what the costs of the visa will be. In addition to this, we will give you the exact requirements for the visa application as well as advice on the procedures, duration and the application forms. However, with the majority of countries it is now compulsory to apply for a visa in person and therefore we cannot take responsibility to obtain the visa on your behalf. Likewise we can advice you on the most effective way to apply for a passport, but unfortunately we cannot apply for a passport on your behalf.

- **Safety & security:** At Trendsetters Travel, we take the welfare of each and every participant on our tours very seriously. Just as we work tirelessly to provide once-in-a-lifetime experiences to teachers, coaches and learners, we are equally committed to ensuring that all of our travelers return home safely. Our safety and support infrastructure has been a cornerstone of our business and it is of utmost importance to us.

- **Tour presentation:** Trendsetters Travel would be thrilled to do a comprehensive presentation at your premises. From experience we have learned that a presentation is very effective to get buy-in from the parents and create excitement amongst the players as we include multi-media and pictures from each destination and excursion. Since we offer this presentation free of charge and with no obligation, it is a simple way to 'test the waters' even if you are just considering an international tour.

- **Tour Costs:** It is extremely important to us to quote within your budget constraints whatever that may be. Our quotes will clearly display all the inclusions and exclusions to avoid hidden costs and unpleasant surprises later on. We offer value for money and give you the best price without sacrificing quality.

- **Service to our clients:** Our company policy is to focus on the quality instead of the quantity of tours. Each and every client is important to us and you can be assured of service excellence throughout the process.

- **Tour marketing:** The likelihood of an international tour very often depends on the amount of enthusiasm that the teacher or coach can create (and maintain) within the group. For this reason, Trendsetters Travel would be happy to assist you as much as possible in ways to advertise the tour, keep the group in high spirits and motivated about the tour. Whether it is tour posters, pictures, the multi-media presentation, tour competitions, tour riddles or whatever it takes to maintain enthusiasm until you board your flight!

- **Contract with school / club:** The organizing teacher or coach will sign a contract on behalf of the school / club. This ensures that all parties involved are aware of the terms and conditions necessary to ensure that safety and accountability are maintained throughout the trip. As soon as the contract is executed and deposits are paid, we immediately begin organising the tour to ensure that learners get the best tour possible. We purchase airline tickets, make hotel deposits, and arrange all other elements of the trip so that the tour is not coordinated in haste.

Check your progress-1

Answer the following questions.

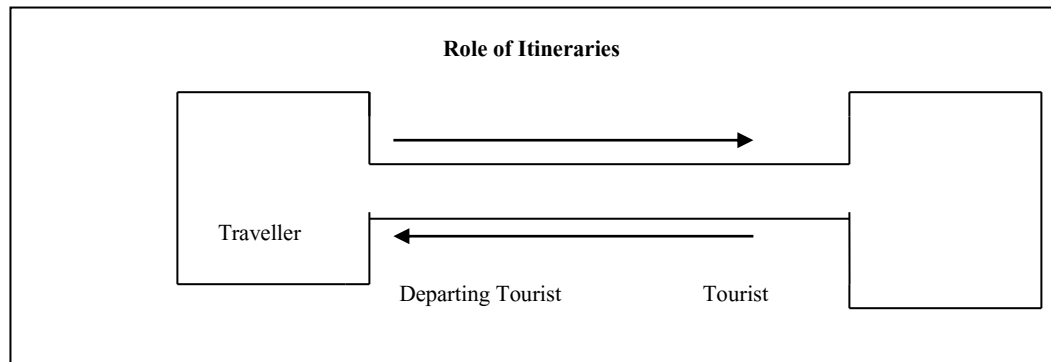
1. Define tour itinerary.
2. What are the main types of itinerary?
3. Explain escorted itinerary

Check your answer with the one given at the end of the unit

1.4 Significance of Tour Itinerary

Tourism is concerned with pleasure, holidays, travel and going or arriving somewhere. The activity of tourism is intimately dependent upon travel motivations. In fact, to make travel possible, it is the tour Programme, which plays most important role in travel motivation. Itinerary as a detailed tour program that enables the destination to be reached. Many writers like Boorstin and Baudrillard have said that tourism through guided groups yields better results in terms of a destination success and customer delight. As a consequence all the persons involved in guides tours or packaged tours viz. tourist entrepreneurs, professionals and the local people have more responsibility towards tourists,

destination and the host environment. The role played by itineraries can be explained by the following diagram.



According to Leiper, (1990) itineraries provide not only the information to the travelers to reach the destination, but also the intermediate places which may be visited enroute. Today's travelers are accustomed to flexibility. With do-it-yourself travel tools readily available and very much the norm for booking leisure travel, its understandable employees have come to expect the same when planning business travel. They rely on the ability to do the research, know the options and make informed travel decisions all on their own. And, they appreciate the ability to change plans when the need arises. *Itinerary brings* added flexibility, convenience and assurance to your employees throughout the travel planning process:

Flexibility: Because travelers can calculate the costs of itinerary changes with *Online Ticket Exchange*, they're empowered to make informed decisions while experiencing the flexibility to change travel plans as they see fit – all without picking up the telephone.

Convenience: With *Hold Trips*, travelers experience the convenience of shopping and reserving airline seats, hotel rooms and rental cars even before trip details are finalized.

Assurance: *Pre Trip Approval* is added assurance for travelers that their making the right moves on behalf of the company – all facilitated online and automatically.

Simplicity: Travelers can research costs and exchange tickets online with a few simple clicks, hold itineraries without driving fees and receive prompt pre-trip approval. This also brings simplicity to travel managers' day-to-day responsibilities by automating features that typically required travel agency intervention.

Compliance: Because travelers are working within an online system backed by powerful rules engines, multiple checks and balances are automatically in place to ensure policy compliance.

Control: Travel managers experience more control over program process with the ability to set and enforce policies online when it comes to exchanging, holding and approving travel itineraries.

Cost Savings – More cost savings as more transactions are moved online

Employee Satisfaction – Travelers are empowered to make or change travel plans as needed

Check your progress-2

Answer the following questions.

- Describe benefits of tour itinerary.
- Discus the significance of tailor made itinerary.

Check your answer with the one given at the end of the unit

1.5 Summary

In this Unit, we have familiarised you with certain details regarding the Itinerary and Travel Plan: definition, differentiation, scope and Significance management and day-to-day functions in a tour operator company. It is essential for a tour operator to first gain knowledge about the market conditions and then acquires product knowledge. The Unit also dealt with .certain aspects like defining itinerary, types of itineraries scope and briefings, etc. which at the surface may appear to you as something trivial but you must remember that these are **all** vital issues as far, as customer satisfaction is concerned and cannot be taken lightly in a tour operation industry. These are equally important for managers, supervisory staff as well as employees. This is basic unit and in subsequent units you should again more knowledge related with tour package, different types of package related- special interest tour packages and so fourth.

Answer to Check Your Progress

1. 1) See sec. 1.2
 2) See sec. 1.3
 3) See Sec. 1.3
2. 1) See sec. 1.4
 2) See sec. 1.4

1.6 Glossary

- **Educational Tour itinerary** - A tour designed around some educational activity such as studying Renaissance art.
- **Escorted Tour itinerary** - A prearranged travel program, usually for a group, escorted by a courier. In a fully-conducted tour, escort and/or guide service is provided throughout; 2) A sightseeing program conducted by a guide, such as a city tour.

- **Fam Tour itinerary** - Familiarization tour for travel agents or journalists planned and executed by a destination or region, usually in cooperation with an international airline.
- **Group Tour itinerary** - A prearranged, prepaid travel program for a group usually including transportation, accommodation.
- **DMO** Destination Marketing Organization – an organization dedicated to developing and marketing tourism, typically defined by a geographic or political area such as a town, city or region.
- **Consolidator** Someone who puts all the ground components of a package together. For example, bus, activities, accommodation, programming

1.7 Review Questions

- Describe the tour itinerary concept. Discuss various types of itineraries
- Define tour itinerary. Explain the scope of tour itinerary.
- What do you mean by a tour itinerary? Discuss the significance of tour itinerary.
- “Over r the years the concept and definition of itinerary has been changes many fold” illustrate.

1.8 Suggested Readings

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- IATA Manual
- Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India, Reports and guidelines for travel agency and tour operators.

UNIT 2: COMPONENTS AND ELEMENTS OF AN EFFECTIVE TOUR ITINERARY

Structure

- 2.0 Objectives
- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Components of Tour Itinerary
- 2.3 Elements of effective tour itinerary
- 2.4 Summary
- 2.5 Glossary
- 2.6 Review Questions
- 2.7 Suggested Readings

2.0 Objectives

After reading this unit, you will be able to:

- Explain the main components of tour itinerary
- Understanding of Elements of effective tour itinerary

2.1 Introduction

Now you can understand what is an Itinerary? What are the various types of tour itineraries, and scope of tour itinerary? The unit-1 also described the significance of tour itinerary. The second unit is devoted to understand main components of tour itinerary and elements of effective tour itinerary. In fact, tour package means the pre-arranged combination of at least two of the components (transport, accommodation, and other tourist services) when sold or offered for sale at an inclusive price and when the service covers a period of more than 24 hours or includes overnight accommodation. This unit appraises the understanding of students towards components of a tour itinerary and help them to plan an effective tore itinerary.

2.2 Components of Tour Itinerary

Package holidays or all-inclusive travel has been very popular and is likely to maintain its popularity in many countries such as India, USA, Japan, Ireland, the UK and China According to the European Union's Package Travel Regulations (1992), "package" means the pre-arranged combination of at least two of the components (transport, accommodation, and other tourist services) when sold or offered for sale at an inclusive price and when the service covers a period of more than 24 hours or includes overnight accommodation. For example, a package holiday to India marketed and operated by travel agents and/or tour operators usually consists of overnight accommodation in New Delhi, visits to

one of the two theme parks and other tourist attractions, shopping and of course the use of transportation services.

Different types of tourism components (activities) in package holidays are provided by specific agents and enterprises that form a *tourism supply chain* (TSC). A TSC comprises the suppliers of all the goods and services that go into the delivery of the tourism products to tourists. Among these suppliers, tour operators play a principal role as the intermediaries that bring buyers and sellers together, package different tourism products/services into a single product, and market the product to the targeted tourist segments. Enterprises in a TSC, on the one hand, benefit from providing components of the package tours, as a consistent demand for these products/services could be maintained

What should be included in a tour itinerary is still a debatable rather based on the market or destination?

A “tour itinerary” is a group of products and services presented as a unit and sold for one fixed price. Products and services may include accommodation, transportation, sightseeing, and meals. Some tour itinerary may even include helicopter rides, theatre tickets, interpretive centre entrance passes, picnics, community events and hands-on learning experiences. There are no limits to what can be included. Other points to consider, include:

- Tour itineraries are operated for a specific duration. itineraries may include a complete two week or one week all inclusive, arrival to departure itineraries , may be single day itineraries available for purchase once in the area, or may simply be one component itineraries which lasts a few hours;
- a tour itinerary may be packaged for one or two people travelling as individuals, or for groups travelling together;
- itineraries make it easier to travel into a region, through rearranging and prepaying for services needed en route to, or while visiting, a destination;
- itineraries may offer a benefit to the customer by including advantages he or she would not normally receive if they were to purchase the travel on their own;
- itineraries often provide better values than customers can get on their own;
- itineraries create a perception of value and security;
- itineraries assist in attracting new markets and give existing customers value-added reasons to buy products and services; and
- Some itineraries are operated by seasoned tourism operators as well as by businesses and individuals who are not directly operating a tourism business.

Generally, a tour itinerary is used to identify the origin point, enroute destinations and end destinations along with product / services required by the tourists.

- Accommodation

- Transport
- Transfers
- Additional components at the resort eg resort representative, excursions, entertainment, car hire.

- **Other services**

Accommodations There's a hotel for every budget in India – from luxury resorts to small cheap motels. India is well known for its cheap, clean middle-rung motels and hotels which offer decent accommodation and good food.

Youth Hostels: Indian Youth Hostels (Hostelling International) all over India are very cheap and have excellent facilities, though they might be a little away from city centres. There are some state-run youth hostels, but steer clear of them. A Youth Hostel card isn't generally required, but you save on money at the official Youth Hostels if you have one.

Government Accommodation: Restless British administrators were always up and about, all over the country – even in the remotest of areas, especially in the remotest of areas. The result is that they have left behind a string of accommodation units like Rest Houses, Dak Bungalows, Circuit Houses, PWD (Public Works Department) Bungalows, Forest Rest Houses all over the country often in attractive locations. Well, they are still meant for the travelling government officials, although many will take you in for overnight stays particularly in far-flung areas

Tourist Bungalows: Tourist Bungalows run by the State Governments have superb facilities and are a real good bargain. You can take your pick from rooms with or without AC, single or double. Most have excellent restaurants and what's more, they're pretty reasonable. It is pretty generally agreed that tourist bungalows are the best places to stay while in India.

Railway Retiring Room: The most popular type of accommodation while on transit in trains. They are just like any other hotel except they are at the railway stations. To stay here you must have a railway ticket or an Indrail Pass. In case you have an early train to catch, these rooms are extremely convenient and very cheap.

Railway Waiting Rooms: When all else fails, nod the night away at railway waiting rooms which come free provided you have a valid ticket.

Budget Hotels: Most suitable and preferred by backpackers, budget hotels in India are dirt-cheap. In fact, in the smaller hotels, you may even try your bargaining skills.

Luxury Hotels: Luxury hotels come in several categories in India, such as the super deluxe, deluxe, five star, four star and three star, depending on the facilities they offer. These hotels are generally limited to the major tourist centres and the metro cities.

The Taj Group; the Welcomgroup, the Oberoi, Ritz, Casino and the Air India linked Centaur Hotels and the ITDC group runs Ashok Hotels

Home Stays: The greatest way to know India is to stay with an Indian family; it can quite an eye opener for westerners. Such home stay accommodations are organised in Rajasthan, Ladakh, Chennai and Mumbai in alliance with the Tourism Development Corporations of the respective states. The tourist offices of the cities have the exhaustive list of the families offering this service,

Others: YMCAs and YWCAs in big cities provide an alternative to other type of accommodation. They are well equipped and affordable; however they also have long waiting lists so book in advance. There are a few Salvation Army Hostels in particular in Calcutta, Chennai and Mumbai. Camping facilities are also available for the outdoor types in outdoor type locations of course. Free accommodations as well as meals are available, for a limited period like overnight stay, at some Sikh Gurudwaras (temples).

Transportation

Tourism can be seen as the sum of the relationships resulting from travel and stay of non-residence to the extent that the stay does not need a permanent residence and does not come from a paid activity. It clearly shows the relationship of two ideas— travel and stay, within the complexity of tourism and of fixing at the same time the order of events. Hotels are not essential — they are desirable, but if people can move on their own homes with them in the form of tents and caravans, etc. or use supplementary accommodation. Every tourist wants to travel to see some of the places of interest, quite apart from the place he lands. He is anxious to see the number of places in the shortest possible time. Transport is the key factor for the development of tourism. The means of transport, and the supply of a service in making possible the travel to a place rather than the place of residence are thus not only the '*sine—quanon*' of tourists movement, but also limit the tourist flow quantitatively — the capacity of the means of transport decides the tourist volume and qualitatively the quality of the transport service offered decides the type of tourists in the flow.

Transport is a necessary condition of tourism. Expansion of transport has always proceeded the periods of great increase in travel and tourism.

The various forms of transports may be divided into three categories:

1. Air
2. Land
 - (a) Road Transport
 - (b) Rail Transport
3. Water Transport

Air Transport

Air travel is known as the baby of all the means of transport. Majority of the tourists prefer to travel by air, especially for long distance journeys. The principal method of travelling abroad either for the holiday purposes or on business is by air. The tourist market has been characterised up to now by a very high price elasticity of demand, The JUOTO (now W1O) puts the coefficient

of elasticity at about 1.5 to 2.0. Therefore, a reduction of bob in air areas would lead to growth of 17 to 22% in traffic.

Air traffic rights in international sectors are arranged bilaterally between countries. Air services are either scheduled or non-scheduled, On scheduled services, it is possible to travel as an independent passenger, as an inclusive tour passenger or as a member of an affinity charter group. Fare structures are calculated, following a chart of normal fares, one way fares, round trip fares, round the world fares, circle trip fares, G.I.T. fares, IT fares, or special distinguished areas. On unscheduled services, it is impossible to travel as a charter group or a member of a split charter group.

International Carriers

International airlines or 'Flag Carriers' represent their country and normally have the country's flag painted on the airplane. The majority of the international carriers are ruled and sponsored by the government of that country. The international airlines and routes inquire agreements between the various governments based on socio-economic considerations as well as the frequency of flights from one nation to another, The IATA attempts to resolve policies and fares applicable to the participating international air carriers. The India Flag carrier is Air India.

Domestic Carriers

Several hundred airlines serve the world today. In India, there are many airline companies providing air transportation. No air carrier serves every city in our country. These airlines have permanent operating rights within the region. These airlines are hired by the public and operate on a fixed schedule. The domestic carrier operating between the large cities.

As a travel agent, it is frequently necessary to use several airlines to complete a trip and since no airline serves every city, it becomes essential to allow the major route structure and remember the general geographical regions served. Air transport operation could easily be conveniently grouped under three broad headings.

1. Scheduled air services
2. Non-scheduled air services as chartered services
3. Air taxi services

Scheduled air services

Air services in this category may be international or domestic. They operate on definite routes, They require government licence for their operation. These airlines operate on the basis of published time tables regardless of passenger load factors. These air services can also be categorised as under,

- (i) State owned or public
- (ii) Private owned

In India, the public airline is the national flag carrier such as Air India and Indian Airlines Corporation. In USA all the airlines are operated by the private

sector. Similarly in India very recently we have East West Airlines, Jet Airways, Sahara Airways, etc. which have been operating in private sector. According to their network and relative importance within the air transport business air services, carriers other than IA and IAC, may be identified as either second or third force airlines.

Non-scheduled Air Services/Chartered Services

Chartered air services grew the exposure of scheduled services. They reduce their price dramatically by setting a very high break even load factor and by keeping overhead–low. These airlines do not advertise their routes to the public and save on marketing costs, on operation cost, and on head office cost. These airlines are not obliged to operate to a time table. They can choose to withdraw their less fully booked fights. They have freedom to transfer their passengers to other chartered airlines or consolidate their fights with other.

Air Taxis

Air taxis are privately owned aircraft. They accommodate small groups comprising four to eighteen persons. Mostly these aircrafts are used by business travelers. They are very convenient and flexible Routing can be tailor made for passengers Small airfield close to destination could be used Flights can be arranged or routines amended it short notice.

Air Brokers

These are the middlemen who act as intermediaries between aircraft owners and their potential charter market. They act both in an advisory and a sales capacity their main task is to find suitable aircraft at the right place both for ad-hoc and series charters. They maintain close contact both with airlines and with the chartered market. They play an important role in securing aircraft seats at times of shortage. They are active intermediaries in tour operator's flight consolidations.

Cabotage Routes

Carriage on routes with the national territory of one country is known as cabotage routes. This is normally restricted to the national carriers of the country concerned, It has nothing to do with international agreements.

Road Transport

Road or motor transport plays an important part in the field of tourism in India and European countries. Unlike the other forms of transport, the cost of transport per kilometer has very little road effect on the amount of travel budget. There are two types of vehicles required for tourists.

1. Tourist Coaches
2. Tourist Cars

Coach Travel

Coach travel is managed and operated by coach operators who offer a wide range of tourist services such as

- (I) Express coach routes:

- (a) Domestic
- (b) International
- (2) Private hire services
- (3) Tour and Excursion operating
- (4) Transfer services

Long distance coach services provide a cheap alternative to rail and air travel. Young men and women have been attracted to the adventures of long distance coach packages which provide at a tow price, transport plus minimal food and lodging in route. Most coach companies specialise in certain sphere of activities. Some of them operate and market their tour nationally/domestically. There are other coach companies who specialise in serving hr needs of the incoming tourists and tour operators by providing exceptional programmes, transfer between airport and hotels or complete coach tour for overseas visitors.

Long distance coach operators attempt to tie up reservations for hotel rooms in major tourist centres. The high level of car ownership, coach services both nationally and regionally will flourish in corning years. Effective marketing, package holidays linked to scheduled coach services and unlimited travel within a specified period by coach have attracted wide spread demand among prospective travellers.

Tourist Cars

The increase in car ownership has changed the travel habits. Families got a new freedom of movement. Now, people prefer car travel over public transport, specially because of flexibility and low cost. There is an increase in monitoring holidays, day excursions and short-break holidays. This change has profound affect on the travel industry. The tourist accommodation industry has responded by developing motels, tourist hotels, road side cafes, restaurants and many supplementary accommodation facilities and food and beverage units. Car ferry services have expanded and there is a visitors boom all around.

Indian Railways

The Indian Railways have been frying to adopt themselves to the new conditions of modern tourism The services have undoubtedly been largely improved and adopted to the needs and wishes of the clientele, The different fares introduced have been intended to stimulate the tourists, by many advantageous conditions to make excursions and trips from the place of vocation, with a view to encouraging tourists from overseas to travel by ham during their stay in the country.

The Indian Railways has adopted number of measures in order to promote both foreign and domestic tourism.

Travel As You Like

The 'travel as you like' tickets introduced by the railways offer a special concession to overseas tourist. These tickets are valid for 21 days from the commencement of the first journey. The special feature of the ticket is that the

tourist can travel to any place in the country irrespective of the distance by paying in foreign exchange.

Concessional Return Tickets

Both for foreign and domestic travellers, the railways issues during the season, concessional return tickets for hill stations, at one-and-a-half single journey fares. Overseas tourists who may stay in India for a short time and who have not drawn up plans for extensive travel can also avail themselves of a 10% concession for travel by air-conditioned class.

Group Tourism

Tourists coming in higher portion may also avail of the facility of special trains with restaurant cars which run to desired schedules and with the desired class of accommodation. On trains in which air-conditioned class accommodation is not normally provided a special air-conditioned coach can be arranged for parties of 12 to 14 tourists.

Home on Wheels / Palace on Wheels

The railways provides facility of special tourist cars for organised parties of tourists. There are air-conditioned, first and second class tourist cars with bathrooms, kitchens, sleeping and sitting accommodation. These may be called as 'homes on wheels', tourists cars can be kept in occupation by tourists till their itinerary is over. Some years ago railways with the cooperation of Rajasthan Tourism Development Corporation introduced 'Palace on Wheel'.

Preparing of Itineraries

With a view to encouraging well planned and organised tourism by individual or parties, the railways have drawn up itineraries for standard circular tours for which special tickets valid for three months are available at 3/4th the normal fare in all classes, except air.

1. Buddhist pilgrims from abroad as well as from different parts of the country for journeys to number of places of Buddhist interest on the North-Eastern Railways
2. VIPs and mountaineering expedition travelling to and from Nepal
3. Upper class passengers for journeys to various hill stations
4. Upper class business tourists and high officials in private and public sectors

Indrail Pass

Travel as you like — 'by any train you like' — 'from north to south and east to west' See the bewildering variety of flora and fauna that India is, see its National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries; see its colourful people heralding religious festivals and seasons with folk dances and songs, simple yet robust and vigorous; see its ancient monuments and temples; the footprints of history

Moreover, a tour itinerary should be client oriented which includes:

Standard Components

As noted in the previous section, standard inclusions may vary between group and FIT tours. “Typical” inclusions and “expected” services on a traditional tour may include many of the following:

Meet and Greet

Generally conducted at an airport, port or entry point into a destination.

A professional local guide or company representative meets and greets members of the group and gives them a brief run-down on what activities, transportation, lodging, etc. to expect while in the care of your company. The fee for this service is built in to the overall package cost or may be included in baggage-handling charges.

Lodging Welcome

Conducted for groups by local hotel/resort staff.

While the group escort goes to the front desk to do administrative chores (i.e., update rooming lists, check special needs, ensure rooms are ready, and get room keys), the welcome person leads the group to a small gathering area/room and provides a brief welcome announcement to the group. No fee is charged for this service.

Welcome Reception

While many properties offer a “welcome cocktail” designed to allow time for bags to be delivered to each room, a welcome reception provides groups with basic information about the lodging and local environs. This includes location of ice machines, gift shop, nearest convenience store, bar and soft service, things to see and do, etc. Fruit punch and cookies (or something inexpensive and simple) are served. This reception is kept brief (i.e., 10-15 minutes) and allows for the smooth delivery of baggage to each room while the reception is taking place. The minor cost of the refreshments is borne by the hotel/resort.

Baggage-Handling

Often not included for FIT. These charges, based on a per-bag-in and per-bag-out basis, are charged to the package organizer.

Extra Services

Extra services are low-cost or no-cost complimentary services and personal touches that help to ensure that you get repeat business in the future. Suggestions include:

- a full ice bucket in each room;
- fresh flowers in each room;
- a welcome fruit basket in each room;
- comfortable bath robes for each guest;
- photo film pick-up and delivery;
- self-help coffee, for late at night or early morning, supplied in the lobby;
- a discount coupon from a local or in-house gift store;
- a display of local cultural art and crafts;

- a locally crafted farewell gift upon departure; and
- evening bed turn-down and “treat”.

Meals

Often, groups are made to feel like inferior customers. This can be avoided. Preplanning will show that added effort was made to celebrate their arrival.

Suggestions include:

- printing restricted or single-item main course meals on a letterhead sheet, that includes a special greeting for the group and the day’s date;
- arranging for the group to sit at regular-size tables (not group tables); and
- allotting a set dollar value for each meal and letting group members order from the regular menu, accordingly. (Note: always include staff gratuities in quotes).

Entertainment

Set up a special area for the group. You may wish to provide them with a few complimentary activities, such as:

- playing cards and card tables;
- access to local films or video productions which highlight the local flora and fauna, attractions worth visiting, local shopping opportunities, etc.;
- information/education evenings where local “experts” are invited to provide a presentation and answer questions;
- a talk about tomorrow’s tour (if applicable); and
- a scavenger hunt designed to encourage local awareness.

Sightseeing

Select your tours with your target markets in mind. For example, keep in mind that seniors find it difficult to walk on uneven ground, require assistance getting in and out of boats and enjoy the fresh air but need to keep walking to a minimum. Both groups and FIT’s enjoy the “grass-roots”, local community perspective. Allow time for shopping and resting and refreshing before dinner.

Farewell

A representative from each place of lodging and the local tour operator should be on-hand as the group loads for final departure. A simple “thanks for coming” can be enough, but a treat of candy, fruit or granola bar for the day’s journey is a nice touch.

Creative Inclusions

Creative inclusions are components that add a perceived value to the tour. Suggestions include:

- an evening presentation on provincial and/or local area history;
- slide shows showing local highlights;
- a local craft-making demonstration; and
- an evening presentation on local/indigenous foods and their preparation.

The Duration of a Package

Once target markets have been pinpointed and examined, a travel pattern will emerge. Some markets have a propensity to purchase complete two-week travel packages while others may enjoy one week of prearranged activities following by one week of independent travel. Other target markets may enjoy the freedom to plan their daily excursions on their own. In this case the tour package should make available “vouchers” for the various options available, which the individual tourist can purchase on-site and at the reduced “group rate”.

Tour operators have an ongoing need to locate product offerings of less than one day to incorporate into established travel patterns. Businesses and communities should be encouraged to participate in packaging by programming products or events to fill these needs. Examples include: one-hour interpretative walks through a local garden or easily accessible rain forest trail; a half-day nature hike; or a half-day sightseeing excursion to local viewpoints.

Tourism Supply

- Attractions
- Culture and Heritage Attractions
- National Parks and Reserves
- Wildlife Management Areas and Concessions
- Conference Facilities
- Shopping and Entertainment

Intangible Assets

- Brand India
- Safety and Aesthetics
- Service Standards and Culture

Related and Supporting Industries

- Accommodation
- Transport Modes and Infrastructure
- Road Transport
- Air Transport
- Sea transport

2.3 Elements of effective tour itinerary

Effectively organizing all of the details of an executive's travel plans requires a travel itinerary template that you use consistently. Don't ask your travelers if they want one – JUST DO IT! They'll thank you for it later. And in the mean time, you'll have saved them a lot of time and hassle in sorting through multiple documents or scrolling through multiple emails to find the information they need at the moment they need it while they are traveling. I know this because every executive I've ever created one for initially comes to expect and/or demand them

for future trips. I've done a fair share of traveling myself, and trips with an itinerary are much more efficient.

Think Chronologically: If you haven't done a lot of travel planning in the past, one of the first things I encourage you to do is THINK CHRONOLOGICALLY. What is the order of events for your traveler throughout their trip? This will help you get all of the arrangements made that are required from the start (flights, ground transportation, hotel, meals, meetings, etc.).

Using This Travel Itinerary Template: My template is designed to cover all of the basic details that need to be included on an itinerary for a traveling executive. Not every trip requires airline travel. Not every trip requires rental cars. It may change from trip to trip and traveler to traveler. Remain flexible.

Customize this template to make it fit more specifically to your executive's specific travel needs.

Here are some tips to get you started:

- Fill all appropriate information for each trip.
- If you have executives that travel frequently to the same places, save their past travel itineraries. Open the most recent version, update with the new date and travel details without having to recreate the entire document each time they travel. It's a huge time saver!
- Print a final copy for your executive AND a copy for your file so you have the same information if they need travel assistance while they are gone. If appropriate, you can also print an additional copy for the traveler's family so they know where they'll be and when as well.
- If your executives have e-tickets for their flights, print a copy of the flight reservation from your travel agency or online booking service and staple it to the back of the itinerary just in case there are any issues when they check in at the airport.

Each time you need to create an itinerary, follow these steps to update the template with your executive's travel information.

1. Personalize the **HEADER** information on the template
 - Include your executive's name and your company name.
 - Insert your company's name/logo.
 - Update the travel dates.
 - Do this on the 1st page AND also in the header so it prints on any additional pages of the document if your itinerary is more than 1 page long.
2. Update/add all **AIRLINE** information:
 - Delete all previous times on the itinerary template.
 - Update all airline information requested on the template: dates, times, flight numbers, airline 800 numbers, travel agency numbers, any information that might be needed while traveling.
3. Update the **GROUND TRANSPORTATION** information:
 - Be sure to include car service info or shuttle/taxi contact numbers.

- List on the itinerary where the car service or shuttle will pick the passenger up.
 - Include the confirmation number.
4. Update the **HOTEL** information:
- Be sure there is a hotel contact number to reach the hotel.
 - Include street address and any applicable driving directions necessary.
 - Include the confirmation number and room rate.
5. **MEETING INFORMATION** in order of dates/times.
- Make sure to reference which time zone the time is listed in. to find out which time zone abbreviations apply at various times of the year.
 - Include conference number dial in and pass code information in case their flights are delayed and they need to join the meeting from their cell phone until they arrive at the meeting location. (Trust me, it happens!)
6. Check each section of the itinerary for information that needs to be updated.
7. Treat the compilation of the itinerary as though you were the traveler. What additional information would you want to know?
- Driving directions
 - Restaurant options and/or locations
 - Entertainment venues

8. **PROOF READ, PROOF READ, PROOF READ** the completed itinerary. There are a lot of details here. Make sure you proof it well.

The best executive travel managers make complicated trips look easy. Whether airline delays are likely, there's a strong chance of missed flight connections, or it's going to be a tight transfer from terminal to hotel, itineraries that can stand up to the unexpected all have something in common: they're detailed, confirmed, and include contingency plans.

Planning the perfect trip takes time, which is why the value of corporate travel managers continues to climb in the era of technology. In the words "the ability to engineer an effective, seamless itinerary requires more than just bells and whistles." From vendors to contingencies, we've put together an overview of just what sets the perfect plan apart:

1. The Executive Travel Vendors

In a busy executive travel itinerary, one missing or broken piece can be a disaster. Depending on the importance of the meetings scheduled, with top clients. Corporate travel managers understand from experience that the risk of questionable service associated with booking a new vendor simply isn't worth the potential damage to a travel itinerary.

2. The Documentation

Mobile technology has had a significant impact on corporate travel technology, and proprietary apps that allow corporate travel managers to remotely manage itineraries and risk management are being adopted by an increasing number of major organizations. While details can vary significantly, many travel

professionals are adopting programs that allow them to actively manage an executive's itinerary remotely. That way they can ensure there haven't been any disruptions to schedule.

3. The Connections

Connecting flights are the bane of many corporate travel managers' existence. There are few things in life or work more unpredictable than air travel, and connecting flights can effectively double the chances that an executive doesn't reach his or her final destination as originally planned. Most travel managers have learned to avoid connecting flights whenever possible, and schedule a healthy cushion of time between connections when they simply can't be avoided.

4. The Comprehensiveness

The best itineraries spell out how executives will travel from "door to door." Will the executive ground transportation service be greeting the executive at the office with a discreet text message? How will he meet his Chauffeur in the terminal? Details have been negotiated, established, and communicated so there's no confusion along the way.

5. The Flexibility

The best-laid travel plans don't always go as intended and executive travel managers have a plan in place in case a flight is missed or delayed. Whether they need to contact the car service if the executive is bumped from the flight entirely or they have any last-minute requests for the hotel vendor, their own documentation includes the details that might be changed at the last minute if necessary. The best travel itinerary planning includes a careful attention towards flexibility and continual communication with vendors, so that executives can focus on staying productive as they travel.

Check your progress-1

Answer the following questions.

1. What are the main components of a tour itinerary?
2. How to plan a effective itinerary?

Check your answer with the one given at the end of the unit.

2.4 Summary

It is clear that a tour itinerary provides basic, timely accurate and comparable information to the tourists. A printed tour itinerary was first introduced by the Thomas cook in 1856 when he started inclusive tour package. In this lesson we learnt the tour designing process steps. No doubt, these steps vary from tour to tour and company to company, however provide comprehensive information for development and designing of tour package. In the next lessons we will discuss in detail the concept of tour package and various tour packages.

Answer to Check Your Progress

- 1) See sec. 2.2
- 2). See sec. 2.3

2.5 Glossary

- **Aparthotel** - the type of hotel rooms, close in design to the form of modern apartments, including space for cooking (the cost of food is usually not included in price)
- **Apartments** – the type of hotel rooms, close in design to the form of modern apartments, including space for cooking (the cost of food is usually not included in price).
- **Upgrading** - provision of accommodation services (rooms) with an increase in the category of the room without paying additional fees by the tourist.
- **Railroad/train cruise** - train travel during a few days on a circular route using the train not only for transportation, but also for the provision of accommodation, food for tourist, etc. with stops along the route for sightseeing.

2.6 Review Questions

- What is a tour itinerary? What are its main elements?
- Suppose your are requested to plan a religious tour itinerary , what would the main components
- Draw a route map of adventure itinerary to Garhwal Himalaya.
- What should include to make an itinerary more effectives?

2.7 Suggested Readings

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UNIT 3: INFORMATION AND RESEARCH INPUT REQUIRED IN PREPARATION OF TOUR ITINERARIES

Structure

- 3.0 Objectives
- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Information and research input required in Preparation of Tour Itineraries
 - 3.2.1 Research sources of information for addressing visitor inquiries
 - 3.2.2 Essential travel itinerary information is paramount to develop a tour package:
 - 3.2.3 Benefits of adequate Information and research input
- 3.3 Summary
- 3.4 Glossary
- 3.5 Review Questions
- 3.6 Suggested Readings

3.0 Objectives

After reading this unit, you will be able to:

- Describe the meaning and concept Information and research input required in Preparation of Tour Itineraries.
- Explain Research sources of information for addressing visitor inquiries
- Discuss Essential travel itinerary information is paramount to develop a tour package:
- Describe benefits of adequate Information and research input

3.1 Introduction

Today, tourism business has been recognised as most professional and customer oriented. In fact, tour operation of modern tourism business has become so complex that it cannot be performed without accurate destination information i.e. 3 A's of tourism. Moreover, tour executives or tour mangers use various sources of information in their day- to- day decisions or for the preparation \ development of tour itinerary. Thus, managerial vis-à-vis practical knowledge is the core competence that needs to be developed among the tourism students. This unit is designed to prepare the students as tour planner or manger so that they can understand what the main sources of information are and what research input is required to design tour package.

3.2 Information and research input required in Preparation of Tour Itineraries

To be honest, the word itinerary makes me shudder. They are terrible, constraining, time-consuming, usually impractical schedules with the goal of making our travels easier. Except time after time, they will fail. That two-week trip will either feel like a marathon or a disappointment. How do you balance seeing enough, without trying to see too much? You don't. That is the best part of travel. You never know what the world is going to throw at you. You don't know if it will be pouring rain when you want to hike the Cinque Terre trail, or if the museum is going to close for a private party, or if the president is going to die and the entire city is going to take to the streets. The ultimate travel itinerary is one you are willing to forget about at the drop of a hat. Some would even say the best itinerary is the one that doesn't exist.

This topic will provide you with research skills for collecting travel information for an itinerary, based on the specific needs of your traveller. A travel itinerary should provide accurate details for the traveller and support staff for:

- Departure dates and times
- Arrival dates and times
- Methods of transport - air, bus, train, hire car
- Airline identification
- Flight numbers
- Accommodation bookings
- Business contact
- Appointments
- Airport transfers
- Any other information requested by the traveller

All departure and arrival dates and times are shown in local time, ie the date and time according to the place of arrival or departure. The internet provides many sites for you to research and finalise arrangements for travel itineraries. If your duties require you to organise travel on a regular basis, you will need to access a range of information, either on the internet or from the following suggested list of publications:

- Airline timetables
- Accommodation directories
- Information on visa
- Insurance - health and travel
- Passport applications/renewals
- Time difference
- Modes of travel
- Facilities available at the various venues

Moreover, a tour planner needs to go depth and research various sources of travel information to develop or design effective and innovative tour itinerary.

3.2.1 Research sources of information for addressing visitor inquiries

- the special issues of international tourists arriving in India; e.g., documentation, customs, health problems, language, currency
- List a range of resources available; e.g., online, guide books, pamphlets, 1-800 numbers
- identify tourism regulatory agencies and explain their role in the industry
- provide, to visitors, basic information about India regulations related to:
 - fishing, hunting and/or camping
 - provincial and national parks
 - liquor
 - smoking

Describe the different types of travel plans and tours available to the traveller, including:

- trip plans and itineraries
- day trips
- site tours
- inclusive tour charters
- special interest travel

Identify requirements for travel

- travel limitations related to:
 - documentation
 - criminal records
 - travelling with children
- list various agencies that provide travel information related to health and safety
- research travel advisories and insurance
- identify immunizations required for specific travel

Describe the components of an itinerary

- list the factors that a travel planner will consider when planning a tour, including:
 - age, needs, desired activities and agility of client
 - budget
 - season
 - time and distance
 - accommodation
 - attractions
 - geography
 - risk assessment
 - mode of transportation

- language
- currency
- food preferences

In nutshell, a tour planner gets information on the following aspects:

Before the visit:

Understand the participants in the group.

- Where the participants are from?
- What positions do the participants hold?
- Do the participants know about or sell your product?
- How do they sell your product?
- Do they have potential to sell your product?

Know the itinerary:

- Arrival time:
- Departure time:
- Coming from:
- Going to:
- Visited:
- Primary contact info:
- Staff briefing provided:
- Media kit ready (product info/rate/contact information)
- Gift

During the visit:

- Make visitor feel welcome
- Introduce self
- Exchange business cards
- Outline tour
- Escort group
- Introduce key staff
- Present information kit (Provide CDs or videos if available)
- Offer to send information post tour
- Provide time to answer questions
- Make follow-up list
- Ask group for feed-back
- Collect contact information from group

After the visit:

- Add participants to database
- Send thank-you letter or email
- Follow-up on requests for information/opportunities
- Follow-up on any product/service upgrades

Travel Documents

A travel document is an identity document issued by a government or international treaty organization to facilitate the movement of individuals or small groups of persons across international boundaries. Travel documents usually assure other governments that the bearer may return to the issuing country, and are often issued in booklet form to allow other governments to place visas as well as entry and exit stamps into them. The most common travel document is a passport, which usually gives the bearer more privileges like visa-free access to certain countries

- 1) Passport - Valid for at least 6 months from your travel date.
- 2) Visa - Valid visa for the country you are visiting. You will also require a Transit Visa if you are transiting for more than 12 hours. Please check Transit Visa rules for the country of transit.
- 3) Travel insurance - It is advisable to carry valid Medical & Travel insurance when traveling internationally.
- 4) Foreign Currency - It is not allowed to carry more than US\$ 10,000 as a cash or travellers check.
- 5) Air Ticket - Confirmed return air ticket. A one-way air ticket will be accepted only for students or working professionals (Student Visa or Work Visa holders), as well as dependents of the working professionals.

During the tour itinerary designing process, a tour planner must consider the various tour documents required for the travel to a particular tourist destination such as:

1. Route Instructions (Cue Sheets) and Route Map:

- Spiral-bound booklet that fits into the map-holder of your handlebar bag; includes detailed, easy-to-follow directions.
- Large Scale map with your route highlighted.

2. Pre-Trip Preparation Guide. Provides in-depth coverage of a variety of topics including:

- Tips for preparing physically, mentally & spiritually for your tour.
- Tips for packing, including a packing checklist.
- Information regarding French language and culture.
- On the road cycling tips and safety guidelines.
- Details regarding transportation via train from your gateway city to your tour's starting point.

3. Quick Reference Guide. This handy booklet fits in your handlebar bag for ease of access while on the road, providing information at a glance on the following topics:

- All Diverse Directions support services
- Emergency instructions
- Security and safety guidelines
- Instructions for changing a flat tire
- Rail tips
- Pre-ride checklist and pre-ride stretches

- Essential French Vocabulary

4. Sights Overview: Brief descriptions of notable sights along your route, complete with hours of operation (where applicable.)

3.2.2 Essential travel itinerary information is paramount to develop a tour package:

- Flight Airline and Number
- Flight Confirmation Number
- Hotel Name and Address
- Hotel Confirmation Number
- Car Rental Address
- Directions to Airport
- Directions to Hotel
- Directions to Car Rental Company
- Airport Transportation Information and Hours of Operation
- Things to Do
- Emergency Contact Information
- Subway Map and Hours
- Local Taxi Information
- Local Maps
- Average Local Weather
- Photos of Where You Are Going
- Excerpts from Travel Blogs

Here's a few tips for when you need a plan, but don't want your trip to end up like one of those seven-day, fourteen-country bus tours.

Stretch the Schedule

There is never enough time. Let me say that again. **There is NEVER enough time.** I don't care if you have five years to travel. You'll want ten. The key is to stretch the schedule as much as possible. Have two weeks of vacation? Add weekends. Plan it after a holiday. Take sick days. Book a night flight. Whatever you can do to make your trip longer. Figure out the maximum amount of time you have first.

Do Research

Before you start putting down places and dates on a calendar. Research your destination. Document it well. Read travel guides. Talk to friends. Consult travel forums. Figure out what looks fun and what should be avoided. Don't forget to look for important events like festivals or holidays in your destinations. They can be both awesome experiences, and logistical headaches.

Make a good long list of what you'd like to see and do. And write down how long you'll need to do it. Be realistic and always consult an expert for information. Then put the list in order by priority.

Get a Map

Now that you have a list of places to visit, get out the atlas. (Or head to Google Maps). Get a sense of where everything is, and how long it takes to get between locations. Check road conditions, and seasonal closures.

Plan a Route

Looking at your map, figure out the best way to get between your destinations. Are you flying in and out of the same city? Or can you go one way? Does public transportation go to the places you want to see? Or do you need to rent a car or fly? Consider short flights for efficiency, but recognize they aren't flexible with dates.

Add in Travel Time

Don't forget that going from place to place takes time. Airports take time. Trains take more time. International flights can take days out of your life. Remember that public transport often doesn't have a schedule. It goes when it goes. And that may have nothing to do with your itinerary. Flying to a new destination in the morning, then taking a train to a tourist site, then a bus to your hotel all in one day is exhausting. Count on travel days being an entire day. Don't try to plan sightseeing on the same day.

Build in Flexibility

Unfortunately, the world doesn't revolve around you. But don't feel bad, it doesn't revolve around me either. Something will go wrong. Planes will be delayed. Streets will close. Hotels will go out of business. There will be a festival or a riot or an election or maybe even a parade. You will have to cancel, reschedule, adjust, move and start over.

Get used to it and just go with it Have time in your itinerary to deal with changes and delays. It's just another part of traveling.

Build in Rest Days

It is important that rest days aren't considered the "flexibility" time. Rest days are for resting. Doing laundry. Writing in journals. Taking naps. Drinking beer. Or recovering from drinking beer.

Ask Advice and then Ignore It: Travelers love to give advice. Look at me; I have a whole website full of advice. Listen to what others have to say. Call up old friends that have done similar trips. Post on forums like Lonely Planet's Thorntree. Ask what to do, where to stay, how long you should be there. Make sure to seek out others with similar travel styles. If you're the adventurous type that likes camping and mountain climbing, don't take advice from travelers who like art museums and five-star hotels. Once you have all this information, ignore it. Well, most of it. It's your trip, your adventure. You have to make your own decisions and create your own adventures.

Rental Vehicles: The Contractor shall reserve commercial vehicles for travelers, if requested.

Related Services: Health Requirements. The Contractor shall provide travelers with advice on necessary health requirements, including types of inoculations and vaccinations whether required or suggested for foreign travel.

Ticket Delivery: The Contractor shall provide delivery of tickets, itineraries, and boarding passes (if applicable), and other travel documents, as determined necessary. Tickets shall routinely be provided no earlier than five days in advance of travel unless the Indian. Government requests otherwise. The Contractor shall deliver tickets only to employees designated by the India Government.

- Travel reservations, issuance and delivery of tickets for air, advance seat assignments; ;
- Arranging charter flight services as per the specification agreed by the U.S. Government.
- Reservations for lodging accommodations;
- Commercial automobile rental services;
- Assistance in obtaining passports, visas, and advice regarding health requirements;
- Detailed travelers' itineraries;
- Management information and billing reports derived from the booking database;
- Reconciliation of travel charges incurred through the Government's Central Billing Account (CBA); and,
- Information pamphlets for Government travelers who use the contract.

Tourist guide system that used mobile computing technology on wireless infrastructure to present tourists with tour-related information that could be tuned to fit multitude of circumstantial contexts. Further, Electronic Travel Planner is a system that constructs an entire vacation by piecing together structured components of types "tour", "lodging", and "transportation". Tours typically contain places to visit and activities to perform within a single day and general area, i.e. between lodgings and transports.

Integrating Analysis and Synthesis is the only prior work that we have found to be addressing both the mining of itinerary data and its synthesis. Built as an itinerary recommender system for users, they treat scenic landmarks photographed by a user as defining that user's interests.

Trip planners can also provide a large amount of information to developers and planners related to the origins, destinations, and timing of trips, and on the use of the trip planner software. Map based trip planners show that people using map based trip planners employ a mixture of methods when determining their origins and destinations, including clicking on the map, entering a landmark or intersection, or any combination of those for both the origin and destination

Text-Based Trip Planners: Many times the input and output of the trip planner is a text-based interface. The user enters his/her address at the origin and destination and time requirements including day of travel in text fields. These time inputs can include the time at the origin or the time at the destination. The information is sent to the web server, which sends it to a routing algorithm. The completed itinerary is returned to the web server and back to the browser.

Map-Based Trip Planners: To incorporate maps into this process, identifies the two major functions of a map-based trip planner. The first function is that the planner must make indicate that on-line, map-based trip planners have three-tier architecture. The first tier of the architecture contains a user interface on the web browser, which is the client-server tier. The second tier is a web server, which is the server tier. The third tier is an application server that contains a GIS application server and/or a database server, which is the application tier.

Due to the advancements of computing, communication and storage technologies, automatic transit trip planners have been implemented in recent years. Transit trip planners accept the origin, destination and expected departure/arrival time inputted from users and find proper routes using available transit services. Transit trip planners are generally web based. Some notable transit trip planners provided by transit agencies and companies include Bay Area 511Transit Planner (5), Chicago RTA Transit Planner (6), Google Transit Planner (8), Houston MTA Transit Planner (9), Los Angeles Metro Transit Planner (10), New York City Transit Planner (11), and Seattle Metro Transit Planner (12). Deutsche Bahn (7), Transport Direct (13), and ENOSIS (20) are some notable planners in Europe. Google Transit Planner also provides the routes outside of US if the required data is available.

After the analysis above, it is reasonable to summarize the following features of a common user's itinerary planning for a new place.

1. The description of the demanded destination is usually a category but not a exact geographical location, such as "a famous attraction", "a well-known snack bar", etc.
2. Users demand precise information of each place they want to go such as exact geographical location, the traffic route, the shortest and average taxi time between any two locations.
3. Users are interested in knowing other people's review about the places.
4. Some of the users' demands have multiple optimizing objects, which are clearly expressed and possible to be mathematically described, such as least time cost on the traffic; some are very vague and hard to be described mathematically, such as the most famous location available.
5. Categories of location points: It saves classification information of places. In this paper, we use hierarchy categories provided by foursquare;
6. Traffic information networks: It preserves the shortest travel time and the best path between any two arbitrary semantic location points of a city. We get semantic locations, which paid close attention by users, from public transit

agencies, and mining taxi history data to obtain accurate shortest path information.

7. Repositories of location points: We crawling all location points, which are provided by different users and evaluation by millions of users, of the target city from location based social networks. This collaborative evaluated information can more objectively indicate the popular degree of location points.

3.2.3 Benefits of adequate Information and research input

This kind of front-end user, if used by you can render following benefits:

- a) It gives you ability to make multiple, simultaneous enquiries for a holiday using only one set of data entry stream;
- b) It enables you to have effective link between front and back office system and thus gaining improvement in managing customers and providing customer service;
- c) You can speed up your booking process by taking full advantage of high network speed of this front-end intranet facility;
- d) It allows you automatic search on preferred supplies system, i.e., matching your commercial needs with that of supplier in line with existing business practices;
- e) When you are handling higher value sales in your presentation it enables you to make images and video clips;
- f) When you are using this facility cost of sale is known to both principal as well as tour operator;
- g) It generates detailed and accurate management statistics regarding booking transactions;
- h) Because of the use of the interface platform principal and travel agent are able to give better support to the retailers in the form of customer specific sales and marketing information as well as customer service; and
- i) Its use allows both principals and tour operators to maintain their market penetration whilst enjoying the benefits of the technological change.
- j) Information brokers to pass information from product suppliers to customers;
- k) Transactions processors to print ticket or forward money;
- l) Advisors to provide value-added information to their customers, assisting them in their choices of specific products and destinations.

To sum up, we are witnessing a rapidly changing scene in travel information driven by technology advances and an increasingly competitive market place. We are facing new issues and challenges more particularly related to the use of intranet and internet facilities which need to be carefully addressed for developing a healthy, reliable, accurate itinerary information system in tour operation industry.

Check your progress

Answer the following questions.

1. What are the main sources of information from a tour itinerary?
2. How route map used for effective itinerary?
3. List main benefits of information sources.
4. Give essential travel itinerary information to develop a tour package:

Check your answer with the one given at the end of the unit

3.3 Summary

This unit explains you the various information aspects related to itinerary planning. The unit began with an understanding of various elements of information in tourism industry and the factors governing better information and research input required preparing effective itinerary. In summary, there is a lack of integration between Touristic data mining and synthesizing those mining results to form itineraries such that the users can easily adopt and leverage. We need more appropriate information sources to construct innovative itineraries to serve wider spectrum of tourist requirements. Data mining in Itineraries may incorporate temporal constraints such as opening hours of museums, places especially nice at sunset, areas popular on weekends, etc.

Answer to Check Your Progress

- 1) See Sec 3.2.1
 - 2) See Sec 3.2.2
 - 3) See Sec 3.2.3
 - 4) See Sec 3.2.4
-

3.4 Glossary

- **Affiliated Online Booking Networks** :An online network of operator websites coming together through a central coordinating website, e.g., for accommodation in a district or tourism region
- **Bandwidth**: A measure of capacity, referring to the amount of data which can be transferred simultaneously across an Internet connection: the wider the bandwidth, the larger the carrying capacity, and the faster the uploads and downloads.
- **Cache**: Copies of previously accessed web pages and related files are stored, in a cache, either on your computer or on computers operated by an ISP (Internet Service Provider). On subsequent visits to these web pages the files are retrieved from the cache rather than downloaded from the web server again. This reduces the time taken to deliver the web page to you.
- **Cascading Style Sheets**: A programming language used to define the style, such as font, size, colour, spacing, etc. of web documents. It is recommended by the WC3 (World Wide Web Consortium).
- **Content Management System (CMS)**: System that allows a website owner to edit their content without requiring any knowledge of web programming. Also known as CMS.

- **Database:** A structured collection of records or data that is stored in a computer or on a server. Content management systems save a website's content in a database.
- **ISDN (Integrated Services Digital Network):** A digital service that provides fast data transmission over the existing copper telephone wiring system, requiring a modem and 'dial up' access. It preceded ADSL.
- **ISP (Internet Service Provider):** A company which provides access to the Internet. For a fee, the service provider gives you a software package, username, password and if in a dial-up area an access phone number.

3.5 Review Questions

- What precautions you shall take while engaging or handling providers of various travel services in your tour operation enterprise?
- Highlight the challenges being faced by the players of tourism industry while developing and sustaining relationships.
- Illustrate Research sources of information for addressing visitor inquiries.
- What are essential travel itinerary information is paramount to develop a tour package?
- Elaborate benefits of adequate Information and research input
- How would you use travel information sources for designing tour itinerary?
- List various sources of informational available for a tour operator in India.

3.6 Suggested Readings

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UNIT 4 SYSTEMATIC APPROACH FOR ITINERARY PREPARATION: CONSTRAINTS AND GREY AREAS INVOLVED IN PREPARATION OF INNOVATIVE ITINERARIES

Structure

- 4.0 Objectives
- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Systematic Approach for Itinerary preparation
- 4.3 Constraints and Grey areas involved in preparation of innovative Itineraries
- 4.4 Summary
- 4.5 Glossary
- 4.6 Review Questions
- 4.7 Suggested Readings

4.0 Objectives

After reading this unit, you will be able to:

- Describe the meaning and concept of Systematic approaches for Itinerary preparation;
- Explain the main constraints for preparation of innovative Itineraries ,
- Discuss the Grey areas involved in preparation of innovative Itineraries \

4.1 Introduction

Tour itinerary present analytical problems because of the great diversity of routes that travellers follow and the varying significance of destinations along those routes. Most of the approaches or models that have been proposed to deal with this complexity have focused either on the total number of travellers from one country to another, or on the overall pattern of entire trips. An alternative and complementary approach is to examine the relative location of a destination within the larger itinerary pattern. Depending on their location within the overall trip itinerary, places can exhibit characteristics of one or more destination types: Single Destination, Gateway Destination, Egress Destination, Touring Destination, or Hub Destination. This unit helps the students to plan a systematic tour itinerary while considering constraints and Grey areas involved in preparation of innovative Itineraries.

4.2 Systematic Approach for Itinerary preparation

Tour itineraries, travel gateways and transportation hubs are key concepts in tourism and travel. On the surface they are easy to understand. A tour itinerary consists of a route with one or more stops that a traveller takes. A travel gateway is a place that provides access to (and often travel services for) a destination place or region. A transportation hub is a place where more than one route for a transport medium (usually air or rail) converges and emanate. These concepts, however, have only rarely been critically examined and are only marginally understood from theoretical and empirical standpoints. The basic approaches /models that have been developed have primarily focused on the general flow of travelers from one destination to another and variations in the overall form or pattern of itineraries. Both of these approaches focus on the route, with only secondary attention given to itinerary stops en route. Using empirical data from a targeted survey of international visitors to Hong Kong, the research presented here models variations in itineraries based on the impact that these have on a single destination.

Planning an itinerary is one of the most time-consuming travel preparation activities. For a popular touristic city, it involves painstakingly examining the hundreds of Points-of-Interest (POIs) to select the POIs that one likes, figuring out the order in which they are to be visited, and ensuring the time it takes to visit them, and to transit from one POI to the next, satisfies the user's time budget. Package holidays or all-inclusive travel has been very popular and is likely to maintain its popularity in many countries such as India, USA, Japan, Ireland, the UK and China According to the European Union's Package Travel Regulations (1992), "package" means the pre-arranged combination of at least two of the components (transport, accommodation, and other tourist services) when sold or offered for sale at an inclusive price and when the service covers a period of more than 24 hours or includes overnight accommodation. For example, a package holiday to India marketed and operated by travel agents and/or tour operators usually consists of overnight accommodation in New Delhi, visits to one of the two theme parks and other tourist attractions, shopping and of course the use of transportation services. Different types of tourism components (activities) in package holidays are provided by specific agents and enterprises that form a *tourism supply chain* (TSC). A TSC comprises the suppliers of all the goods and services that go into the delivery of the tourism products to tourists. Among these suppliers, tour operators play a principal role as the intermediaries that bring buyers and sellers together, package different tourism products/services into a single product, and market the product to the targeted tourist segments. Enterprises in a TSC, on the one hand, benefit from providing components of the package tours, as a consistent demand for these products/services could be maintained

There are increasing numbers of travelers seeking high-quality, authentic experiences relating to nature, history, and culture. Ecotourism and heritage tourism are considered among the fastest growing segments of travel throughout the world. Another trend is that more travelers are on their own -- FITs or free and independent travelers. They generally seek out their own activities and develop their own customized itineraries, largely determined by special interests. From birding to spelunking, and archeological digs to scuba diving, travelers are motivated more than ever in finding opportunities to learn while on vacation, to seek new experiences, and to find inspiration.

In fact, itinerary development has become the crux and central point for the success of the tour company. Theoretically, there are two approaches for itinerary development. The first deals with approaching vendors without identifying himself. The reasons supporting this approach being that the tour planner makes reservations independently from the vendor companies as tourist or as tour planner to discover how the “average tourist” is treated by them. It helps him to classify vendors into categories ranging from extremely good to extremely bad. That is, under this approach tour planner starts the ‘tour’ as a tourist who is not distinguished from the other tourists. It provides a major advantage to the tour planner in the form of an opportunity to evaluate vendors and their services from the standpoint of general public (tourists). However, the approach has pitfalls of being both expensive and time consuming.

The second approach means a tour planner makes contract with all potential vendors in advance to put together all ingredients. When the ‘FAM tour’ is conducted in this manner, the tour planner puts all possible components of tour together and develops final tour itinerary. Obviously, tour planner receives much more than the average tourist would have received. Mostly vendors provide the tour planner more convenient and comfortable facilities during his visit. However, this approach is not free from disadvantage of giving the planner a skewed viewpoint in respect of all ingredients of the tour. The tour operator industry practices show that the combined approach is most often used by tour planners to develop an itinerary. The tour planner undertakes all possible attributes of the tour first as an unidentified individual traveler and repeats each tour ingredients as an identified tour planner. Thus, a tour planner will have a much more realistic view at the time of itinerary preparation. More significantly, before designing and planning an itinerary, the tour planner must try to find the answer to three key questions- ‘How much customer demand is in the market?’ ‘How practical is the tour?’ & ‘How profitable is the tour?’

Let us first know the meaning of the term itinerary planning. Roday, Biwal, Joshi ,(2009) have defined itinerary planning as the linking of all the journey points of the traveler’s journey, i.e. from the origin point, and in between stopping points for sightseeing at the destination and back to the point of origin. This is not always the case as sometimes the tourist may not come back to the point of origin.



- Itinerary planning is one of the major functions of any travel agency.
- The travel agencies sell readymade package tours to their clients or may design customized itineraries as per the requirement of the client.
- Itinerary planning has to be done carefully as many details need to be considered like sightseeing, time taken, meals, weather, monument information, the timings of the monuments and its closure.

1. Palace on Wheel Tour Itinerary

Duration: 7 Nights / 8 Days

Destinations Covered: Delhi - Jaipur - Jaisalmer - Jodhpur - Ranthambore - Udaipur - Bharatpur - Agra

Day 1: Delhi

Delhi is a heady amalgam of the quaint charisma of the bygone years and the exhilarating ride on the wings of technology. The city has always been the center of politics and hence has several edifices of great historical significance.

Day 2: Jaipur

Jaipur- the 'Pink City' was founded by Maharaja Jai Singh II in the late 17th century. The city offers an amicable blend of traditional lifestyles and modern ways.

Day 3: Jaisalmer

Fascinating, enchanting and amazing - that is the city of Jaisalmer! A visit to the Patwon ki Haveli is a must on any traveler's itinerary.

Day 4: Jodhpur

Jodhpur, founded by Rao Jodhaji in the mid-15th century, offers fascinating tourist attractions like Moti Mahal (Pearl Palace), Phool Mahal (Flower Palace) and Sukh Mahal (Pleasure Palace).

Day 5: Ranthambore

Sawai Madhopur is the town at the entrance of Ranthambhore National Park, which is famous for its lush environs, clear lakes, meandering rivers and various wild species.

Day 6: Udaipur

the "City of Lakes", Udaipur, was founded in the mid-16th century by Maharana Udai Singh. Lake Palace is the major attraction of the city.

Day 7: Bharatpur & Agra

The famous bird sanctuary at Bharatpur is a haven to more than four hundred varieties of exotic birds. The fascinating city of Agra boasts of Taj Mahal - poetry etched in marble.

Day 8: Delhi

The journey ends in Delhi.

2. Tour Itinerary [Shimla- Manali - Chandigarh]**Tour Itinerary: Code Him/va/13****Day 1 Pick up From Delhi & Drive to Shimla**

Arrive at New Delhi airport or any railway station like New Delhi / Delhi / Hazarat Nizamuddin, Meet n greet by Hamara Holiday executive or vehicle driver at Rly. Station or Airport and drive to Shimla (8 hrs), Arrive at Shimla and check in at hotel and overnight stay at Shimla hotel.

Day 2 Sight Seeing (Shimla & Around Shimla)

Enjoy Breakfast at hotel and depart for sightseeing of Kufri. Kufri is 12 kms from Shimla, Kufri is famous for awesome hill views, and one can visit mini zoo, Poney and Yak Ride .at Kufri. After lunch (own cost) enjoy sight seeing of Shimla places like Shimla mosques built in year 1830, Christ Church built in year 1844, The Gaiety Theatre, The Grindlays Bank built in year 1912, The Scandal Point and The famous Shopping Plaza of the North The Mall & ridge.Dinner & overnight stay at Shimla hotel.

Day 3 Shimla to Manali Drive

Take breakfast & check out from Shimla hotel and drive for Manali (265 Kms / 7 hrs), Reach Manali at evening , Check in at Manali hotel , time free for leisure , dinner & overnight hotel at Manali hotel.

Day 4 Manali Local Sight seeing

after breakfast at Manali hotel, depart for half day local sight seeing tour covering places like Hadimba Devi temple, Manu temple, Vashisht Bath, Van Vihar and evening shopping at the local market (Mall). Overnight stay & dinner at Manali hotel.

Day 5 Manali (Rohtang Pass or Snow Point visit)

After breakfast at Manali hotel , depart for Rohtang pass (51 Kms / 2 Hrs) which is located at height of 13050 Feet above sea level and is gateway for Ladakh from Manali, Generally Rohtang pass open in mid May and closes in mid November , depending up on snowfall , If Rohtang pass is not open sight seeing will be done for available snow point like Gulaba , Kothi or Marhi or Solang valley. Solang valley is heaven for adventure lovers, and paragliding. Zorbing, skiing can be done on extra cost. (Subject to availability). Return back to hotel, dinner & overnight stay at Manali hotel.

Day 6 Manali to Chandigarh Drive

Check out from Manali hotel after breakfast and drive to Chandigarh (320 Kms / 8 hrs). Chandigarh is first planned city of modern India, Chandigarh was designed by French architect Le Corbusier. The city Chandigarh was named after the goddess of power, Mother Chandi, Temple Chandimandu is dedecated to goddess Chandi at new city, Dinner & overnight stay at Chandigarh hotel.

Day 7 Chandigarh to Delhi Drive & Drop

After breakfast, check out from Chandigarh hotel & drive to Delhi 265 Kms / 5 hrs, arrive Delhi and drop at railway station or airport.

To model how an itinerary appears from the perspective of a single destination we need the following:

1. A point representing the trip origin, along with any non-destination transit stopovers to and from the origin;
2. A point representing the destination of interest to the analyst;
3. A point representing one or more other destinations of interest to the traveller; and
4. The linkages in between these points.

In accordance with accepted norms of international travel data collection, travelers would be required to spend at least one night in a place for it to be considered a destination in the model proposed here. Transit points are not considered destinations. Because destination points and itinerary lines all have specific geographic locations, they also have specific and measurable relationships with the home location of travelers.

However, those itineraries suffer from two main drawbacks. First, they are often not tailored to one's own interests. Second, suggested itineraries may not fit one's particular time budget. Someone who visits a place for a very short time frame, e.g, in the case of a layover in a city, or a very long time frame, e.g., in the case of a month-long backpacking trip, is unlikely to find an itinerary suggested by those services, satisfactory. Constructing a personalized itinerary for a user is a big challenge because, even with a relatively small number of POIs, the number of possible itineraries can be combinatorial large.

More specifically, the systematic approach of itinerary planning process involves the following interactions.

- 1) It starts with a user providing a time budget and a starting point of the itinerary (usually corresponding to the hotel where the user is staying);
- 2) At each step, the system presents the user with a small fixed number of POIs that are most probably liked by the user, based on feedback provided by the user so far;
- 3) The system also recommends highly ranked itineraries to the user based on the feedback;
- 4) The user provides her feedback on suggested POIs to indicate whether or not she is interested in them, and the process continues;
- 5) The user can also choose to pick one of the recommended itineraries, at which point, the process stops.

Designing such an interactive system is a non-trivial task and raises both semantics and efficiency challenges. We provide a brief overview of those challenges here.

Check your progress – 1

Answer the following questions.

1. What novel approach of interactive itinerary?
2. Discus Main destination ratio (MDR).

Check your answer with the one given at the end of the unit

4.3 Constraints and Grey areas involved in preparation of innovative Itineraries

Tourism implies a movement of people in time and space, from their place of usual residence to the destination (or destinations). Surprisingly, the analysis of tourism mobility within a single destination and among destinations has not been taken adequately into account; despite a deeper knowledge of tourism movements is a fundamental pre-requisite for logistics, for the management of economic, social, and environmental impacts of tourism.

The majority of models/ approaches of pleasure trip behaviour is, in fact, based on the hypothesis that tourists visit a single destination, even if this hypothesis is almost un-reliable. The main reasons for this lack are attributable both on the difficulties associated to the collection of information on multi-destination trips and on the lack of clarity on what should be meant for "multi-destination" trip. Ministry of Tourism, official statistics on tourism does not provide any information on multi-destination trips and on trip itineraries, neither from the supply side (statistics on guests arrivals), nor from the demand side. This implies that to analyze the phenomenon ad-hoc surveys need to be implemented. Regarding the lack of clarity of the term "multi-destination" trip is attributable to the strong dependence of this concept to the definition of destination itself, from the geographical scale undertaken. The importance of analysing multi-destination trip behaviour is also related with the relevance of this phenomenon for regional tourism development. The multi-destination vacation experience will require longer than average stays and will, in general, attract those with active lifestyles and more discretionary time and income. Individual destinations will have the opportunity to explore new markets in a cost effective manner and to develop a more competitive product.

At the regional level, regional tourism organizations can exploit the potential for profitable diversification and rebranding of a destination/region. For these reason, one of the key-issue is related with the identification of factors affecting the choice of making a multi-destination trip. These are usually distinguished in: physical factors (related to the destination morphology and logistics); human factors (motivations, socio-economic features, etc.), and time availability and budget. Regarding physical factors some authors highlighted the importance of "cumulative attractions" in a multi-destination trip can exert more interest than the case in which each attraction is visited separately in different trips. On the

contrary, independent tourists tend to explore more deeply the destination and they have more possibilities to change itineraries during their trip. Finally, all tourists' movements are influenced by time availability and budget. Time has, in fact, a strong influence on spatial touristic movements toward the destination and among several destinations. The mode of transportation chosen, and budget availability would have an influence in the way in which vacation time is spent. Moreover, some people can choose to visit many places, whereas other people can decide to visit less places, spending more time in them. Summarizing, the knowledge of factors affecting tourist's mobility is an essential pre-requisite for the management and planning of effective tour itinerary.

on basis of current performance, Indian Tour operation Industry can be termed as 'successful', but being 'successful' is very different from being 'competitive' and there are critical challenges which are negatively dictating and adversely affecting its competitiveness. Moreover, an innovative itinerary is pivotal for a successful tour operation therefore a tour planner has to consider or understand various constraints and grey areas in preparation of innovative Itineraries such as:

- **Arrivals by country of residence or nationality.** These are the most common data available to researchers and are the most widely used for basic market studies and simple comparisons. These data are gathered at most borders by immigration officials, and estimated for suborder areas through sampling. Studies using these data sources have typically demonstrated a hierarchy of routes, centered on major regional destinations, which are strongly connected to one another, and smaller radial ties to places lower in the network hierarchy. While highly influenced by local and regional economics, politics, transportation infrastructure and geography, the resulting patterns tend to reflect the Central Place tourism and recreation hierarchy.
- **Main destination ratio (MDR).** The MDR was proposed by Leiper (1989) as a way to address the limitations of arrivals by country data. To improve the level of data aggregation the MDR adds the main destination of travellers. It provides an improvement over simple destination arrival data and, where it is available, it could quite easily be added to the annual global arrival data compiled by the World Tourism Organization (WTO).
- **Full itineraries.** Full itinerary data are collected in one of two ways: (1) travelers are asked to list, preferably in order, all of the stopover places on their itinerary; or (2) travelers are asked to trace their travel route on a map, preferably indicated stopover points as well. This level of data aggregation clearly provides the most detail, though the method of data collection can influence the forms of analysis that are possible. Map traced paths, for example, are more suited to network.
- A problem with conventional travel itineraries is that they often don't provide an overview of the relationship between various events of a trip. The only

relationship which can be viewed in these types of itinerary is that various events follow one another sequentially in time. As part of a Collaborative Information Gathering (CIG) software, a graphical visualization tool has been developed to assist travel agents and their clients with the process of collaborative creation and viewing of travel itineraries remotely over the Internet.

- **High Exit Barrier; Difficulty in trial** – One characteristic of services is that it is hard to escape from the consequences of a poor choice (of service and service provider). Hence, they are over cautious while deciding on the tourism services (choice of destination, transporters and hotels etc).
- **Word-Of-Mouth (WOM)** – WOM is crucial in selling of (tourism) services because usually the choice of destination is affected by WOM publicity. Here, it is important to realize that tourists tend to believe more on information from independent sources and less on promotions.
- **Highly infectious industry** – Tourism Industry is very sensitive to environmental changes and it gets affected by them and reacts very fast to them.
- **High Social Cost** – Tourism takes a toll on the resources (especially natural resources), and a large part of the revenues brought in by tourism is required for sustaining the resources, so the profitability of tourism industry is suspicious, especially in countries where proper 'sustainability' mechanisms are not in place.
- **Intermediary Conflicts** - Components of the tourism industry have different commercial objectives, strategic interests and operational procedures, so as channel partners protect and advance their own interests, often at the expense of their partner's gains, several intra-channel conflicts emerge inevitably.
- **Tourists rates the overall experience** – visitors tend to rate their overall experience at the destination and in the process they credit tourism industry for the performance of industries and sectors, which are not directly related to tourism. If 'anything' is not according to tourists' expectations, it might go against the tourism industry, because the negative WOM will be generated for the destination.
- **Sensitizing the diverse Human Resources** – It is an industry where even the behavior of general public affects the overall experience of tourists, and people associated with this industry vary significantly in their background, education, occupation and experience etc (an hotelier is totally different from a taxi driver), so having a 'common program' addressing everyone in this industry is inviting failure and neither it is easy to have so many different / customized programs.
- **Collapsing Hotel Infrastructure** – India has approximately 150000 hotel rooms, which are insufficient to meet the existing demand, let alone catering to new demand. Moreover, concentration of hotels is causing an

acute shortage of rooms in remaining areas which are no short of tourist destinations and attract a lot of tourists.

- **High Operating Costs** – Indian hotels suffer from high operating costs and this ultimately reflects in their higher prices. The biggest sufferer is the 'budget tourists' and even for those who can pay, when the facilities are not according to the prices it leads to dissatisfaction and also makes the destination unattractive for tourists.
- **Transportation Chaos** – increasing number of airlines (from 2 to 10 in last 4 years) has rapidly increased the number of passengers, resulting in a virtual collapse of facilities at Indian airports. Moreover, there is no supervising authority, maintaining and monitoring the quality and standards of services delivered by airlines making an unpleasant experience a rule, rather than an exception.

Indian Railways, another popular mode of transportation suffers from conditions worse than the airlines (in terms of reservations, punctuality, cleanliness, facilities etc). Since India welcomes tourists mostly from developed countries these problems convert their trip into a 'mission' and few return with good memories.

- **Unfriendly Government Policies** – Till recent past, Tourism was perceived as an elitist activity in India and hence high tax rates and less budgetary provisions were the fate of its tourism industry. The table below refers to some main provisions affecting tourism.
- **Travellers' use of the Internet has grown:** One of the most important recent technology advances, the Internet, may be viewed as an opportunity by some travel service providers while appearing threatening to others. The Internet's increased popularity has had a major impact on the travel industry over a relatively short period of time. On-line agencies have had a huge impact on the travel market. A very popular service is 'dynamic packaging'; where consumers put together their own holiday packages by purchasing their flight, hotel, or car rentals separately. We need to define the Itinerary Scoring Semantics, which dictates how an itinerary should be scored based on the user feedback.
- **Aggregate trip generation:** Improvements in destination attributes can be expected to increase total trips within tourist destination - a generation effect. However, when the multinomial logit responds to an attribute enhancement at one destination it reduces the visitors to all others. To the extent that this reflects the limited total number of tourists, it is realistic but there should also be some generation effect. An added module is introduced to reflect such generation, at least to overcome inappropriate reductions at many destinations in response to enhancement of one of them.

Check your progress- 2

Answer the following questions.

1. What main grey area in innovative itinerary?
2. Discuss main constrains in itinerary development.

Check your answer with the one given at the end of the unit

4.4 Summary

Although travel itinerary data is not difficult to collect, it does present analytical challenges because of the great diversity of routes that travelers follow and the different scales that can be applied in defining destinations. Most of the models/ approaches that have been proposed to deal with these issues have focused either on general flow from one country to another, or on the overall pattern of entire trips. An alternative and complementary approach is to examine the relative location of a destination within the larger itinerary pattern. From a market study perspective, this approach could prove more valuable in understanding the different ways that travelers perceive and experience a destination as part of their itinerary and how a destination.

In summary, we understand the novel approach of interactive itinerary planning based on user feedback and itinerary expected scores; formally define the optimal itinerary construction problem, which is one of the two core problems in interactive itinerary planning. We also understand that designing innovative itineraries based on user feedback and time budget.

Answer to Check Your Progress

Answer to Check Your Progress-1

- 1) See sec. 4.2
- 2) See sec. 4.2

Answer to Check Your Progress-2

- 1) See sec. 4.3
- 2) See sec. 4.3

4.5 Glossary

- **Airline reporting conference (ARC):** a consortium of airline companies, who by agreement, provide a method of approving authorized agency locations for the sale of transportation and cost-effective procedures for processing records and funds to carriers. Not all airlines are ARC companies.
- **All-inclusive:** A form of package holiday where the majority of services offered at the destination are included in the price paid prior to departure (e.g. refreshments, excursions, amenities, gratuities, etc).
- **circle trip:** a journey with stopovers that returns to the point of departure

- **incentive tour:** (1) a trip offered as a prize, particularly to stimulate the productivity of employees or sales agents, or (2) the business of operating such travel programs
- **incidentals:** charges incurred by participants of a tour, but are not included in the tour price
- **Inclusive tour itinerary:** tour in which all specific elements – transportation, airfare, hotels, transfers, and other costs – are offered for a flat rate. An inclusive tour does not necessarily cover all costs such as personal items and telephone.
- **Independent contractor:** a person contractually retained by another to perform certain specific tasks the other person has no control over the independent contractor other than as provided in the contract. In the context of group travel, a tour manager is often retained by the tour operator, or tour brochure designer/writer might be hired in this capacity.
- **Independent tour:** an unescorted tour sold through agents to individuals. For one price, the client guaranteed air travel, hotel room, attraction admissions and (typically) a car rental.

4.6 Review Questions

- Describe the meaning and concept of Systematic approaches for Itinerary preparation ;
- Explain the main constraints for preparation of innovative Itineraries ,
- Discuss the Grey areas involved in preparation of innovative Itineraries

4.7 Suggested Readings

- Mohinder Chand, Travel Agency Management: An Introductory Text, Anmol Publications Pvt. Ltd. New Delhi, 2007.
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- IATA Manual
- Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India, Reports and guidelines for travel agency and tour operators.

BLOCK 2

Types of Itineraries

Today, Tour operation business has become more volatile and has been facing numerous challenges in the tourism market place. In fact, tourists are becoming more sophisticated and demanding innovative tour product. Thus , in order to catering their needs and requirements tour operators are developing and designing the pre-planned, tailor made and Flexihol tour itinerary. Many tour businesses are finding that the only way to gain a competitive edge is through the effective and efficient management of tour package. This block will give you the necessary background about the tour itinerary: pre-planned, tailor made and Flexihol tour itinerary. This block comprises the following units:

Unit- 5 focuses on Pre-designed, Tailor Made and Flexible Itineraries: scope and Differentiation. This unit describe the meaning and concept of pre-tailor tour itinerary, explains the Flexihol tour itinerary and finally discuss the difference between pre-planned and Flexihol tour itinerary

Unit 6 of the course entitled “Tour Manager’s / Executive’s and Tour Escort’s Itinerary: definition and Case examples”. Moreover, the unit focuses on definition, meaning and scope of tour Escort. Describes significant role played by the tour escorts in both inclusive and escorted tours and discusses the main responsibilities of tour escort in the changing tourism marketplace.

Unit -7 deals with discussion of Common Interest and Special Interest Itineraries: Salient features and case models. In this unit you will learn about the Common Interest and Special Interest Itineraries – Concept, meaning and salient features. Further, the unit describes common Interest and Special Interest Itineraries- case models.

Unit -8 we will describe about the unique features of MICE centric Itineraries: Case examples. The unit also discusses meaning, concept and sample MICE tour Itineraries.

Block Objectives: After studying this block, you will be able to:

- Describe the meaning and concept of pre-tailor tour itinerary,
- Explain the Flexihol tour itinerary ,
- Discuss the difference between pre-planned and Flexihol tour itinerary
- Describe definition, meaning and scope of tour Escort.
- Identify significant role played by the tour escorts in both inclusive and escorted tours.
- Explain the main responsibilities of tour escort in the changing tourism marketplace.
- Describe the meaning and concept of special interest tourism;
- Explain the unique futures of special interest tourism,
- Discuss the Common Interest and Special Interest Itineraries
- Describe the meaning and concept of MICE
- Explain the features of MICE,
- Discuss the sample MICE itineraries

UNIT 5 PRE-DESIGNED, TAILOR MADE AND FLEXIBLE ITINERARIES: SCOPE AND DIFFERENTIATION

Structure

- 5.0 Objectives
- 5.1 Introduction
- 5.2 Tour Itinerary - Pre-designed
- 5.3. Tailor Made Itinerary
- 5.4. Flexible tour itinerary
- 5.5 Difference between Flexihol itinerary and pre-planned tour itinerary
- 5.6 Summary
- 5.7 Glossary
- 5.8 Review Questions
- 5.9 Suggested Readings

5.0 Objectives

After reading this unit, you will be able to:

- Describe the meaning and concept of pre-tailor tour itinerary,
- Explain the Flexihol tour itinerary ,
- Discuss the difference between pre-planned and Flexihol tour itinerary

5.1 Introduction

Planning an itinerary of activities that satisfies a traveller's desires is a complex task. While there exist numerous online resources to help find travel activities, parsing through all the information available and creating a plan is difficult and time consuming. Alternatively, travel agents and concierge services can provide recommendations, but provided plans tend to be generic and touristy. Furthermore, none of these sources are available on the fly. If a traveler unexpectedly has an extra day to spend or a previously planned activity is closed, there is no immediate assistance available to them. This unit familiarizes you with the pre-planned, tailor made and Flexihol tour itinerary. The students will be able to design these itineraries.

5.2. Pre-designed tour itinerary

A pre-design itinerary consists of accommodation, transportation advertised and sold together by a vendor known as a tour operator. Other services may be provided such a rental car, activities or outings during the holiday. Transport can be via charter airline to a foreign country, and may also

include travel between areas as part of the holiday. Package holidays are a form of product bundling.

Further pre-designed itineraries are normally conducted by a tour director who takes care of all services from the beginning to end of the tour. In fact, these itineraries include the flights, hotels, transportation, transfers to the airport / hotel, most meals and some sightseeing. These are often conducted by motor coach and usually no more than three nights are spent in each location visited. They are usually fast-paced and prices include most everything.

According to Morrison (1989), Pre-designed tour itinerary is a trip planned and paid for a single price in advance, which covers a broad range of items from commercial transportation and accommodation to meals and sightseeing, sometimes accompanied by an escort or a guide. Middleton (1994) describes it as an inclusive form of travel, organized by intermediaries or middlemen; in which the tour represents a bundle of tourism goods and services, marketed as one particular product or brand and sold at an inclusive price. According to Holloway (2000) describe the pre-design itinerary as itineraries put together by a tour operator or other supplier, usually incorporating at least three elements, transportation, accommodation and transfers, although some packages may include additional services such as excursions.

Sample Tour Itinerary

1. Pre-planned tour itinerary to Forts & Palaces of Rajasthan

Group / 15 Days / 13 Nights

The princely states of Rajputana, now Rajasthan, were once the domain of courageous warriors and lavish ruling dynasties. Following a tour of Delhi and Agra, this journey travels into the heart of Rajasthan and explores many of the region's magnificent forts and palaces, atmospheric cities and stunning desert scenery.

Day 1 – To Delhi: Fly from London to Delhi with Jet Airways / Virgin Atlantic. (N)

Day 2 – Delhi: Late morning arrival and transfer to the Maidens Hotel (or similar) for 1 night. Afternoon tour of Old Delhi to see the Red Fort, Jama Masjid etc. (N)

Day 3 – To Agra: Morning tour of New Delhi to see India Gate and the former viceregal residence, both fine examples of British imperial architecture. Continue to the tomb of the Mughal Emperor Humayun and the Qutb Minar tower. Afternoon drive to Agra and stay for 2 nights at the Radisson Hotel Agra (or similar). (B)

Day 4 – Agra: Early morning visit to the Taj Mahal, arriving in time for sunrise. After breakfast, visit the tomb of Itmad-ud-Daulah and Agra Fort. Optional excursion to see the Taj Mahal at sunset (payable locally). (B)

Day 5 – To Jaipur: Drive to Jaipur and stay 2 nights at Alsisar Haveli (or similar). En route, visit Emperor Akbar's deserted 16th-century sandstone city of Fatehpur Sikri. (B)

Day 6 – Jaipur: Morning visit to the ancient palace of Amber Fort. Optional visit to the Anokhi Museum of Hand Printing, where you have the opportunity to learn how to handprint your own scarf. Afternoon tour of the City Palace and the Jantar Mantar astronomical observatory. (B)

Day 7 – To Bikaner: Transfer to Bikaner, once a major trading centre on the caravan route linking central Asia with north India. Stay 2 nights at the Laxmi Niwas Palace, the former residence of the maharaja of Bikaner. (B)

Day 8 – Bikaner: Morning visit to Junagarh Fort. Afternoon at leisure. This evening, stroll through the old town of Bikaner, which has some of India's best street architecture. (B)

Day 9 – To Jaisalmer: Drive to Jaisalmer for an overnight stay at Fort Rajwada (or similar). Afternoon tour of Jaisalmer Fort, often referred to as the Golden Fort due to the colour of its sandstone walls. (B)

Day 10 – To Manvar: Drive to Manvar in the Thar Desert. Following a visit to local villages, continue to the tented camp (see page 64 for details). Evening Rajasthani dinner and music amid the sand dunes, followed by an overnight stay at the camp. (B, L, D)

Day 11 – To Rohet / Luni: Drive to Jodhpur and visit the majestic Mehrangarh Fort. Continue to the village of Rohet / Luni and stay 2 nights at Rohetgarh Fort / Fort Chanwa. (B, D)

Day 12 – Rohet / Luni: Morning at leisure. Afternoon 4x4 safari to visit the Bishnoi tribal villages. (B, D)

Day 13 – To Udaipur: Drive to Udaipur via the exquisite Jain temples at Ranakpur. Evening arrival at the LaLiT Laxmi Vilas Palace / Fateh Garh (or similar) for a 2-night stay. (B)

Day 14 – Udaipur: Morning tour of the City Palace and Jagdish Temple. Afternoon at leisure. (B)

Day 15 – To London: Transfer to the international airport and fly to Delhi to connect with the Jet Airways / Virgin Atlantic flight to London. (N)

2. Journey from the Golden Temple

Group | 10 Days / 8 Nights

Starting from the holy city of Amritsar, home of the Golden Temple, this tour travels through the foothills of the Himalaya to Shimla, the summer capital of 'British India'. Along the way, the diversity of north-west India is explored with visits to Dharamsala, and its Buddhist temples and monasteries, and the wonderful Kangra valley.

Day 1 – To Amritsar: Fly from London to Amritsar, via Delhi, with Jet Airways. (N)

Day 2 – Amritsar: Arrive and transfer to the Ista Amritsar / Ranjit's Svaasa for 2 nights. (N)

Day 3 – Amritsar: Morning visit to the Golden Temple, Jallianwallah Memorial and Ram Bagh Gardens. Afternoon transfer to Wagah on the India-Pakistan border to see the Sunset Retreat ceremony. (B)

Day 4 – To Mcleodganj: Morning drive to Mcleodganj in Dharamsala. As headquarters of the Tibetan government in exile, this former British hill station has a strong Tibetan feel. Afternoon tour of Namgyal monastery, seat of the Dalai Lama. Stay overnight at the Surya Resort (or similar). (B, D)

Day 5 – To Taragarh: Morning drive to Taragarh, via the Norbulingka Institute, a centre for Buddhist teaching and work. Stay 2 nights at Taragarh Palace, owned by the royal family of Jammu and Kashmir. Set on a 6-hectare forested estate and surrounded by tea gardens, the palace has magnificent views of the snowcapped Dhauladhar Mountains. (B, L, D)

Day 6 – Taragarh: Day at leisure, with optional guided walks in the Kangra valley. (B, L, D)

Day 7 – To Shimla: Full-day drive through the foothills of the Himalaya to Shimla. Stay 2 nights at the Oberoi Cecil hotel. (B)

Day 8 – Shimla: At leisure. (B)

Day 9 – To Delhi: Take the narrow gauge railway to Solan and drive to Kalka to connect with the express train to Delhi. Stay overnight at the LaLiT New Delhi (or similar). (B)

Day 10 – To London: Fly to London with Jet Airways. (B)

Pre-designed tour itinerary has many benefits for tourists:

Tour Manager

Upon arrival in your destination your group will be met by one of our carefully selected tour managers, who will accompany the group throughout the tour ensuring nothing gets in the way of your holiday of a lifetime.

Scheduled Flights

We use only scheduled airlines for international and almost all internal flights, and we can offer excellent upgrade rates.

Expert Local Guides

For all group departures, a representative is available to assist with check-in and any seat requests you may have during the main check-in period.

Comfortable Land Travel

All land transfers are by air-conditioned buses of a size appropriate for the group.

Airport Representatives

For all group departures from international airport, a representative is available to assist with the check-in process and any seat requests you may have.

First Class Accommodation

We generally use first class 4 and 5-star hotels, or the best available, on all our tours.

Check your progress-1

Answer the following questions.

1. Describe pre-plan itinerary
2. Explain benefits of pre-plan itinerary.

Check your answer with the one given at the end of the unit

5.3. Tailor Made tour Itinerary

A Tailor-made Tour means that a tour is **designed specially for you**, and meets every of your need. None of the pre-designed tours are fixed in Tailor-made tour. You can have your trip specially tailored to your heart's desire to gain a greater individual attention and the maximum flexibility and comfort. To take a Tailor-made tour, you would please send us a message to tell us what you want to do, to see, how many people of your group or family, your hotel request, meal requirement, personal interest, or special travel activities and language service if necessary! The more information's the more suitable tour we can design for you. Or you can easily use the Tailor Made Form to tell us your request.

What does “tailor-made programme “Mean?

A tailor-made programme is an itinerary created just for you, in which we include everything you wish to see and do during your trip. The programme can be as long or as short as you wish. A tailor-made programme can include accommodation, meals, guide service in a given city and even excursions outside of cities. The standard of accommodation and length of the tours are up to you. When we send you our first proposal, you're free to add or remove anything you wish in order to make it suit your individual requirements

The joy of a tailor-made itinerary is that your holiday is designed around your requirements and you are not restricted to the set itinerary of a group departure.

- Do you like the look of one of our suggested itineraries but would like to stay at alternative accommodation or include a few extra days and extend your holiday?
- Are you going on holiday to relax rather than spend your time packing and unpacking, moving from one place to the next?
- Are you celebrating a special occasion - perhaps your honeymoon, a special birthday or an anniversary? Why not enjoy each others company in privacy without being part of a larger group?
- Are you travelling abroad to stay with friends or family and wishing to add-on a safari, a cruise, or even some self-drive exploration?
- Maybe you only want to be away for a long weekend, or perhaps you have an extended amount of time to enjoy travelling and would like us to help with part of it?
- If you have a limited amount of time, group departure dates often don't fit.
- You may well want a private vehicle, or the very best naturalist the region has to offer.

Moreover, A tailor made holiday and travel service is like a **personal planning service**. You tell us what you want (either in detail, or give us some parameters to work within), and then we arrange services to fit your wishes for your holiday. We also advise you on improvements which you might want to consider.

When we plan a trip for you we ask questions to help us really understand what you are hoping for from your holiday. This way we can get as close as possible to your requirements both financially and as regards the whole holiday experience.

The kind of questions we ask are:

- How many people are travelling? Are there any children in the party?
- How long and roughly when do you want to travel?
- Where might you want to go, or what kind of experience are you hoping for?
- Is there anything specific you want to see or do?
- What type of accommodation do you like (eg from luxury hotels to camping)
- Roughly what budget would you like us to try to keep to for you?

All of Himachal

12 Days / 11 Nights

1N Chandigarh - 2N Shimla - 3N Manali - 1N Dharamshala - 2N Dalhousie - 2N Amritsar

- **Day 1 Chandigarh**
Arrive at Chandigarh and proceed to your hotel. On arrival one can visit the Pinjore Garden or the Rock Garden. Overnight in Chandigarh. (D)
- **Day 2 Chandigarh - Shimla (Approx time 9 hrs.)**
Proceed to Shimla. Arrive in Shimla and proceed to your hotel. Overnight in Shimla. (B,D)
- **Day 3 Shimla-Kufri-Shimla**
Today enjoy your visit to Kufri- winter sports capital, visit Scandal point and Shimla Church. Overnight in Shimla. (B,D)
- **Day 4 Shimla - Manali (Approx time 10 hrs.)**
Proceed to Manali. Evening free at leisure, one can enjoy shopping at Mall road. Overnight in Manali. (B,D)
- **Day 5 Manali-Rohtang Pass or Snow Point-Manali**
Today enjoy scenic beauty of Himalaya. Visit Rohtang Pass or Snow Point. Free time to enjoy snow. Overnight stay at the hotel in Manali. (B,D)
- **Day 6 Manali-City Sightseeing**
Today visit ancient temples like the Manu Mandir, Hadimba Temple, Gayatri Mandir and Vashista Kund. Overnight in Manali. (B,D)
- **Day 7 Manali -Dharamshala (Approx time 7 hrs.)**
Proceed to another scenic town of Himachal- Dharmashala. Evening visit Dal Lake, Dalai Lama monastery and Bhasunag Temple. Overnight at the hotel in Dharmashala. (B,D)
- **Day 8 Dharamshala- Dalhousie (Approx time 6 hrs.)**
Today depart for Dalhousie. Arrive at hotel, Evening free for leisure or you can enjoy nice walk around this small town. Overnight stay at the hotel Dalhousie. (B,D)

- **Day 9 Dalhousie-Khajjiar-Dalhousie**
Enjoy full day excursion trip to Khajjiar surrounded by dense Deodar forests, small temple with a golden spire and golf course. Visit the Ajit Singh Smarak and satadhara Sparkling springs. Evening at leisure. Overnight stay at the hotel in Dalhousie. (B,D)
- **Day 10 Dalhousie - Amritsar (Approx time 9 hrs.)**
Today proceed to Amritsar. On arrival check in at hotel. Rest of the day is free for leisure. Overnight at Amritsar. (B,D)
- **Day 11 Amritsar**
Today morning visit Golden Temple. Evening Enjoy Wagha Border. Overnight at Hotel. (B,D)
- **Day 12 Amritsar – Hometown**
Today depart from Amritsar by train or flight to hometown. (B)
Tour Concludes

Check your progress-2

Answer the following questions.

1. Explain tailor made tour itinerary.
2. Discuss advantages of tailor made tour itinerary.

Check your answer with the one given at the end of the unit

5.4 Flexible tour itinerary

Flexihol offers you tailor-made international holidays and travel packages with a wide range of sightseeing tours and experiences to suit your individual taste and budget. Flexihol Holidays include Romantic Getaways, customised holidays to Europe, Far East, Australia & New Zealand, Africa, Middle East and America. Customised holidays to exotic islands, rail Europe holidays and instant holidays for short-durations are also available. Flexible itineraries are known by different names such as Flexihol, freedom, fusion holidays offered by different tour companies.

Sample of Flexible Itineraries

Day 1- Arrive Delhi

Arrive Delhi and meet the representative at the arrival hall and transfer to hotel. In the afternoon proceed on a **tour of Delhi**. In Old Delhi visit the majestic Red Fort, the historical Chandni Chowk, besides Raj Ghat and Shanti Vana. In New Delhi visit the Rashtrapati Bhawan, the one-time imperial residence of the British viceroys; the India Gate, a memorial raised in honour of the Indian soldiers martyred during the Afghan war; the Laxminarayan Temple, built by the Birlas, one of India's leading industrial families; Qutab Minar, built by Qutub-ud-din Aibek of the Slave Dynasty; and the lotus-shaped Baha'i Temple.

Day 2- To Mandawa

Morning drive to Mandawa. Arrive Mandawa and check - in at hotel. From this hotel you can take a walking tour of the painted houses in this region belonging to some of the leading business families of the country.

Day 3- To Bikaner

Morning drive to Bikaner. Arrive Bikaner and check – in at hotel. Afternoon **sightseeing tour of Bikaner** including The Junagarh Fort, built by Rai Singh between 1588 and 1593, has a 986-metre-long wall with 37 bastions. Also visit the government-managed Camel Research and Breeding Farm is only one of its kinds in Asia.

Day 4- To Jaisalmer

Morning drive to Jaisalmer. Arrive Jaisalmer and check – in at hotel. Afternoon excursion to Sam Sand Dunes in the evening for a spectacular sunset and also enjoy a camel ride.

Day 5- In Jaisalmer

Morning **sightseeing tour** of Jaisalmer including Sonar Fort, housing a fourth of city's residents. Also visit Patwon Ki Haveli is one of the most exquisite havelis with a beautifully latticed façade. Salim Singh Ki Haveli is just three centuries old, and is still lived in. Its arched roof is held up by well executed brackets in the form of peacocks, Nathmalji Ki Haveli built by two architect brothers.

Day 6- To Manwar

Morning drive to Manwar. Arrive Manwar and check – in at tented camp in the middle of desert. Explore the surroundings and the village on own.

Day 7- To Luni

Morning drive to Luni. Arrive Luni and check – in at Palace Hotel. Afternoon enjoy a **jeep safari** to the Bishnoi Villages or horse ride around the Fort & village.

Day 8- In Luni

Day return excursion to Jodhpur. Visit The Mehrangarh Fort situated at an altitude of about 125 metres is spread over an area of 5 sq. km and has seven gates. The Jaswant Thada is a white marble memorial built in memory of Maharaja Jaswant II in 1899. The Umaid Bhawan is a majestic building that presently functions as a hotel and museum. The Mandore Gardens, situated about 8 km from Jodhpur, has cenotaphs of the Jodhpur rulers. The Government Museum and Zoo are located in the pleasant Umaid Gardens.

Day 9- To Mount Abu

Morning drive to Mount Abu. Arrive Mount Abu and check – in at hotel. It is a **pilgrimage center** for Jains and Hindus, noted for its beautiful Dilwara Jain Temples.

Day 10- In Mount Abu

Morning **sightseeing tour** includes visit to Dilwara Temples, the best Jain temples in the country. Gaumukh Temple, Achalgarh Fort, Toad's Rock, Sunset Point, Trevor's Tank; Nakki Lake said to have been carved out by the gods with their nails, is a favorite spot for boating.

Day 11- To Udaipur

Morning drive to Udaipur. Arrive Udaipur and check – in at hotel. Afternoon free to take a walking tour on your own through the narrow lanes and back streets of Udaipur upto the Washing Ghats at the lake Pichola. Visit one of the fine downtown restaurants for an optional dinner.

Day 12- In Udaipur

Morning sightseeing tour of Udaipur visiting The City Palace and Museum is considered as the largest palace complex in Rajasthan. Pratap Memorial has the bronze statue of Maharana Pratap, the legendary warrior king of Udaipur. Jagdish Temple which was built in 1651 AD. Saheliyon Ki Bari is a small ornamental garden. Late afternoon enjoy a two hour boat-ride on Lake Pichola visiting many Ghats (banks) of washing, bathing etc and enjoy excellent views of the Lake Palace and City Palace.

Day 13- To Pushkar

Morning drive to Pushkar. Arrive **Pushkar** and check – in at hotel. Later visit Pushkar Lake which is believed by the Hindus to be as old as creation, has been a place of pilgrimage through the centuries. There are 52 bathing Ghats built around the lake.

Day 14- To Samode

Morning drive to Samode. Arrive Samode and check – in at Palace hotel. Explore the surroundings of Samode on own.

Day 15- To Jaipur

Morning drive to Jaipur. Arrive Jaipur and check – in at hotel. Morning excursion to Amber Fort, situated just outside the city, you can have the unique experience of traveling on elephant back to and from the top of the hill on which the fort is situated. Afternoon sightseeing tour of Jaipur including, City Palace in the heart of Jaipur is known for its blend of Rajasthani and Mughal architecture. Not far away is the **Central Museum**. Jantar Mantar, is the largest of the five observatories built by Sawai Jai Singh. The Hawa Mahal or the Palace of Winds was constructed for the royal ladies to watch the royal processions without being seen.

Day 16- To Delhi

Morning drive to Delhi airport. You will be assisted by a representative to airport to board flight for onward destination. End of our services.....

Inclusions:

- Accommodation in all the hotels on single/twin/triple sharing basis, as per the list above.
- Breakfast on all days.
- All prevailing taxes like Luxury tax in all hotels and Expenditure tax
- All transfers to or from hotels, city tours, excursions, drives by an air-conditioned transport.
- Services of an English speaking local guide.
- Inter state road tax, toll tax, driver's allowance, parking etc.

Exclusions:

- Any lunch, dinner, snacks, mineral water etc. unless mentioned in the itinerary.
- Entrance fee to any monuments or camera fee.
- Any airfare or airport tax
- Tips, gratuities.
- Portage, laundry, telephone calls, table drinks or any other expenses of personal nature.

5.5 Difference between Flexihol itinerary and pre-planned tour itinerary

A flexihol tour is run exclusively for you, your own families or friends with no other strangers. Alternatively, we can customize an itinerary in line with your specific wishes. In particular, you will benefit from the following advantages.

1. Start the tour on any date at your convenience.
2. Choose the tour length as long as your schedule and budget allow.
3. Plan the tour with hotels and sightseeing spots that you are specifically interested in.
4. You may order the dishes you want with our specially arranged A La Carte Meals.
5. Experienced guides and skillful drivers in each city offer services are provided for your exclusive use.
6. Luxury & comfortable private car or minibus operates for your party only.
7. Travel at your own pace that flexibly fits your travel style.
8. Ideal for people who need special assistance, such as the elderly, people with disabilities or families with small children

Organized Small Group Tour

Small group tours with guaranteed departure dates are best for those who are eager to see the most popular sights in India at a comparatively low price. What could travelers get from the small group tour? A favorable price is only a small part of it. Let's see more details as follows.

1. The group tours have fixed departure dates and itineraries that can not be changed.
2. Private tours added prior to or after the group tour are welcomed.
3. Special treatment from the guide and driver make you feel like part of a friendly family.
4. Share a clean and safe limousine with other group companions.
5. Enjoy the diversity of our A La Carte Meals with other travelers.
6. Good chance for you to meet and make new acquaintances from all over the world.
7. The maximum group number is 18 persons, but we guarantee departure even with 1 person.

8. Enjoy a worry-free vacation with our careful arrangements from the very beginning to the end.

Check your progress- 3

Answer the following questions.

1. Explains the concept flexible itinerary.
2. Describe benefits of flexible itinerary.
3. What are the main difference between flexible itinerary and pre-planned tour itinerary?

Check your answer with the one given at the end of the unit

5.6 Summary

The tour itinerary is influenced by the selection of various factors. There appears to be a difference between first-time traveler who tends to demand more intensive itineraries, and more experienced travelers who appear to prefer a more relaxed itinerary with more days at destination. Thus these opposite desires will influence the tour planning philosophy and itinerary planners will have to consider the target market for a particular destination in order to achieve the correct balance between the number of destination visited and the number of days at destination. Indeed, this concept is especially problematic for itinerary planners as many tourists both first timers and more experienced and therefore the itinerary must satisfy both.

Answer to Check Your Progress**Answer to Check Your Progress - 1**

- 1) See sec. 1.2
- 2) See sec. 1.2

Answer to Check Your Progress - 2

- 1) See sec. 1.3.
- 2) See sec. 1.3.

Answer to Check Your Progress - 3

- 1) See sec. 1.4
- 2) See sec. 1.4
- 3) See sec. 1.5

5.7 Glossary

- **tour broker:** a person or company which organizes and markets tours
- **tour catalog:** a publication by tour wholesalers listing their tour offerings
- **tour conductor:** see tour manager/director
- **tour departure:** the date of the start by any individual or group of a tour program, also used in referral to the entire operation of that single tour

- **tour consultant:** individual within an agency selling and advising clients regarding a tour. The consultant is sometimes a salesperson with particular expertise in escorted tour sales.
- **tour escort:** the tour company staff member or independent contractor who conducts the tour. Often called the tour manager or tour director. It is technically a person that only escorts the group and does not have charge of the commentary portion.
- **tour leader:** usually a group leader, also see escort
- **tour manager:** a person employed as the escort for a group of tourists, usually for the duration of the entire trip, perhaps supplemented by local guides. The terms tour director, leader, escort,

5.8 Review Questions

- Discuss the emerging trends of tour itineraries.
- Elaborate what factors to be considered to prepare tailor made itinerary.
- Explain difference tailor made itinerary and flexible tour itinerary.
- Suggest a pre-planned tour itinerary to Himachal Pradesh for 10 days.
- What are the main benefits of flexible tour itinerary?

5.9 Suggested Readings

- Gee, Chuck and Y. Makens, Professional Travel Agency Management, Prentice Hall, New York, 1990.
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- Holloway, J.C., The Business of Tourism, Pitman, 1992.
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- Kanishka publishers, and distributors, New Delhi, 2002.
- Syrratt G., Manual of Travel Agency Practice, Butterworth, Oxford, 1995.
- IATA Manual
- Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India, Reports and guidelines for travel agency and tour operators.

UNIT 6: TOUR MANAGER'S/EXECUTIVE'S AND TOUR ESCORT'S ITINERARY: DEFINITION AND CASE EXAMPLES

Structure

- 6.0 Objectives
- 6.1 Introduction
- 6.2 Tour Manager- Concepts and meaning
- 6.3 Tour Manager- itineraries
- 6.4 Summary
- 6.5 Glossary
- 6.6 Review Questions
- 6.7 Suggested Readings

6.0 Objectives

After reading this unit, you will be able to:

- Describe definition, meaning and scope of tour Escort.
- Identify significant role played by the tour escorts in both inclusive and escorted tours.
- Explain the main responsibilities of tour escort in the changing tourism marketplace.

6.1 Introduction

The term 'tour escort' is also used to describe the tour manager, tour conductor, tour director or courier in Europe. Indeed, some tour companies prefer to call their tour leader a 'tour escort' to stress their employee's sightseeing commentary skills. However, in practice the role of the tour escort is different from that of the tour leader. A tour escort is 'one who conducts a tour', or one with 'a broad based knowledge of a particular area whose primary duty is to inform'. Tour escort should ensure that the clients are enjoying their tour and meet their guests' needs. Their responsibilities can be very demanding—assuming the role of leader, educator, and being the first to rise in the morning and the last to go to bed at night. They can work full- or part-time, and during the "High Season" they can be gone up to 150 days at any one time or depending on the requirements.

6.2 Tour Manager/ Escort- Definition, Meaning and Scope

A person who manages an itinerary on behalf of the tour operator ensuring the programme is carried out as described in the tour operator's literature and sold to the traveller/consumer and who gives local practical information. Further, tour

managers may or may not be tourist guides as well. They are not trained or licensed to work in specific areas unless they have the proper requirements or legal right, depending on the region. The tour escort manages the group's passage over a multi-day tour and has intense contact with the tour participants. This person may be an employee of the tour operator, a professional tour escort hired by the tour operator or a representative of the organization sponsoring the trip. The term 'tour leader' is also used to describe the tour manager, tour conductor, tour director or courier in Europe. Indeed, some tour companies prefer to call their tour leader a 'tour guide' to stress their employee's sightseeing commentary skills. However, in practice the role of the tour guide is different from that of the tour leader. A tour guide is 'one who conducts a tour', or one with 'a broad based knowledge of a particular area whose primary duty is to inform'. To avoid confusion, the term 'tour leader' will be used in this paper to indicate the person who actually escorts the tour participants throughout their journey. The person conducting a tour needs a variety of skills and faces many challenges. The tour leader is a psychologist, diplomat, flight attendant, entertainer, news reporter, orator and even translator and miracle professional. To be successful at this job is not easy. Many authors have stated that keeping the tour participants happy and making certain that all services are provided as contracted are the main responsibilities of the 'escort'. They also suggested 'ten dos and ten don'ts' for escorting a tour. To act professionally and demonstrate leadership, a tour escort should never become personally involved with a tour member, since this may result in losing control of the tour. Undoubtedly, the tour leader is under considerable pressure during the service encounter. It requires patience and care to accomplish the task. Further, strategies for managing a tour group, suggesting that the 'tour manager' must be fair; praise a tour group's behaviour; exceed the client's expectations; be firm when facing disruptive behaviour; encourage client 'adulthood'; exercise leadership; and be flexible. Many studies have demonstrated that the tour leader is a crucial factor in achieving customer satisfaction who sells the next tour. It is also pointed out that a tour leader's performance is a key factor in differentiating a tour operator from its competitors. The tour leader's performance within the service encounter not only affects the company image, customer loyalty and word-of-mouth communication but can also be seen as a competitive factor. But customers' satisfaction with the tour leader's performance does not necessarily mean that customers will be satisfied with the tour operator. What is happening during the service encounter between the tour escort and the customer is essential.

Some evidence demonstrating the tour escort's shortcomings included:

- Unfamiliarity with the local language – the tour leader could not help customers to order food;
- Non-familiarity with some hotels arranged for the journey;
- Lack of enthusiasm to help tour participants under certain circumstances;
- Unwillingness to hear advice;

- Inadequate knowledge in interpretation;
- Inadequate communication skills, which resulted in misunderstandings with some of the group members.

Thus, a tour escort is a person who accompanies a tour departure to return, as guide, troubleshooter etc, a person who performs such functions only at the destination.

Check your progress - 1

Answer the following questions.

1. Trace the historical development of tourist manager
2. Define the term tourist escort.

Check your answer with the one given at the end of the unit.

6.3 Tour Manager- Itineraries

- **South India Temple, Hill Station, Art & Architecture with Mumbai & Matheran Hill Station**

Duration: 17 Nights / 18 Days

Places to See: Chennai - Mahabalipuram - Pondicherry - Tanjore - Rameshwaram - Madurai - Kodaikanal - Ooty - Mysore - Bangalore - Hyderabad - Mumbai - Matheran

Day 01: Arrive Chennai

Arrive Chennai airport, meet & greet with our office representative. Assistance and transfer to hotel check in (hotel check in/ out time 1200hrs afternoon, early check in subject to availability of rooms).

PM: city tour of Chennai, visit the **San Thome Cathedral**, built on the site of a 16th century Portuguese basilica which is said to be the tomb of the apostle Thomas, who is reputed to have brought Christianity to India in the 1st century AD. The tour also includes **St Thomas Mount**, the Little Mount Shrine, the **Fort St George**, **St Mary's Church**, and the **Fort Museum** which has a collection of objects from the tenure of the East India Company in Chennai including letters from Robert Clive. The **Marina Beach** is the second longest in the world. Walk along the surf-kissed edge, coast along the Drive, relax in your shorts, take the kids to the aquarium, sip coconut water, but worshippers of the sun, beware! You'll offend everyone if you bring out your bikini. Rumours of sharks and sharp eddies keep all but the bravest away. The academy of classical dance and music, **Kalakshetra** or 'Temple of Art' is in Thiruvananthapuram. Run on the ancient lines of gurukul education, it frequently presents recitals of classical music and Bharatnatyam in town. The **Government Museum and Art Gallery** has objects of art, sculptures and carvings from the Chola, Pandya, Pallava, and the Vijayanagar periods. Overnight at hotel.

Day 02: Chennai – Mahabalipuram [130Kms/ 3hrs approx]

Breakfast at hotel drive to Mahabalipuram, en-route visit Kanchipuram. The Land of Thousands Temples is a small, rural town about 75-km from Chennai in the state of Tamil Nadu. With the Sankara Mutt acting as the hub of Hindu activities and the temples, Kanchipuram is one of the most highly visited pilgrimage spots in India, and can rightfully be called the "Kanchipuram was under the Pallavas from the 6th to 8th century AD and later became the citadel of the Cholas, Vijayanagar Kings, the Muslim and the British. It has been a center of Tamil learning, cultural and religious background for centuries. Kanchipuram has magnificent temples of unique architectural beauty bearing eloquent testimony to its glorious Dravidian heritage.

On arrival check in to hotel. **PM Visit the Cave Temples** which excavated by scooping out the scarp of the hill. The scooping work starts from front to back. The cave temple is usually divided into inner & outer mandapas, distinguished by the difference in levels. The front mandapa will have pillars & plasters numbering 4,6,8,10. The inner mandapa contains single, triple or five cells. The cave temple with little modification is categorized as Mamalla style. The pillars under this style are slender & taller with squatting lion at their base. The pillar is divided into distinct parts known as kalasa, tadi, kumba, padma etc. **Monolithic Temples** are locally known as Rathas. They were executed by chiseling out the exterior face of the boulder. Work started from top to bottom. The pyramidal vimana with sikhara at the top is an important feature of this style. It can be rightly said that these monolithic temples must have paved the way for the structural temples with elaborate architectural & sculptural details in the subsequent stage. There a total number of 8 monolithic temples found in Mamallapuram. The five rathas in one place, Ganesha Ratha, Valayankuttai Ratha & Pidari Rathas. **Five Rathas**, a small hill sloping from south to north has been segmented into five divisions & converted into monolithic temples. The heights of the segments have been cleverly used for temples with single tier to three-tiered vimana. Each monolithic temples shows different kind of sikhara. The five rathas are Dharmaraja Ratha, Bhima Ratha, Arjuna Ratha, Draupadi Ratha and Nakul Sahadev Ratha. **Shore Temple**, The Shore Temple on the Bay of Bengal was constructed in the 7th century during the rule of King Narsimha-Varman II Rajasimha (c. 690-728). The Shore temples is a temple complex consisting of two Siva temples and a carving of Anantasayana Vishnu. The temple facing east is entered by a small gopura. On plan, it consists of a small sanctum & a front mandapa & is a two-tiered vimana. The sanctum is housing a linga. The Somaskanda panel consisting of Siva & Parvati with baby Skanda is on the back wall of the sanctum. The dhara linga & Somaskanda panel on the back wall of the sanctum are the features of the Pallava temples only. Overnight at hotel.

Day 03: Mahabalipuram - Pondicherry 110Kms/ 3hrs approx]

Breakfast at hotel, drive to Pondicherry. On arrival check in to hotel.

PM: Sightseeing of Pondicherry, The name Pondicherry has been derived from the Tamil word Puducheri signifying 'the new settlement'. It was a French settlement that comprised Pondy, Yanam, Karaikal, and Mahe. Amazing is the fact that different districts of Pondicherry fall under different states. The capital Pondicherry is situated in the state of Tamil Nadu at a distance of around 200 km from Chennai. While Karaikal is also a part of Tamil Nadu, Mahe is located in Kerala, and Yanam is in Andhra Pradesh. There is a strong influence of French culture on Pondicherry town, especially on its architecture, a result of the centuries-old relations this place maintained with France. Today, Pondicherry is more famous because of its relation with Sri Aurobindo. Sri Aurobindo selected this peaceful and harmonious place to make his abode in the second decade of this century and remained there till his death. A political revolutionary before coming to Pondicherry, he became one of the most famous sages of modern times produced by India.

Shree Aurobindo and The Mother, his most eminent disciple, set up the **Aurobindo Ashram, Auroville** in 1926. Together they explored the possibilities of yoga and meditation as a path to salvation. At the Ashram residents continue to practice their teachings and run a lot of the cultural activity in Pondicherry. There is an educational centre, which occasionally hosts lectures, screens films and holds play performances. The sun, surf and sand are best at the **beaches** a little outside town. Called Serenity, Quiet and Reppo they manage to live up to their name. The town beach has a 4-meter high statue of Mahatma Gandhi and French World War I memorial. There is a 150-year-old lighthouse also. The **French Institute** is in a stylish colonial building. It has some remarkable old French books that are very rare. The Romain Rolland library has over 60,000 volumes and overlooks the sea. Along with the 'kepis' capped cops and its streets being called 'rue', it is the churches that help the town retain its European charm. The church of **Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception** or Notre Dame de la Conception is almost 300 years old. The church to **Our Lady of Angels** is famous for an oil painting that was gifted by Napoleon III. The most magnificent however is the grand gothic **Sacred Heart Church** with 3 stained glass panels of the life of Christ. Just outside town is a copy of the Basilica at Lourdes. Many temples around Pondicherry are dedicated to Ganesh, the half man half pachyderm god who is the Destroyer of all Obstacles. The oldest ones date back to the 10th century Chola Empire. The **Vinaynagar Manakula temple** has a golden dome and a collection of 40 beautiful friezes. The temple to the local goddess **Drowpattiamman** has a fire festival in July-August.

The Botanical Gardens are pleasant for a stroll and the aquarium has a collection of exotic ornamental fish. The **Pondicherry Museum** has a really eclectic collection of this, that and the other. It has an art collection, Pallava sculptures, handicraft, weaponry, archaeology, geology and the old French Governor Dupleix's bed, an old palanquin and such interesting odds and ends! The **Jawahar Toy Museum** has a collection of dolls dressed up to represent

every state in India. Also visit **Auroville** is something of an avante garde community 10 km from Pondicherry. It was instituted by The Mother in 1968 as an experiment in international living. The aim was spiritual regeneration and communal harmony. Over 1200 people are divided into several communes like 'Forecomers', 'Grace', 'Sincerity' etc with each commune engaged in a separate field of research. Casual tourists aren't encouraged but anyone with a genuine interest in the philosophy is welcome. Auroville is sprawling so the biking there, around and back will be heavy work. Mopeds might be a better idea. Overnight at Hotel.

Day 04: Pondicherry - Tanjore (190Kms/4hrs approx)

Breakfast at hotel drive to Tanjore. On arrival check in to hotel. **PM: Sightseeing of Tanjore or Thanjavur** was the ancient capital of the Chola kings whose origins, go back to the beginning of the Christian era. Power struggles between these groups were a constant feature of their early history, with one or other gaining the ascendancy at various times. The Cholas' turn for empire building came between 850 and 1270 AD and, at the height of their power. Probably the greatest chola emperors were Raja Raja who was responsible for building the Brihadishwara Temple (Thanjavur main attraction) and his son Rajendra-I whose navy competed with the Arabs for controls of the Indian Ocean trade routes and who was responsible for bringing Srivijaya under Chola control.

Thanjavur District is the Rice Bowl of Tamil Nadu. The Big Temple and the other famous temples in the district are known all over the world. Thanjavur was the cultural capital of the country in 1790. Thanjavur gained prominence during the period of Chola Kings, who made it as their capital. Thereafter, it was ruled by Nayaks and Maratta Kings, who nurtured art and culture. The cultural, the architectural and the scholarly pursuits of these rulers are reflected in the great monuments like Grand Anaicut, Big Temple and Serfoji Mahal Library etc. in the district. Thanjavur rose to glory during the later Chola reign between the 10th and 14th Centuries and became a centre of learning and culture. It is the headquarters of Thanjavur district, the 'Rice Bowl' of Tamil Nadu. It is also known for its exquisite handicrafts, bronzes and South Indian Musical Instruments.

The main tourist attractions of Tanjore are **Brihadeshwara Temple & Fort:** built by great Chola king in the 10th century it is an outstanding example of Chola architecture and is listed in world heritage. On the top of the apex of 63 metres high, a dome is said to be constructed from a single piece of granite, weighing an estimated 81 tones. **Thanjavur Palace & Museum:** the palace near the temple is a vast building of masonry built by the Nayakas around 1550 and partly by the Maratha. The palace houses an art gallery, a library and a hall of music. The art gallery occupies the Nayak Durbar Hall. It has a superb collection of Chola bronze statues from the 9th to 12th centuries. The Saraswati mahal Library is next door to the gallery. **Art Gallery:** In the Palace there are a number of granite and bronze statues of the Chola period. Visiting Times: 9.00 - 13.00 hrs and 15.00 - 18.00 hrs. **Saraswathi Mahal Library :** In another section of the Palace

is the library where over 30,000 palm leaf and paper manuscripts in India and European languages are preserved. Visiting Times: 9.00 - 13.00 hrs and 14.00 - 17.00 hrs. Wednesday Holiday. **Schwartz Church:** (In the Palace garden) built in 1779 AD by Rajah Serfoji in token of his affection for the Rev.C.V.Schwartz of the Danish mission. Overnight at Hotel.

Day 05: Tanjore – Rameshwaram (240kms / 5hrs approx)

After breakfast at hotel drive to Rameshwaram, check in at hotel. Rest day free and easy for personal activities relax etc. Overnight at hotel.

Day 06: Rameshwaram

Breakfast at hotel, visit **Sri Ramanathaswamy Temple**; this temple dedicated to Lord Shiva constitutes the main attraction of the town of Rameswaram. Situated near the sea on the eastern part of the island, this temple is mostly known for its staggering structure, magnificent corridors and spectacular sculptures. It has been built under the patronage of a number of rulers from the 12th century. The most premier aspect of the temple is its corridor that is world's longest one and stretches about 197 meters in East-West direction and 133 meters in the North-South direction.

The temple is even more appealing to the devotees because of the legend associated with it. It is believed that Lord Rama, after having killed Ravana had decided to offer Lord Shiva a prayer of gratitude for having guaranteed his succeeded in the war. He instructed Hanuman to fetch the lingam from Kailasa within a certain time, but Hanuman was delayed and Sita had to prepare one of sand, before the auspicious hour. It is said that this is the same Lingam of Sri Ramanatha in the temple. What acts as a supplementary to enhance this aura of myth and supernaturalism in the temple are the 22 wells, the water of which are believed to have medicinal properties? Also water from every well tastes different from the other. **Satchi Hanuman Temple**; Very near to the Sugreevar temple is the Satchi Hanuman Temple, which is located about 3km from the main temple of Lord Ramanathaswamy. Legend has it that this temple enshrines the very spot where Hanuman had given Rama the good news of the welfare of his wife Sita with a stchi or an evidence of the Choodamani, or a jewel that Sita possessed. This is also a favorite destination for the devotees.

Rest day visiting the numerous other temples or relax. Overnight at hotel.

Day 07: Rameshwaram – Madurai (168kms/ 3-4hrs approx)

Breakfast at hotel, drive to Madurai check in at hotel.

PM visit, Meenakshi Temple: This temple is the city's main attraction. This temple is nearly 2000 years old placed in the heart of the old town - a splendid example of Dravidian architecture. A striking feature of the temple is the astonishing structure know as "Ayiramkaal Mandapam" or the Hall of Thousand Pillars and each pillar features high, ornate, bold sculptures that look life like. The present temple was designed in 1560 by Vishwanatha Nayak and subsequently built during the reign of Tirumalai Nayak. There are four entrances to the temple with an area of six hectares. Each of its 12 towers has the height of 45 to 50

meters. The Potrama Raikulam or the Golden Lotus Tank is the place where the Tamil literacy society, called Sangam used to meet to decide the merits of the work presented to them. The temple museum has 985 richly carved pillars and each one surpasses the other in beauty.

Tirumalai Nayak Mahal: This Indo-Saracenic building was built in 1636 by the ruler whose name it bears. The imposing edifice is famous for the “Stuccowork” on its domes and impressive arches. The Sorgavilasam (Celestial Pavilion), measuring 75m x 52m, constructed entirely of brick and mortar without the support of a single rafter or girder, is a marvel of indo-Saracenic architectural style. Among other striking features of the palace are the massive white pillars, several of which line the corridor that runs along the courtyard. Connected by high decorated arches, these pillars measure 20m in height and have a circumference of 4m. Elsewhere, there are polished black stone pillars of varying heights. It was King Thirumalai Nayak’s grandson who demolished much of the fine structure and removed most of the jewels and woodcarvings in order to build his own palace in Tiruchirapalli. **Gandhi Museum:** The 300-year-old palace now converted into Museum has a picture gallery, a library of personal memorable of the Mahatma Gandhi and an exhibit of South Indian handicrafts and village industries.

Vaniyur Mariamman Teppakulam: This enormous temple tank is fed by water from the Vaigai River. Mariamman Teppakulam is a beautiful square tank spread over a huge area of almost 16 acres, located about 5Kms East of Meenakshi Temple. The tank is the scene of the colourful float festival held in January/February to celebrate the birth anniversary of King Thirumalai Nayak, who built this tank. The deities of Meenakshi and Sundareswarar are placed in a float, called “Teppam”, decorated with flowers and illuminated with hundred of lights. This float is taken around the tank to the sound of traditional music. On the Northern side of the tank a temple is dedicated to Mariamman, a famous village deity of Tamil Nadu. Overnight at Hotel.

Day 08: Madurai – Kodaikanal (116kms/ 2-3hrs approx)

Breakfast at hotel, drive to Kadaikanal, check in at hotel.

Later visit Star Shaped Lake - one of the major attractions of this quaint little hill station. Situated at the heart of the main town area, it is also a favourite evening spot for the locals as well. It is the legacy of former Collector, Sir Vere Levinge, who formed it by damming the valley where three streams flowed. The entire lake area is spread over an area of about 60 acres. Here you can also try out some boating courtesy the Boat Club that is located here. Moreover, small horse rides can also make a good pastime in the early evenings.

Solar Observatory - one of the only three solar observatories in the world that is more than 75 years old. Built at an elevation of 2343 meters, the Solar Observatory was built at the highest point of the town. You can have a look into the solar system by booking your tickets for the scheduled shows.

View Point - from where you can have a thrilling view of the entire Kodai valley. The hill station best view points are Pillar Rocks, Green Valley View point and the Dolphin's Nose. You must not miss a visit to these places as they are known for their natural marvel and beauty. You could also find some of the locally made products here to take along as the memorabilia of your visit. Overnight at hotel.

Day 09: Kodaikanal – Ooty (256kms/ 5hrs approx)

Breakfast at hotel, drive to Ooty check-in at the hotel. **PM** Sightseeing of **Ooty**; situated in Nilgiri Mountains near Tri Junction of Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Kerala. Ooty is the only hill station in India which attracts visitors during all seasons. It has built up a famous as the 'all-seasons -hill resort' and the 'queen of hill stations'. It is one of the most popular hill resorts in southern India at an elevation of 7216 ft. Above sea-level, her moods change with every season, but each of her moods is hospitable to the visitor. Nestling among the hills at a point where the Eastern Ghats meets the Western Ghats, the district headquarter town of Udhagamandalam sprawls along a beautiful plateau. The Eastern Ghats are mighty and attractive while the Western Ghats have wooded loveliness. Nature unfolds itself in and around Ooty in a myriad of profiles, each one with a distinctive grandeur and individuality.

The first inhabitants of this land were a tribe called Todas who had been living here long before the British came in the early nineteenth century. But the credit for modernising Udhagamandalam and making it accessible goes to the British who constructed the first railway line in the area and made it the summer capital of the Madras Presidency. Todas antedated all explorers to the Nilgiris by a great margin of time. Mr. John Sullivan discovered Ooty in 1820. He built a permanent house at Nilgiri Hill and this was the beginning. Soon several other British officers built their summer houses. Horses, pony bullock cart and Tonga were transportation modes at that time. Overnight at hotel.

Day 10: Ooty – Mysore – Bangalore (260kms/ 5hrs approx)

Breakfast at hotel, drive to Bangalore, en route visit Mysore Palace built in 1911-12. The piece of harmonious synthesis of the Hindu and saracenic styles of architecture with archways, domes turrets, colonnades and sculptures which are magnificent. The palaces and royal garden of Mysore, 'The Jewel of Karnataka', provide glimpses of its past grandeur. Thus the Maharaja's Palace is one of the largest in the country, embellished with stained glass and domes and turrets giving it an ethereal air. We enjoy our afternoon sightseeing tour visiting Chamundi Hill lies just outside the city and is topped by a temple to Chamundi, the Rajas chosen diety. Half way up the hill, sits a huge granite statue of Nandi, the bull, Lord Shiva's vehicle, and the route is dotted with other minor shrines. Late visit to Maharajas Palace, completed in 1912, dominates the centre of Mysore. The building is a synthesis of Hindu and Sarancenic architecture, designed by Henry Irwin, a British architecture.

Srirangapatnam fort the stronghold of Tippu Sultan. Tippu made a last minute ditch Against the British in 1799 before surrendering his kingdom. Among the

many fort buildings still intact, are Tippu's Airy summer palace and his tomb at the Darya Daulat Bagh (garden). **Daria Daulat Bagh:** Built in 1784, this Summer Palace was one of Tipu's favourite retreats. It stands on a raised platform at a height of 1.5 metres. The Bagh is situated on the banks of Cauvery river has treasured the paintings, engraving, arms that depict the Valant victories and Struggles of Tipu Sultan. The structure made of teak, this Indo-Saracenic structure has ornate and beautiful frescoes. The corridors showcase murals which describe Tipu's ordeals in the battlefield against the British.

After sightseeing of Mysore continue drive to Bangalore. On arrival check in at hotel Overnight at hotel.

Day 11: Bangalore – Hyderabad (flight)

Breakfast at hotel, half day city tour of Bangalore 'Garden City' visiting the **Lal Bagh Garden:** Hyder Ali laid out this famous botanical garden and his son added horticultural wealth to them by importing trees and plants from several countries. The garden today houses over 1000 species of flora which include rare and enchanting collection of tropical plants, trees and herbs. Also see the Government buildings **Vidhana Soudha:** This splendid neo-Dravidian granite building that dominates the northern boundary of the Cubbon Park is the home of the State Legislature and the Secretariat. The massive sandalwood door of the Cabinet room is a spectacular feature of this imposing building. The Vidhana Soudha is bedecked in illuminated glory during special periods and is a sight worth viewing.

The Bangalore Palace & Fort: The Bangalore Fort was built by Kempe Gowda and expanded by Tippu Sultan. Within its walls is the well preserved 16th century Ganapathi Temple. The Bangalore Palace was built by a Wodeyar king in 1887 on the 400 acre space. Inspired by the Windsor castle, this palace was built in the Tudor style, complete with Gothic windows, foiled windows, battlements and turrets resembling the Daria Daulat Palace in Srirangapatnam, this summer palace has been constructed largely of wood and is famous for its carving and paintings. **Tippu's Summer Palace:** The palace was first a mud-brick defense built by Kempegowda in 1537. Hyder Ali and his son Tipu Sultan later rebuilt it 1791. The two-storied structure (replica of the Daria Daulat in Srirangapatnam) served as Tipu's summer retreat. An inscription on the wooden screen describes the palace as the 'abode of happiness', almost mocking the ruins that surround it. Though the palace still has elegant teak pillars, most of the painted decorations have been destroyed and it is in very bad shape.

Afternoon transfer to airport to board flight for Hyderabad. On arrival meet with our office representative, assistance and transfer to hotel. Overnight at the hotel.

Day 12: Hyderabad

Breakfast at hotel, full day city tour of Hyderabad a 400 year-old metropolitan city teeming with bustling-bazaars and Muslim monuments. **Hyderabad:** founded on the River Musi five miles east of Golconda, in 1591-92 by Muhammad Quli Qutb

Shah. In the 16th century the city grew rapidly along the banks of river Musi. Many buildings sprang up along the River Musi and Golconda was the capital of the Qutb Shahi rulers. Hyderabad, under the Nizams, was the largest princely state in India. Area wise it was as big as England and Scotland put together. The State had its own currency, mint, railways, and postal system. There was no income tax. Soon after India gained independence, Hyderabad State merged with the Union of India. On November 1, 1956 the map of India was redrawn into linguistic states, and Hyderabad became the capital of Andhra Pradesh.

AM visit Charminar: an imposing monument, which reflects the glory of the Qutub Shahi dynasty. It is a massive square structure, 56 m (183.72 ft) high and 30 m (98.42 ft) wide. This monument is built entirely of granite and lime mortar. It has 4 minarets one on each of its corners. These fluted minarets are attached to the main building and rise towards the sky to a height of 56 m (183.72 ft). Each minaret of the Charminar has a double balcony. A small bulbous cupola crowns each of these beautiful minarets, which is decorated with petal like formations. A short pointed spire crowns all the minarets. This beautiful colossus in granite, lime, mortar and, some say, pulverized marble, was at one time the heart of the city. This great tribute to aesthetics looks sturdy and solid from a distance but as one moves closer, it emerges as an elegant and romantic edifice proclaiming its architectural eminence in all its detail and dignity. **Grand Mecca Masjid:** oldest masjids in the city & the biggest. Muhammed Quli Qutub Shah began building it in 1617 under the supervision of Mir Faizullah Baig and Rangiah Choudhary. Mughal emperor Aurangzeb completed the construction in 1694. It took 77 years to come up as the magnificent edifice we see today.

PM excursion to visit Golconda Fort: of the most magnificent fortress complexes in India, once famous for its diamond mines. The history of Golconda Fort dates back to the early 13th century, when this south eastern part of the country was ruled by the Kakatiyas. It is built on a granite hill 120 metres high, and is surrounded by crenellated ramparts constructed of large masonry blocks weighing several tonnes. The massive gates are studded with large pointed iron spikes to prevent elephants from battering them down. The outer wall surrounding the entire township of Golconda, is about 11 kilometres long, and is strongly fortified. In its heyday, the 10 kilometre long road from Golconda to outer Hyderabad, was a fabulous market selling jewellery, diamonds, pearls and other gems, which were famous all over the world. **Qutub Shahi Tombs:** Quite close to the Golconda fort are the tombs of the seven Qutub Shahi rulers in the Ibrahim Bagh. The galleries of the smaller tombs are of a single story while the larger ones are two storied. In the center of each tomb is a sarcophagus which overlies the actual burial vault in a crypt below. The domes were originally overlaid with blue and green tiles, of which only a few pieces now remain. Overnight at hotel.

Day 13: Hyderabad – Mumbai (flight)

Breakfast at hotel, transfer to airport to board flight for Mumbai. On arrival meet and greet by our office representative assistance and transfer to hotel. Rest day free and easy for personal activities relax etc. Overnight at hotel.

Day 14: Mumbai

Breakfast at hotel, full day for visiting Essel World the hottest destination for the ones who are all set to have fun.

Mumbai's only international style theme park and scintillating amusement center that is located close to Gorai Beach, Essel World is the place to be for all in love with racing their adrenaline to the maximum. Essel World has a special place in the hearts of Mumbaikars and also people across the country. This is because it is the oldest amusement park in the city. Many people from contemporary age have grown along with Essel World. Though being one of the first amusement park, it is new in style and concept. Essel world is an international-style theme park and amusement park that has defined the parameters of modern fun. It constantly adopts new progressive technologies to redefine itself. Outside the city limits you could hire special ferries to reach the park that sprawls over 64 acres of green landscape. With over 34 thrilling and scintillating rides, games and amusements, EsselWorld is a guaranteed spot to pep you up. There is something for all; the entire fun extravaganza includes Children's Rides, Adult's Rides and Family Rides. You would also love to try some of the coin-operated games, like Crazy Shuttle, Derby Racer, Aqua Blasta, Water Lazer etc. Some of the freaky rides of the park are Crazy Cups, Road Train, Riki's Rocking Alley, Tilt-a-Whirl, Zipper Dipper, Highway Cars, Hedge Maze, Fun Net, Haunted Hotel, and Prabal – the Killer. Essel world offers economical packages for weekends and season specials. Opens everyday from 11:00 hrs to 19:00 hrs, Essel World is a great amusement park where fun never stops. The wide array of restaurants offers delicacies from local over and above international cuisines. The Wet World at Esselworld seems to be the stomping ground during summers, when people come here to relax themselves in the soothing showers of water. Rain pool, Splash pool, Croc pool and Lazy River are the prime attractions of this water park. The amusement park has been styled on international patterns and frequently implements new technology, in form of machineries and environment, to redefine itself. Water Kingdom is the twin park of Essel World. While providing nonstop, fun amidst adventurous rides and 30,000 species of flora, both of these amusement centers allure over 1.8 million people annually. In a nutshell, Essel World is the best place to get entertained ceaselessly in Mumbai.

Day 15: Mumbai – Matheran (85kms/ 2hrs approx)

Breakfast at hotel, **AM** city tour visit the **Gateway of India**: Mumbai's most famous landmark, The Gateway of India, is situated at Apollo Bunder. It was designed by George Wikket. It was built to commemorate the visit of King George V and Queen Mary to India in 1911. Through this magnificent monument, numerous viceroys and governors were welcomed to India as they disembarked from their steamers, hence the name. **Prince of Wales Museum**; Barely a

stone's throw from the Gateway of India is the Prince of Wales Museum, a magnificent, but somewhat strange structure, built in a confluence of Gothic and Moorish styles, and crowned by a sparkling white dome. It boasts a good collection of ancient Indus Valley artifacts dating back to 2000 BC, plus some priceless Tibetan and Nepali Art. There is an entire gallery devoted to Buddhist tankha scrolls and another to Tibetan bronzes, but the chief attraction here is the collection of over 2000 miniature paintings from the various art schools of India. Next to the Museum is the Bombay Natural History Society, which has an extensive collection of local flora and fauna.

PM drive to Matheran, check in at hotel. Rest day free and easy for personal activities relax etc. Overnight at hotel.

Day 16: Matheran

Breakfast at hotel, sightseeing of Matheran one of the most exquisite and beautiful hill stations placed at an altitude of 800m above sea level and situated at a distance of 100km from Mumbai, the major tourist attractions of the place are its 38 vantage points that offer breathtaking view of the whole place and its nearby areas.

Echo Point; this is a crucial point that offers a panoramic view of the whole place. As the name suggests, Echo point is well-known for allowing you to enjoy your echoes. This has made the place very popular amongst locals as well as tourists. **Charlotte Lake;** this lake is the main source of water supply in Matheran and a major point of the place. It is located at a distance of 1 km from the main market and looks idyllic during the monsoons, but dries up during the summers.

Louisa Point; Located on a plateau, this famous lookout point offers a spectacular view of the ruined forts of Prabal and Vishalgarh. The famous "Lion's Head" (a rock resembling a lion's head) is located close to it. **Alexander Point;** It is a famous point located 1 km towards the north of the place. This point provides splendid views of the Garbut Point, the Chowk valley and the Ulhas River, and is a favorite among the sightseers. **King George Point;** during the monsoons, water from the nearby Charlotte Lake overflows and forms various waterfalls around the place. This is the point that beautifully captures these waterfalls and hence is a popular point during the season of showers. **Sunset/Porcupine Point;** Located at a distance of 4 km from the main market, this point is famous for its views of the setting sun. This point offer views of a dark forest below. Prabalgad can also be seen from this point.

Monkey Point; It is a well-known point, famous for the large number of mischievous monkeys that throng the place. The point also offers a mesmerizing view of the verdant plains below. **More Tourist Attractions;** Other important points are Heart Point, Malang Point, Honeymoon Hill, Lords Point, One-tree Hill, Olympia, Paymasters Park, Artists Park, Mount Barry, etc. Overnight at hotel.

Day 17: Matheran - Mumbai (85kms/ 2hrs)

Breakfast at hotel, drive to Mumbai check in at hotel.

PM visit Hanging Gardens; laid out in 1881 these formally laid out gardens have a notable collection of hedges shaped like animals. Perched at the top of Malabar Hill, on its western side, just opposite the Kamala Nehru Park, these terraced gardens, also known as Ferozeshah Mehta Gardens, provide lovely sunset views over the Arabian Sea. The park was laid out in the early 1880s over Bombay's main reservoir, some say to cover the water from the potentially contaminating activity of the nearby Towers of Silence. **Marine Drive;** which runs along the shoreline, starting at Nariman Point and up to Malabar Hill. This is a windswept promenade, flanked by the sea and a row of art deco buildings. Looped between the concrete jungle of Nariman Point, Mumbai's Manhattan, and the leafy green slopes of Malabar hill, Marine Drive was once called the queen's Necklace, strung with glittering street lights like an enormous strand of imperious jewels. It is also one of Mumbai's busiest roads, an important artery for the heavy suburban traffic heading downtown. Cars whiz continually past the two mile stretch, past huddled lovers, children and babies in perambulators. Like other seafronts, this is where most of south Mumbai comes to breathe in some fresh air. Overnight at hotel.

Day 18: Mumbai – Departure

Breakfast at hotel, transfer to airport to board flight for your onward destination.

Check your progress - 2

Answer the following questions.

1. Discuss the role of tourist escort.
2. What are the main responsibilities of tourist escort?
3. Explain the professional ethics in tour escorting.

Check your answer with the one given at the end of the unit

6.4 Summary

In this short unit, the focus was on the role, responsibility and professional ethical obligations of tour escort, with the stress on definitions of tour escort, code of conduct and code of practice. This is all in consideration for the working environment both in Western countries and even Asian countries. At the end of the unit, students understand the concept of tour escort, role and their responsibilities in the tourism industry.

Answer to Check Your Progress

- 1) See sec. 6.2
- 2) See sec. 6.3
- 3) See Sec. 6.3

6.5 Glossary

- **Travel & tour guide** - escort tourists around places of interest such as historic buildings, museums and other sight-seeing tours and point out interesting information.
- **Resort representative** - usually work in overseas holiday resorts, taking care of holiday makers and act as a contact point for information and assistance. They also hold welcome meetings for guests, help to arrange trips, entertainment and accompany tourists on transfers to and from the airport.
- **Tour manager** - accompanies tourists on group tours and ensure that the holiday run smoothly. Duties include keeping holiday makers informed, liasing with hotels, travel agencies and officials at tourist sites.
- **Travel consultant** - provide customers with information and advice on holidays and arrange holiday bookings.
- **Tour Conducting** is about managing tours, it involves traveling with groups while staying with groups, controlling and entertaining people dealing with problems and at times guiding tours. The tour conductor can be with that group, depending on the type of tour for two to three weeks.
- **Tour escort:** a person who accompanies a tour departure to return, as guide, troubleshooter etc, a person who performs such functions only at the destination
- **Tour Guiding** is usually for a shorter length of time. It refers to the specific activity at a sight or an attraction for a scheduled portion of time.

6.6 Review Questions

- What is a tour Escort? Describe historical growth and development of tourist escort in India.
- Illustrate the significant role played by the tour escorts in both inclusive and escorted tours.
- Explain the main responsibilities of tour escort in the changing tourism marketplace.
- What do you mean by professional ethics? Discuss the tour escorts' professional ethics.
- Write a note on Escorting services in India.

6.7 Suggested Readings

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8. Bruce Prideaux, Gianna Moscardo, and Eric Laws (2006) Managing tourism and hospitality services: theory and international applications, CAB International, UK.

UNIT 7: COMMON INTEREST AND SPECIAL INTEREST ITINERARIES: SALIENT FEATURES AND CASE MODELS

Structure

7.0 Objectives

7.1 Introduction

7.2 Common Interest and Special Interest Itineraries – Concept, meaning and salient features

7.3 Common Interest and Special Interest Itineraries- case models

7.4 Summary

7.5 Glossary

7.6 Review Questions

7.7 Suggested Readings

7.0 Objectives

After reading this unit, you will be able to:

- Describe the meaning and concept of special interest tourism;
- Explain the unique futures of special interest tourism,
- Discuss the Common Interest and Special Interest Itineraries

7.1 Introduction

It is easy to attract visitors when you have plenty of resources, nice accommodations, powerful selling techniques, many supporting sectors and of course reliable government support. The challenge starts when you lack most of the above and what you have is only a handful of beautiful natural resources, breathtaking sceneries, goodwill and a great desire and pride to show those visitors what your country is made of. Rich natural resources, a breathtaking coastline, rich flora and fauna, historical, cultural and religious heritage, which all combined together within the same small country; represent a big advantage for India. This Unit attempt; to fiuniliarise you with the special interest tourism along with the basic knowledge and requirements of special interest tourists. It also develop an understanding of preparation of special interest tour itineraries.

7.2 Common Interest and Special Interest Itineraries – Concept, meaning and salient features

While we are all aware that India is blessed with a high diversity of resources and good opportunities for the development of tourism, we cannot say this sector is generating the expected results. Rich natural resources, a

brehtaking coastline, rich flora and fauna, historical, cultural and religious heritage, which all combined together and represent a big advantage for India.

Special Interest Tourism - Definition and Trends

A widely known and accepted definition of tourism is travel for leisure, business or recreational purposes. In 1994 the United Nations defined three forms of tourism with regard to a specific country: (UN, 1994)

- a) Domestic tourism;
- b) Inbound tourism; and
- c) Outbound tourism.

The first one involves residents of the same country traveling only within the same country; the second includes non-residents traveling into this country and the third one involves residents traveling in a foreign country. By combining these three basic definitions the United Nations created three main categories of tourism: internal tourism which is a combination of both domestic and inbound tourism, national tourism comprising domestic tourism and outbound tourism and international tourism which includes inbound and outbound tourism.

According to Read (1980), in Hall and Weiler (1992), the conceptualization of the term 'Special Interest Tourism' (SIT) emerged during the 1980s and can be seen as the predecessor of 'Niche Tourism'. Early discussion of SIT set the context for the development of niche tourism markets, and was seen to be a prime force associated with the expansion of tourism and the motivation around which tourist activity was planned and advanced.

Special interest tourism comprises different special interest travel forms which have become known as niche markets over the years and gained popularity among the actors of the tourism industry. While there is not a limit to these niche markets some of them have become more sustainable and considered categories of special interest tourism. These main categories along with a short description for some of them are:

- a) Adventure tourism
- b) Religious tourism;
- c) Cultural tourism;
- d) Rural Tourism;
- e) Ecotourism;
- f) Culinary tourism;
- g) Wildlife tourism;
- h) Heritage tourism;
- i) Medical tourism.

- **Adventure tourism:** According to travel-industry-dictionary adventure tourism is "recreational travel undertaken to remote or exotic destinations for the purpose of exploration or engaging in a variety of rugged activities". Programs and activities with an implication of challenge, expeditions full of surprises,

involving daring journeys and the unexpected. Climbing, caving, jeep safaris are examples of adventure tourism.

- **Religious tourism:** Is that form of tourism where groups of people or individuals travel for pilgrimage, leisure of missionary purposes.
- **Cultural Tourism:** “Cultural tourism is a genre of special interest tourism based on the search for and participation in new and deep cultural experiences, whether aesthetic, intellectual, emotional, or psychological” (Stebbins,1996, p.948). This definition incorporates a variety of cultural forms, including the history, religion(s), art, architecture and other elements that have contributed in forming of the specific culture of the visited region.
- **Rural Tourism:** According to Eurostat (1998) rural tourism “regards the activities of a person travelling and staying in rural areas (without mass tourism) other than those of their usual environment for less than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes (excluding the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the placed visited) ”.
- **Ecotourism:** According to The International Ecotourism Society (1990) ecotourism is “responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the well-being of local people”. While these definitions are helpful to support our idea and our choice of case studies, they would not be enough to understand special interest tourists. Instead we should focus especially on whom these tourists are, their characteristics and interests. Special interest tourists are generally adults or third age persons, adolescents and children (members of family or school groups), with the following characteristics:
 - Spirit of adventure;
 - Curiosity and
 - Sharing experiences.

Their intention is to travel to destinations which are environmentally and culturally rich, well conserved, seldom frequented and places where one can still enjoy the luxury of tranquillity.

Special interest tourists enjoy activities in contact with nature, beauty of a conserved natural area, the pleasure of watching the fauna in its natural habitat, of exploring, discovering and learning, overcoming obstacles and feeling the pleasure of overcoming them. Furthermore they like to discover how easy it is to read a map, navigate a river and learn climbing techniques, diving, horse riding, canoeing, driving cattle, packing and carrying a rucksack. For that tourist the physical effort involved is a small price to pay for enjoying the view of a mountain, camping next to a lake of still clear water or watching an eagle soaring in the wind. Above all there is the pleasure of sharing experiences with friends and relatives. Thus, Special interest tourism may be defined as a form of tourism which involves consumers whose holiday choice is inspired by specific motivations and whose level of satisfaction is determined by the experience they pursue.

Salient features of Special Interest tourism

Special interest tourism contributes to the economy and helps to raise several niche markets. Special interest tourists express an aspiration for real experiences and authenticity which allow them lively recognition with host communities in a non-exploitative manner and tourists' involvement with special interest activities becomes a platform to provide the way of finding personal fulfilment. SIT is ethical and sustainable tourism as the tourist experiences are not gained at the cost of damaging the qualities, if a society which made the experience possible.

- Competition (play/social to pure sport/serious orientation in sport tourism), – formality (informal to formal in educational tourism and eco-tourism), – depth of interest (shallow to deep in eco-tourism and cultural tourism).perceived to real/soft to hard in adventure tourism.
- social orientation (programs/courses/family/friends toppers/teams/solo),
- environmental/physical orientation (natural/unstructured to developed/structured),
- local to global (familiarity and proximity to novel and exotic),
- Access (cost, time, equity and low to high).
- Frequency of participation (measures prior experience with activity, familiarity of setting).
- Skills, knowledge, setting attributes—low to high,
- Locus of control/autonomy (perceived to real competence).
- Importance/enjoyment (attraction),
- self expression/sign,
- Centrality.
- Risk probability
- Choosing one activity/product over other options.
- Risk consequences
- Making poor choices
- These categories overlap in many cases.
- Cycle tourism may involve aspects of 'green' tourism, rural tourism, travelling for health and wine and food tourism.
- It's helpful to be able to imagine a range of special interest tourism categories, though.
- One of these that we shall look at now is 'dark tourism'.

Check your progress-1

Answer the following questions.

1. Define the concept of special interest tourism

2. Identify main features of special interest tourism,
Check your answer with the one given at the end of the unit

7.3 Common Interest and Special Interest Itineraries- Case Models

Discover Bhutan Tour

Tour Type: Special Interest

Duration: 09 Night / 10 Days

Destination Covered: Delhi, Paro, Thimpu, Punakha, Paro

Accommodation Type: Luxury Hotels

Tour Customizations: Customizable & Extendable

Detailed Itinerary

Days 1: Arrive Delhi

Upon arrival you are met and transferred to your prebooked Hotel. Upon arrival at the hotel you are received with a traditional welcome. Rest of the Days is relaxing and for free activities.

Over night at Hotel.

Days 2: Delhi

This morning we visit Old Delhi, built in the 17th century by Shah Jehan the Magnificent (who also built the Taj Mahal). First we will be visiting the famous Jama Masjid mosque with its 9,000 sq. ft. courtyard, three domes and two minarets, and then proceed to the massive complex known as the Red Fort. Afternoon we'll visit Lakshmi Narayan Temple, a Spectacular structure that's just 60 years old, and then proceed via India Gate and the Governmental building to Qutab Minar, the 240 foot tower built in 1190 to commemorate the arrival of Islam in India, the Bahai Temple with its nine pools on an elevated platform, and the Crafts Museum, which replicates an Indian street with over 50 artists and craftspeople at work. Over night at the Hotel

Days 3 : Delhi - Paro (By Flight)

Your flight this morning takes you to the majestic mountain retreat of Bhutan. This hidden treasure of the Himalayas, known as The Dragon Kingdom, is still home to an ancient style of life. Remote, mysterious and truly special, Bhutan's pure and genuine cultural heritage is a priceless gem in the treasure - house of the subcontinent. The beautiful terraced valley where the medieval town of Paro nestles is home to many of Bhutan's oldest temples and Dzongs. These are centuries - old repositories of cultural treasures and works of art. Visit Paro Market and town this evening. A stroll down main street is a very Pleasant experience. Over night at the Hotel.

Days 4: Paro

Our Tour of Paro starts with a drive to view the Takstang Monastery (Tiger's Nest) from a distance. Later visit Kila Gompa. Afternoon visit the Ta Dzong Fort.

Now the National Museum of Bhutan which displays antique thankha paintings, textiles, weapons and a very interesting collection of postage stamps. Later drive to the Rinpung Dzong built during the 17th century. Which is now used as an administration center and school for monks. Over night at the Hotel

Days 5: Paro - Thimpu (By Surface)

You are Driven through spectacular mountain views and peaceful countryside to Thimpu, Bhutan's capital. Enroute, visit a Bhutanese farm house, traditionally built entirely without nails. Over night at Hotel,

Days 6: Thimpu

Your tour of Thimphu includes the Simtokha Dzong, the oldest fortress of its 1627. It now houses the Dzongkha Language and Religion University. Protection of their unique and precious heritage in this last remaining stronghold of Himalayan .Buddhism is now a priority of the government. Also visit the great Tashichho-Dzong - or Fortress of the Glorious Religion - the center of government and religion. Stroll to Changgankha Monastery, and visit the handicrafts emporium to shop where a wealth of artistic skills are displayed.Over night at the Hotel

Days 7 : Thimpu - Punakha (By Surface)

After breakfast we continue our drive towards Punakha -The first stop after leaving Thimpu is Dochula Pass at 10,500 ft., offering breathtaking views of the Himalayan Range and the valleys below. Punakha holds the title of winter capital because of its more temperate climate. Bhutanese monks and the leader still live in Punakha during winters. Punakha Dzong was strategically built at the confluence of the phochu and mochu Rivers in 1637 by the first Shabdrung of Bhutan, Ngawang, Namgyel.Over night stay at hotel.

Days 8: Punakha - Thimpu (By Surface)

This morning you will be againg transfered to Thimpu , upon arrival checkin at your Hotel . Afternoon stroll the lively SunDays Market where folk from outlying areas come to stock up on most of their goods. Dressed in colorful traditional garb, these remote mountain dwellers descend upon the market place, creating a photographer's dream as they barter among themselves and socialize with friends. Later visit the memorial chorten built in memory of the late King Jigme Dorji Wangchuck. Over night at the Hotel.

Days 9: Thimpu- Paro (By Surface)

After breakfast we will Leave for Paro . Upon arrival check in at your prebooked Hotel . Rest of the Days free for personal activities.

Days 10: Leave Paro

Transfer to international airport to board flight for onward Journey .

Cultural Central India Tour

Duration: 14 Days

Destinations : Delhi- Jaipur-Fatehpur Sikri-Agra-Agra-Gwalior-Orcha-Khajuraho-Allahabad -Varanasi- Delhi

Day 01 : Arrive Delhi

Meeting and Assistance at the airport and transfer to hotel for overnight stay.

Day 02: Delhi

Morning after breakfast enjoy combined city tour of Old & New Delhi visiting Red fort, Jama Masjid, Rajghat, Lotus Temple, India Gate, President house etc.

Entrances to Monuments are not included (only guide with driver). Overnight at hotel.

Day 03: Delhi- Jaipur

Breakfast at the hotel and drive to Jaipur. Jaipur is the Gateway to Rajasthan.

Also know as Pink city, as all buildings have a pink tint to them. It is an unselfconsciously medieval city, with stately palaces, colourful bazaars (market) and a fort brooding over the city. Graceful women in swirling skirts and viels of red, yellow, orange and magenta, laden with silver jewellery, straight tall men in Turbans and luching carts drawn by camels, do nothing to dispel the illusion. On arrival checkin at hotel for overnight stay.

Day 04: Jaipur

Morning after breakfast guided excursion to Amber fort, enjoy elepant ride over there. Afternoon city tour of Jaipur visit City Palace museum, Observatory and Palace of Winds. Overnight stay at hotel.

Day 05: Jaipur-Fatehpur Sikri-Agra

After breakfast drive to Agra and transfer to your hotel. Enroute visiting Fatehpur sikri- named as The Abandoned city. Built by great Mugal Emperor Akbar, as his capital but after few years abandoned due to scarcity of water. The whole city is built of Red Sand Stone. Afternoon visit Taj Mahal-The Eternal symbol of India and Agra, built in white marble. Taj Mahal was built by Mugal Emperor Shahjahan for his Empress Mumtaz Mahal. 20,000 workmen worked for 22 years to complete it. Overnight stay at hotel.

Day 06: Agra-Gwalior-Orcha

Morning after breakfast drive to Orcha. Enroute visit Gwalior Fort- also known as Gibraltar of Asia. On arrival in Orcha checkin at hotel. Orcha is famous for its temples. Its a small town. Overnight stay at hotel.

Day 07: Orcha-Khajuraho

Morning breakfast at the hotel and drive to Khajuraho-temple city of India. On arrival in Khajuraho checkin at hotel. Khajuraho is famous for its 11th century temples which are still very prominent and dominating the city. Overnight stay at hotel.

Day 08: Khajuraho Breakfast at the hotel and proceed for guided city tour of Western and Eastern style of Temples. Whole temple walls in western style of temples are embosed with erotic sculptures and idols. Overnight stay at hotel.

Day 09: Khajuraho-Allahabad

After breakfast drive to Holy City Allahabad. Also famous for confluence of three rivers Ganges, Jamuna and Saraswati. On arrival in Allahabad checkin at hotel for overnight stay.

Day 10: Allahabad-Varanasi

Breakfast at the hotel and drive to City of temples and holy river ganges-Varanasi. On arrival checkin at hotel. Rest of the day free for your independent activities. Overnight stay at hotel.

Day 11: Varanasi

Early morning boat excursion on the holy river ganges to see the bathing ghats and cremation site. Watching people bathing and worship-ping at the ghats is one of the most extraordinary experiences of a visit to India. Later visit the Bharat Mata Temple, Durga temple, Tulsi Manas mandir, Banaras Hindu University which has an art gallery.

Day 12: Varanasi- Delhi

Breakfast at the hotel Full day free. Evening transfer to railway station to board overnight sleeper train for Delhi. Overnight on board train

Day 13: Delhi

Arrive Delhi in the morning and transfer to hotel. Full day free for your independent activities. Do you last minute shopping? Overnight stay at hotel.

Day 14: Delhi Depart

Intime transfer to airport to connect your flight back home.

Includes:

- 03/04 star twin sharing hotels with daily american breakfast
- All transfers, city tours and intercity travel by non-airconditioned transport
- 2nd AC sleeper class Train tickets Varanas-Delhi
- English speaking guides during city tours
- Elephant ride in Jaipur
- Boatride in Varanasi

Excludes:

- Monument entrance fees during city tours
- Expenses of personal nature like, food, laundry, telephone calls, drinks etc etc.
- All other expenses not mentioned under "includes" heading.

Traditional Healing – Medicine & Culture

Place to Be Visited: Hanoi, Ha Long, Saigon

(7 DAYS – 6 NIGHTS)

HIGHLIGHTS

- Meet the friendly locals and taste delicious food every day at atmospheric restaurants;
- Discover Hanoi's historical and culture highlights;
- Visit the best traditional hospital and meet with the finest traditional doctors;
- Explore limestone islands and emerald green waters of Ha long Bay;
- Discover Saigon's historical and culture highlights, China town included;

- Explore the only traditional medicine museum of Vietnam.

ITINERARY

Day 1: Hanoi (Welcome Drink & Dinner)

Pick up at Noi Bai airport and transfer to your hotel in Hanoi, Vietnam's capital city. Overnight in Hanoi

Day 2: Hanoi (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

In the morning, visit the Institute of Acupuncture and meet with one of the best specialists of Acupuncture. In the afternoon, visit the capital city and its cultural centers, including the One Pillar Pagoda and the Temple of Literature. Enjoy a traditional folk show and an ancient water puppet show. Overnight in Hanoi

Day 3: Hanoi (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

In the morning, visit the National Hospital of Traditional Medicine, the leading hospital in its field for the whole country of Vietnam. It is the largest establishment for treatment, research, and training in traditional medicine. The hospital has a total of 22 departments with two main centers that are divided in 3 main sections including clinical, para-clinical and functional section. You'll visit the various departments and you can meet with some of the best traditional specialists. In the afternoon, enjoy shopping activities in the city center. Overnight in Hanoi.

Day 4: Hanoi – Ha Long Bay (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

In the morning, transfer with guide to Ha long (170km). Upon arrival, get on board a private boat for a stunning cruise in Ha Long Bay (4 hours), a World Heritage site recognized by UNESCO. Visit some magical grottoes while relaxing in the best scenic beauty of Vietnam. Enjoy a traditional lunch with the freshest and finest seafood. After lunch, Board the superb emerald cruise for a one night stay in Ha long Bay. Overnight on Emeraude cruise.

Day 5: Ha Long - Hanoi – Saigon (Breakfast, Dinner)

Transfer from Ha Long to Hanoi Airport for the flight to Saigon with stop at arts and crafts factory. Pick up at Tan Son Nhat airport and transfer to the Hotel. See the Ao Dai dancing show (closed on Tuesday). Overnight in Saigon.

Day 6: Saigon (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

In the morning, visit the newly opened FITO Museum; it is the first and only traditional medicine museum in Vietnam. This attraction has numerous ancient items depicting a complete history of traditional medicine. Some of these objects are more then 3000 years old. The museum has important documents in the pharmaceutical, acupuncture, gynecologic, pediatric, ophthalmologic, and nourishment fields. During your visit, you can see the worshipping rooms and meet with the herbal doctors; you can watch the wide collection of kettles used for cooking medicine, and see a documentary film on Vietnamese traditional medicine. Furthermore, you can shop for souvenirs in the museum or else go to the traditional pharmacy for your own special preparations. In the afternoon,

enjoy a classic city tour including Cho Lon (China town), the post office, the cathedral and the presidential palace. Overnight in Saigon

Day 7: Saigon (Breakfast, Dinner)

In the morning, you are free at leisure for shopping activities at Ben Thanh Market. Transfer to the airport for departure in the afternoon/evening.

• **COCONUTS & BEACHES TOUR**

Duration: 06 Nights / 07 Days

Day 01: Arrive Cochin

Greet on arrival at the Cochin International Airport. Transfer to hotel. Afternoon proceed for city tour, visiting the historic city of Fort Cochin -Ancient capital of the Dutch, Portuguese and finally the British. A walking tour of Fort Cochin would be ideal or otherwise an "Auto Rickshaw" can be another choice. Visit will include the old Spice Market at Mattancherry, the antique shop on Jews Street, the Synagogue, Dutch Palace and, the Church of St. Francis where the mortal remains of Vasco Da Gama was buried before it was shifted to Portugal. Return to your hotel for Overnight stay.

Day 02: Cochin / Periyar

Morning after breakfast, drive to Spice Village at Periyar (185 Kms/5 Hrs drive), which lies in the shade of Cardamom Hills and is a beautiful area of tranquil winding roads, tea gardens, rubber estates and spice plantations. Check-in at the Hotel. Afternoon, visit to the National Park. After that Boat safari in lake Periyar and try to catch a wild elephant. Overnight in Hotel.

Day 03: Periyar / Kumarakom

After breakfast, visit tea and spice plantations or do a soft trek with escort in the jungle. Afternoon drive to Kumarakom (135 kms / 3 Hrs drive). Check into the hotel for overnight stay.

Day 04: Kumarakom]

Morning visit Kumarakom Bird Sanctuary -spread across 14 acres, The Kumarakom Bird Sanctuary, an ornithologist's paradise is a favorite haunt of migratory birds like the Siberian stork, egret, darter, heron and teal. A visit to the bird sanctuary, set within the lush acres of wooded land nearby, acquaints you to the variety of migratory birds that flock in thousands, some from the Himalayas, some even from as far as Siberia. Afternoon visit to the marvelous mangrove forests, coconut capopies and pulsating paddy fields sprinkle with enchanting waterways and canals decked with white lilies. Overnight in Hotel.

Day 05: Kumarakom / Marari Beach

Drive to Marari Beach -a sleepy fishing village located between the port city of Cochin and Alleppey. Check into the hotel. Afternoon cruises on the backwaters nearby, visits to traditional coir-making units etc.

Day 06: Marari Beach

Full day to explore the beach.

Day 07: Marari - Cochin

Drive to Cochin (60 Kms / 1½ Hrs) and transfer to airport to connect flight for onward destination. (Hotel Checkout 12:00 Hrs)

Check your progress- 2

Answer the following questions.

1. How develop nature based tours?
2. What is eco-tour package?

Check your answer with the one given at the end of the unit

7.4 Summary

This Unit has given you an idea about the utility of special interest tourism. Now you're familiar to design special interest tour package not only for domestic tourists but also for the international tourists. Special interest tourism is one of the most interesting tourism sectors in India which has a great potential to successfully develop this type of tourism. It started slow but nowadays more and more tour operators and other tourism stakeholders are showing interest toward it. Investments in this sector are growing and resourceful but unknown locations are coming into existence. Bringing tourists into the yet-to-be discovered Indian cultural landscape, where folk legends and history are combined into mystical scenery has become a primary goal for the economic development of many regions in India. Forests and natural reserves are rapidly becoming tourism products due to the wider interests of tourists and their involvement. The building of environment-friendly resorts and hotels across the world represents the growth of ecotourism markets and the tourist's awareness for the preservation of environment in sustainable ways the tourism development in India can be described as exceptionally successful. Tourism development is now seen as a realistic chance by the regional and national administration.

Answer to Check Your Progress

Answer to Check Your Progress - 1

- 1) See sec. 7.2
- 2) See sec. 7.2

Answer to Check Your Progress - 2

- 1) See sec. 7.3
- 2) See sub sec. 7.3

7.5 Glossary

- **Geotourism** - tourism that sustains or enhances the geographical character of the place being visited - its environment, culture, aesthetics, heritage, and the well-being of its residents.

- **Ethnic Tour** - A tour designed for people of the same heritage traveling to their native origin or to a destination with ethnic relevance.
- **Special Interest Tour** - A tour designed to appeal to clients with a special or common interest. Most such tours provide an expert tour leader and usually visit places and/or events of special interest to the participants.

7.6 Review Questions

- Elaborate the growth and development of special interest tourism India.
- Identify main special interest types of tourism.
- Suggest 5 days tour itinerary for international tourists who wanted to visit Himalayas.
- List the major tour operators involved in special interest tourism in India.
- What are the unique features of special interest tour package?
- Illustrate present trends of special interest tourism in India.

7.7 Suggested Readings

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UNIT 8: UNIQUE FEATURES OF MICE CENTRIC ITINERARIES: CASE EXAMPLES

Structure

- 8.0 Objectives
 - 8.1 Introduction
 - 8.2 MICE- Concept, meaning, features
 - 8.3 The Indian MICE Industry
 - 8.4 MICE Itineraries: Case examples
 - 8.5 Summary
 - 8.6 Glossary
 - 8.7 Review Questions
 - 8.8 Suggested Readings
-

8.0 Objectives

After reading this unit, you will be able to:

- Describe the meaning and concept of MICE
 - Explain the features of MICE,
 - Discuss the sample MICE itineraries
-

8.1 Introduction

The Meetings, Incentives, Conventions and Exhibitions (MICE) industry is one of the key drivers of tourism destination development and an important generator of income, employment and foreign investment. Beyond economic benefits, the MICE industry presents opportunities for knowledge sharing, networking and capacity building, making it an important driver for intellectual development and regional cooperation. In Asia and the Pacific, one of the fastest developing regions in the world, some countries and cities are already leading in MICE tourism, having recognized the potential of this industry to bring economic, social and intellectual benefits. With ever more exhibition grounds, accommodation units and entertainment facilities being constructed throughout the region, Asia and the Pacific is strongly positioning itself as a world leader in the MICE industry. Thus, this unit is about MICE and agreeing tour itineraries. You should be able to understand the concept of MICE and agree the main features of MICE tour and agree the main routes and timings. You should know and understand the logistic factors involved in MICE Itineraries.

8.2 MICE- Concept, meaning, features

India has always been a unique conference destination with its vast array of scenic, heritage, art and crafts, architecture, nature and wildlife, cultural, culinary,

spiritual and therapeutic attractions. The steady growth trajectory of the Indian economy has made it a commercial hub and a desirable conference destination. Improved infrastructure with new airports and hotels, improved air, road and rail transport are all adding to this. There are about 40 international and several domestic airlines operating in India. An excellent railway system connects the major cities to tourist destinations. Creativity and the rich cultural heritage help in conceptualising unique events that are truly unique and one-of-a-kind. Socialising with erstwhile Royalty in their palaces, participating in an actual Indian wedding, yoga and meditation, therapeutic sessions are some of the out-of-box events that can be planned and executed. The traditional warmth and hospitality, the colors and pageantry, the richness and diversity makes India very attractive for international conferences. According to UNWTO, MICE will be the fastest growing segment in a total of 1 billion International tourist arrivals worldwide in 2012. Currently Asia account for 16 % of world meetings. This rather less than charming acronym which gained prominence in 90s, stands for - "Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions", its clientele the business, corporate, organizational and event based categories of groups, associations, organizations, & conglomerates. As inbound MICE grow in India, its outbound MICE market was estimated around USD 550-600 million in 2011. This resulted in an outbound trip volume of 6.2 million, with around 1.5-1.8 million travelling outbound only for MICE tourism. It is estimated, by 2020 Indian outbound tourist will be 50 million compared to 12 million today. While China's current outbound of 50 million will increase to 150 million. MICE tourism is a term that encompasses four different components of the corporate meeting's market-meetings, incentives, conventions and exhibitions-which are all separate activities.

Definition of MICE

In 'Meetings Industry Terminology', IAPCO (the International Association of Professional Congress Organizers) provides the following definitions for MICE:

Meeting: General term indicating the coming together of a number of people in one place to confer or carry out a particular activity. Frequency: can be on an ad hoc basis or according to a set pattern, for instance annual general meetings, committee meetings etc.

Incentive: A meeting event that is part of a programme offered to participants to reward a previous performance.

Conference: Participatory meeting designed for discussion, fact-finding, problem-solving and consultation. As compared with a Congress, a conference is normally smaller in scale and more select in character - features which tend to facilitate the exchange of information. The term 'conference' carries no special connotation as to frequency. Though not inherently limited in time, conferences are usually of a limited duration with specific objectives.

Exhibition: Events at which products and services are displayed.

According to International Meetings Industry Glossary (1993) a conference as “an event used by any organization to meet and exchange views, convey a message, open a debate or give publicity to some area of opinion on a specific issue.

MICE – Feature

The Meetings, Incentives, Conventions and Exhibitions (MICE) industry is one of the key drivers of tourism destination development and an important generator of income, employment and foreign investment. Beyond economic benefits, the MICE industry presents opportunities for knowledge sharing, networking and capacity building, making it an important driver for intellectual development and regional cooperation. The main Features of MICE are as:

- **Beyond the Season:** MICE tourism cuts beyond the two seasonal tourism peaks in the country, and definitely adds a third for hot climate India, from where MICE operators and delegations prefer to plan their business & conferences as a getaway from the heat as well.
- **Will be back:** MICE tourist tends to refer visits to family and friends and often come back as leisure tourists.
- **Low on environmental impact:** It is experienced that MICE tourist are groups which are more responsible due to the nature of their agenda, and minimize adverse effects due to the all around guidance of the service providers
- **Destinations:** MICE tourist are not just limited to Delhi but have a compact range that includes, destinations within short driving distances of the capital, such as Shimla, Chandigarh , Agra , Jaipur and so many.
- **Social Media:** Connectivity and social media have added to the surge. Internet World Stats reported, internet users world wide have grown at a rate of 480 % between 2000 and 2011. Currently the number of users stands at a staggering 2.095 billion, out of which 44% are in Asia, figuring 922 million.
- **Benchmarking:** Benchmarking the success and failures of other Asian destinations can help in picking up performance gaps and plan for it, and increase the competitiveness.
- **High end services:** State of the art conferencing facilities, with conference halls, cutting edge audio visual presentations, video conferencing live streaming and web casting, interactive post-event video uploads, language interpreters, event coordinators, end to end solutions and services with support activities of registrations, payments, accommodations and software systems
- **Destination Image:** The image of a destination or its branding is a necessary influence in the decision- making process of venues. Therefore it is the destination brand that creates an image in the mind of the customer. A

brand can simplify decisions, reduce purchase risk, create and deliver expectations.

- **International Air links:** Regular flights connecting major cities; Business class and first class air travel. Airlines include five star service providers such as Qatar Airways Gulf Air, and regular business & economy fliers as Thai Airways, Korean Airlines, Air China, Jet Air, Indian Airlines, Air Arabia, & Biman Bangladesh. Domestic flights are also available
- **Exotic Sights & Adventure:** From Jungle Safaris to guided Heritage tours or adventure activities such as Paragliding, Ultra light aircrafts, Boating, Elephant jungle rides. Rafting and Bungee jumping for the adrenaline shot
- **Leisure & Well Being:** Golf, Health Clubs & Spas
- **Commitment:** Tourism services are an experience, which evolve from exchange between the tourist and the service providers. Hotels & venues need to give a tangible evidence of facility which might be the structure of the building, the décor, the ambience, the food, that suggests quality, commitment and delivery.
- Providing stimulus to global economic growth by creating forums for new product development, exchange and marketing;
- Facilitating academic, technical and professional advancement by encouraging the global development and exchange of research, knowledge, standards and procedures;
- Supporting communities by facilitating access to global knowledge and expertise and attracting new investment potential;
- Enhancing and supporting transportation, hospitality and tourism infrastructure by creating an economically important rationale for non-leisure travel;
- Promoting international cooperation and collaboration by encouraging and sustaining business and professional networks, and
- Supporting economic transition by facilitating retraining and professional development on a global basis.

8.3 - The Indian MICE Industry:

MICE tourism is nothing but business tourism. MICE stand for: Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions. "E" sometimes refers to as Events and "C" sometimes refers to as Conventions. According to the International Association of Professional Congress Organizers (IAPCO), Meeting is the coming together of a number of people in one place, to confer or carry out a particular activity. This can be on an ad hoc basis or to a set pattern. For example, annual general meetings, committee meetings etc. Incentive is part of a program which is offered to its participants to reward a previous performance. Conference is a participatory meeting designed for discussion, fact finding,

problem solving and consultation. It is smaller in scale as compared to a congress which is usually of limited duration with specific objectives. Event is something at which products and services are displayed; for example, a career fair, an automotive exhibition etc. Unlike the other components of MICE tourism, incentive tourism is conducted purely for entertainment, rather than for professional or educational purposes.

The MICE industry is “at the high-quality, high-yield end of the tourism spectrum”, international surveys suggest the segment tends to spend between two to four times more than the leisure tourist. Although different categories with in the segment such as corporate buyers, entrepreneurial buyers, association buyers, and public or governmental sector buyers signify different levels of spending. The 2010 International Meetings Statistics Report, by Union of International Associations (UIA) ranked Singapore as the top convention city in Asia, a position it has retained for 23 consecutive years. The MICE industry, which rakes in billions of dollars in tourism receipts for Singapore, is expected to reach S\$10.5 billion by 2015.

According to UNWTO, MICE will be the fastest growing segment in a total of 1 billion International tourist arrivals worldwide in 2012. Currently Asia account for 16 % of world meetings. This rather less than charming acronym which gained prominence in 90s, stands for - “Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions”, its clientele the business, corporate, organizational and event based categories of groups, associations, organizations, & conglomerates. As inbound MICE grow in India, its outbound MICE market was estimated around USD 550-600 million in 2011. This resulted in an outbound trip volume of 6.2 million, with around 1.5-1.8 million travelling outbound only for MICE tourism.

It is estimated, by 2020 Indian outbound tourist will be 50 million compared to 12 million today. While China’s current outbound of 50 million will increase to 150 million. During the PATA Travel Mart at New Delhi 2011, John Kaldowski , PATA’s Head of Tourism Strategy described the growth of outbound tourism from China and India - “These two giants last year generated more than US \$ 65 billion in tourism receipts globally (excluding international transport) and were responsible for close on 53 million arrivals to Asia Pacific destinations” On the same occasion Surekha Poddar, Executive Director of Consumer Research Nielsen India cited recent surveys and mentioned India ranked at number one in global consumer confidence indices, with a rating of 126 compared to the global rating at 89. The survey also mentioned travel as the second priority of at least 34 per cent of Indian consumers. As the last couple of years continue to show a very significant increase for outbound tourists in Asian countries, the two decades old gradual growth of MICE tourism too has gained new heights - a segment which has earlier remained the forte of the hotel industry in western countries. Asian cities have emerged as global

MICE TRENDS

With a growing business, of course, come varying trends and the MICE space is no different. As the segment grows, so do the demands of the customers. Martin Wuetrich, General Manager, Sheraton Bangalore, which owes 20 per cent of its room occupancy to MICE, opined that opportunities lay in the tier II cities. "Some of these markets are beginning to create demand with newer segments purely because of the quality of the kind of hotel that exists. Something similar has happened in a city like Bengaluru. Corporate and multinationals are considering Bengaluru as an option to hold high scale annual events looking at the availability of world class MICE facilities, events they would have otherwise held abroad or in Mumbai or Delhi. The main trends are as:

- Long-haul destinations like the US are picking up with outbound travel purchasers
- Corporate are looking beyond South-East Asia for newer and exciting destinations for incentive trips
- Eastern Europe and South America emerging as destinations of choice with travel purchasers looking for high-end products
- Increasing demand for exciting packages with substantial value-addition, for example, teeming incentive trips with sports, adventure, etc.

The International Conference and Convention Association (ICCA) recent publication of the top 20 destinations for MICE business has reaffirmed the old world order--that not one African city or country made it into the top 20 worldwide. In fact, the top six countries appear to be cast in iron, led by the United States and followed by Germany and Spain. In the city ranking, Vienna took the top position followed by Paris and Barcelona, respectively. African destination countries have been trying to market MICE events more aggressively in recent years but are often limited by the available conference facilities and more important, bed capacity in capital and key commercial cities. While South Africa has been persistently topping the African rankings and has invested heavily in facilities ahead of the 2010 FIFA World Cup, other countries have been playing catch up with Kenya significantly for the East African region attracting ever more MICE business and hoping for yet more.

Significantly, the planning for a brand new international class conference centre is advancing, to be set at the Bamburi area of the Indian Ocean port and Leisure City of Mombasa. Another country keen on increasing their MICE footprint is Rwanda, where new hotels and conference facilities are due to be commissioned. Among them a new Marriott Hotel and Conference Centre. Globally, Africa, as is generally the case with tourism arrivals and global ranking therein, remains in the distant pack chasing a however fast growing market segment for such profitable and visibility creating events.

The new top 20 country rankings, according to the number of confirmed major meetings held, are:

USA – 759 meetings
Germany – 577
Spain – 463
UK – 434
France – 428
Italy – 363
Brazil – 304
China – 302
Netherlands – 291
Austria – 267
Canada 255
Switzerland – 240
Japan – 233
Portugal – 228
Republic of Korea – 207
Australia – 204
Sweden – 195
Argentina – 186
Belgium 179
Mexico – 175

The top 20 city rankings, again going by the number of meetings hosted in 2011, are:

Vienna – 181 meetings
Paris – 174
Barcelona – 150
Berlin – 147
Singapore – 142
Madrid – 130
London – 115
Amsterdam – 114
Istanbul – 113
Beijing – 111
Budapest – 108
Lisbon – 107
Seoul – 99
Copenhagen – 98
Prague – 98
Buenos Aires – 94
Brussels – 93
Stockholm – 93
Rome – 92
Taipei – 83

Check your progress - 1

Answer the following questions.

1. What is MICE?
2. Define MICE
3. What are the main features of MICE?

Check your answer with the one given at the end of the unit.

8.4 MICE Centric Itineraries

The India Convention Promotion Bureau (ICPB) sponsored by the Ministry of Tourism, the Government of India aims at promoting India as a competent and credible MICE destination. India is still in its growing stage showing signs of becoming a fully fledged MICE destination. According to the ICCA, India is 27th in the global meetings market. The Indian inbound MICE segment is growing at the rate of 15 to 29% annually. The Indian inbound MICE market in the first seven months in 2004 was US\$20 million, which is 40% more than the same period in 2003. As a potential MICE destination, though in its infancy stage, India has virtually everything a modern conference organizer or delegate could expect. The important MICE destinations in India are: Agra, Bangalore, Chennai, Goa, Hyderabad, Jaipur, Kochi, Kolkata, Mumbai, and New Delhi.

The tourism industry in any country is one of the major revenue earners. MICE tourism is an up and coming sector and a major revenue contributor to the tourism industry in countries. In order to be a hot spot for MICE, a destination needs to be developed and promoted. Infrastructural facilities accessibility, to accommodation, to venues needs to be of international standard and quality. Since India is becoming a major MICE destination, an investigation needs to be conducted on the factors and attributes affecting convention site decision making. Conventions can be hosted anywhere, which gives rise to competition among destinations in portraying themselves as the best destination. Because of this growing competition, it is imperative that an investigation be made into the factors that contribute best in site selection for MICE within the various destinations in India. Past studies have tried to shed light on identifying many factors, though there is still room for investigation and little is known on the relative importance of each factor. Convention and visitor bureaus (CVB's) and destination management organisations (DMO's) lack adequate knowledge for the competitive action in promoting their destination. As mentioned earlier, India is still in its growing stage and the factors and attributes constitute to be the foundation of any potential MICE destination needs to be investigated.

MICE Tour Itineraries

Most of the travel and hospitality companies provide customized solutions for various MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Events) related travel needs. These assist at every stage of planning your travel, including pre-tour

familiarization visits, booking of air tickets, arranging accommodation at the hotels, gala dinners, collateral preparation, technical back up, meal arrangements and event management.

MICE tours offer the following services to customers:

- Research and development of complete program
- Identification and reservation of location
- Venue and accommodation selection
- Planning, organisation and equipping of location area
- Contracting and negotiation of services
- Organization of pre and post tour programs, spouse programs, social programs and arrangements for accompanying guests
- Specialized exclusive theme dinners
- Audiovisual recording of the event
- Shows and special entertainments
- Special evening venues
- Transportation – meet and greet services during all arrivals
- Security

• Visa application services

Pre - Conference Services	Onsite Conference Services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conference Budgeting as per Organizers projection • Negotiation and Contracting with Hotels, Vendors ,Suppliers • Program me Planning- Announcements • Coordination with Speakers / Delegates for Airline tickets (International) • E-mailers & Postage • Logo design & Printing • Venue Selection - Accommodation & Social Functions. • Conference Secretariat set-up • Setting up computerization management system • Audio Visual planning • Layout plans and Exhibitor Manual • Souvenirs, posters and Conference Stationary • Badge designing, printing and VIP cards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Venue set-up – Hall Decoration & pre check up- allocation service areas • Secretariat setup - staffing • Spot Registration set up & Accounts Management • Business center - fax / internet and photocopy facilities • Airport facilitation desk for Airport pick and drop (Airport Transfers) • Transport & shuttle services to Venue / Social functions/ hotel • Signage - Backdrops, indication signs, placards • Delegates kit bags and Contents, Badges distribution and Transport stickers • Audio Visual equipment and Technical staffing • Video Conferencing facility for satellite selected areas. • Hall Management -Comperes, ushers, dais plates • Photography and video coverage. • Simultaneous interpretation and language assistants. • Registration and Assistance counters. • Hall planning / seating arrangement • Exhibition stalls and branding signage & Security • Catering and Theme functions • Cultural shows • Day tours Management and Entertainment services • Closing ceremony - Souvenirs and Mementoes
Post -Conferences Services	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Airport Transfers and send offs • Post Conference Tours • Editing and printing reports • Post Conference correspondence • Balance invoicing • Settlement of accounts • Closure of conference 	

1. Singapore : Conference (3 Nights / 4 Days)**Day 1 : Singapore**

Arrive in Singapore and proceed for city orientation tour which includes statue of Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles, Parliament House, Suntec City, Fountain of Wealth, City Hall, and Orchard Road. Experience the Singapore Flyer ride which offers a breathtaking view of the shimmering Marina Bay waterfront and historical landmarks dotting the city skyline. Visit Night Safari later in the evening.

Day 2 : Singapore

Half day conference/business session. In the evening, experience the

Cable Car Ride from Mt. Faber to Sentosa Island. Visit Images of Singapore - The Pioneers of Singapore, Surrender Chambers, Festivals of Singapore, and Wax Works. Admire rare marine species at Underwater World. Enjoy the 'Songs of the Sea' show in the evening.

Day 3: Singapore

Visit Universal Studios at Resort World, Sentosa. Enjoy gala dinner in the evening.

Day 4: Departure from Singapore

Free time for leisure in the morning. Board the flight for your hometown. Tour concludes. Take back souvenirs and memories of a wonderful trip, arranged to perfection in true Kesari MICE style.

2. Hyderabad Conference: (2 Nights/3 Days)

Day 1: Hyderabad

Arrive in Hyderabad. Free time for relaxation. In the evening Light and Sound Show at Lumbini Park

Day 2: Hyderabad

Full Day conference which will be followed by gala dinner in the evening.

Day 3: Hyderabad

After breakfast proceed for City Tour which includes Snow World, Birla Temple and Charminar. Later board the flight/train for your hometown. Tour Concludes.

3. Delhi - Agra Conference: (2Nights/ 3Days)

Day 1 : Delhi - Agra

Arrive in Delhi. Proceed to Agra to visit Taj Mahal. Free time for relaxation.

Day 2: Agra

Full day conference followed by gala dinner in the evening.

Day 3: Agra- Delhi

After breakfast. Proceed to Delhi for City orientation tour which includes Raj Ghat, Rashtrapati Bhavan, Parliament House & India Gate .Board the flight/Train for your hometown. Tour Concludes

4. Goa Conference: (2 Nights / 3 Days)

Day 1 : Goa

Arrive in Goa . Free time for relaxation.

Day 2: Goa

Breakfast in the Hotel. Full Day Conference followed by Gala Dinner.

Day 3: Goa

Breakfast in the Hotel. Free time for shopping or enjoy on the beach. Later board the flight/train for your hometown. Tour Concludes.

5. Hong Kong: Conference (3 Nights / 4 Days)**Day 1 : Hong Kong**

Arrive in Hong Kong. Enjoy the famous Hong Kong Harbour Illumination show 'Avenues of the Stars' later that night.

Day 2: Hong Kong

Full day conference/business session with gala dinner in the evening.

Day 3: Hong Kong - Disney world

Enjoy the magic of Disney Land, and its exciting rides. Take in 'Festival of the Lion King' - a virtual explosion of colours, music and amazing talent. Experience the magical 3-D adventure, and 4D show. Witness the Disney Parade and a spectacular fire show in the evening.

Day 4: Departure from Hong Kong

Free time for leisure in the morning. Board the flight for your hometown. Tour Concludes

6. Malaysia: Conference (3 Nights / 4 Days)**Day 1 : Kuala Lumpur**

Arrive in Kuala Lumpur. Proceed for city tour which includes magnificent view of the city from the Observatory Deck of the K. L. Tower, take a photo stop at Petronas Twin Towers, and visit Suria KLCC. Take in the King's Palace, Dataran Merdeka Square, National Mosque, Cricket Field, and High Court Building.

Day 2: Kuala Lumpur

Full day conference. Enjoy a gala dinner later in the evening.

Day 3: Kuala Lumpur - Genting Highlands - Kuala Lumpur

Travel to Genting Highlands by Asia's longest and fastest cable car. Try your luck at the famous Casino de Genting. Have an exciting time at Genting Outdoor Theme Park. Return to the hotel in Kuala Lumpur in the evening.

Day 4 : Departure from Kuala Lumpur

Visit Putrajaya, the administrative capital of Malaysia, or enjoy some leisure time. After lunch, Board the flight for your hometown. Tour concludes.

Check your progress- 2

Answer the following questions.

1. What should the part of a MICE tour?
2. What are the main advantage of MICE tour?

Check your answer with the one given at the end of the unit

8.5 Summary

In India, business tourism has been identified as the largest segment of global and domestic tourism. MICE tourism is a fast emerging sector; especially after

the liberalization of the Indian economy and Indian tourism industry is equipped with all facilities to welcome business tourists. MICE are the fastest growing section of the international and domestic tourism markets. The standards of facilities and services offered have evolved over the last decade towards the extensive use of technology, environment friendly services, pricing, market segmentation, regional preferences, etc. This segment has immense potential and provides tremendous growth opportunity in India for the sale of several hundred room nights as opposed to few by the transient travellers. In fact, MICE tourism finds itself being inevitable in all the occasions.

Answer to Check Your Progress - 1

- 1) See sec. 1.2
- 2) See sec. 1.2
- 3) See sec. 1.3.

Answer to Check Your Progress - 2

- 1) See sec. 1.3
- 2) See sec. 1.4

8.6 Glossary

- **Congress:** The regular coming together of large groups of individuals, generally to discuss a particular subject. A congress will often last several days and have several simultaneous sessions. The length of time between congresses is usually established in advance of the implementation stage, and can be either pluri-annual or annual. Most international or world congresses are of the former type while national congresses are more frequently held annually. 2) Meeting of an association of delegates or representatives from constituent organizations. 3) European term for convention.
- **Convention:** An event where the primary activity of the attendees is to attend educational sessions, participates in meetings/discussions, socialize, or attend other organized events. There is a secondary exhibit component. Compare With MEETING, EXHIBITION, TRADE SHOW and CONSUMER SHOW.
- **Convention Center:** Facility that combines an exhibition space with a substantial number of smaller event spaces. The purpose of these buildings is to host trade shows, public shows, conventions, large food functions and other functions related to the convention industry. They may be purpose built or converted and municipally or privately owned.
- **Convention Services Manager (CSM):** Professional at a hotel, convention center or convention bureau who is responsible for event operations management on all levels.

- **Corporate Exhibit:** An institutional exhibit telling the story of the company without intentionally marketing the product or service.
- **Backwall Booth/Stand:** An exhibit that is back to back with another exhibit or against a building wall.
- **Access Panel:** Removable panel or section of exhibit to permit access to lamps, projectors, mechanisms, etc

8.7 Review Questions

- Describe the facilities provided by Indian Hotels for business tourism.
- Make a list of important destinations of MICE tourism.
- Identify the drivers that help in the decision making for the convention site selection in India.
- Discuss the differences in the attractiveness of potential convention destinations within India.
- Elaborate the role of accommodation along with other factors in India.
- Prepare a 3 days tour package for the marketing executives how want to discuss tourism promotional strategies in New Delhi.

8.8 Suggested Readings

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BLOCK- 3**Tour Packaging - Concept, Nature and Scope**

The tour operators strategic position between the various vendors encompassing airlines, transport operators, hotels, etc. and the ability to combine the various elements of travel industry into relatively affordable and standardized tour package, have emerged as the key manipulators of tourism industry. When tourists choose to book a package or decide to go on holiday, how do they determine which package to buy especially in view of the consumer's inability to inspect the ingredients making up the tour package prior to travel? In the current tour operation business environment we find ourselves in fastest changing era, it is critical that tour operator should adapt proactive approaches to develop and design new tour package. This block will give you the necessary background about Tour Packaging -Concept, nature and scope the itinerary: meaning, concept, nature and scope.

This block comprises the following units:

The **9 unit** of the course entitled "Tour Package: concept, Significance and Limitations describes the meaning and concept of tour package; explain the types of tour package and finally discuss the significance of tour package.

Unit- 10 focuses on Elements and Steps involved in formulation standard tour package. Finally the unit discusses the Steps involved in formulation standard tour Package.

Unit - 11 deals with discussion of Costing and Pricing of Tour Packages- completion analysis and strategic costing. In this unit you will learn about the Key pricing factors in tour pricing; competitive Pricing and strategic costing.

In unit -12 we will describe about the marketing of Tour Packages: Need for pre-active approach. The unit also discusses tour package marketing- Concept and meaning and finally explains the procedure for developing a Tour Marketing Plan/ approach.

Block Objectives

After studying this block, you will be able to:

- Describe the meaning and concept of tour package;
- Discuss the significance of tour package
- Describe the elements standard tour Package
- Explain the Steps involved in formulation standard tour Package
- Describe the meaning and concept tour costing & pricing ;
- Explain the Key pricing factors in tour pricing
- Describe competitive Pricing and strategic costing
- Describe the meaning and concept of tour package marketing ;
- Explain the Tour Marketing Plan/ approach

UNIT 9: TOUR PACKAGE: CONCEPT, SIGNIFICANCE AND LIMITATIONS

Structure

- 9.0 Objectives
- 9.1 Introduction
- 9.2 Tour Package - Concept and meaning
- 9.3 Significance of tour package
- 9.4 limitations of tour package
- 9.5 Summary
- 9.6 Glossary
- 9.7 Review Questions
- 9.8 Suggested Readings

9.0 Objectives

After reading this unit, you will be able to:

- Describe the meaning and concept of tour package;
- Explain the types of tour package
- Discuss the significance of tour package

9.1 Introduction

Economic development in India has changed the way people think; both inbound and outbound travel is flourishing, travelling has become fashionable for many people, and package tours are the preferred mode of domestic, inbound and outbound travel for the travellers when taking vacations. Tour package is the product of travel agency or tour operator. In fact, it is the total tourism product which is designed and offered to the tourists. In this lesson you will understand the concept of tour package and its various types. Travel agency and tour operator are in the business to promote tour package, which is the combination of both natural and manmade tourist resources. Thus, in order to work in the travel agency or tour operation business one must be able to describe the tour product or tour package and its components. Keeping in view this fact, in this unit an attempt has been made to familiarize you to the tour package, types of tour package and its importance.

9.2 Tour Package - Concept and Meaning

A package holiday or package tour consists of transport and accommodation advertised and sold together by a vendor known as a tour operator. Other services may be provided like a rental car, activities or outings during the holiday. Transport can be via charter airline to a foreign country.

Package holidays are organised by a tour operator and sold to a consumer by a travel agent. Some travel agents are owned by tour operators, others are independent.

Tour operators are companies that organize several different aspects of travelling and market them as a complete “package”. They pre-arrange the most important elements of a trip, for example travel arrangements and accommodation, so that they fit together smoothly and ensure trouble-free experience for the traveler. The simplest package tours consist of a combination of transportation to the holiday destination and accommodation. However, the package may include a number of other elements: for example transport to and from the airport, a hired car, meals, guided tours, entertainment and the services of a company representative to deal with any problems at the holiday destination. The holidaymaker can buy these various components in advance of the trip. By using a tour operator travellers avoid the problems of contacting and making complicated arrangements with travel companies and hotels, perhaps in a foreign language and then having to pay separately for each service. They can also rely on the knowledge and experience of the tour operator to choose the best services available. In addition the tour operator, with thousands of potential customers, is in a position to bargain with airlines and hotel chains. They can buy in bulk and make deals which enable them to offer holidays at reasonable prices while still making profit.

The first organised tours dated back to Thomas cook who, on 5 July 1841, chartered a train to take a group of temperance campaigners from Leicester to a rally in loughborough, twenty miles away. Thomas Cook - the company - grew to become one of the largest and most well known travel agents before being nationalised in 1948. With the gradual decline of visits to British seaside resorts after the Second World War, Thomas Cook began promoting foreign holidays (particularly Italy, Spain and Switzerland) in the early 1950s. Information films were shown at town halls throughout Britain. However they made a costly decision by not going into the new form of cheap holidays which combined the transport and accommodation arrangements into a single 'package'. The company went further into decline and was only rescued by a consortium buy-out on 26 May 1972. In fact, the concept of tour package was coined by Thomas cook when he offered inclusive tour package in 1855. Although Thomas Bennett offered package tour to the VIP's in 1850 but Thomas Cook has made first tour package by adding the sequence of tourism components and provided a printed tour itinerary to each tour participant.

Definitions of Tour Package

Holloway defines tour package as a “total tourism product consisting of transportation, accommodation and recreational services offered to the tourists at

a destination". In brief, a package tour encompasses the following elements:

- Accommodation in hotel, motel, resort, dharmsala etc.
- Transportation-includes reservation in Airplanes, Railways, Coaches etc.
- Transfers, portorage, entrance fee/tool etc.
- Sight Seeing/Excursions.
- Guides or escorts.
- Special events, cultural shows and other activities

Thus, a package tour or **package holiday** consists of transport and accommodation advertised and sold together by a vendor known as a tour operator. Other services may be provided such a car rental, activities or outings during the holiday. Transport can be via charter airlines to a foreign country, and may also include travel between areas as part of the holiday. Package holidays are a form of tourism product bundling.

Check your progress-1

Answer the following questions.

1. Explain the concept of tour package
2. Define tour package

Check your answer with the one given at the end of the unit

9.3 Types of Package tour

Recently, numerous tour packages have been introduced in the tour operation industry to cater the diverse needs of tourists such as educational Tour - A tour designed around some educational activity such as studying Renaissance art. Escorted Tour - A prearranged travel program, usually for a group, escorted by a courier. In a fully-conducted tour, escort and/or guide service is provided throughout. A sightseeing program conducted by a guide, such as a city tour. Fam Tour - Familiarization tour for travel agents or journalists planned and executed by a destination or region, usually in cooperation with an international airline. Group Tour - A prearranged, prepaid travel program for a group usually including transportation, accommodations, attraction admissions, and meals (see also Packaged Tour). Inclusive Tour - A tour in which specific elements - airfare, hotels, transfers, etc., are offered for a flat rate. An inclusive tour does not necessarily cover all costs. Independent Tour - An unescorted tour sold through agents to individuals. For one price the client receives air travel, a hotel room, attraction admissions, and typically a car rental.

Inclusive Tour Package: These packages are constructed for people of wide interest or Some ITs are designed for particular interest groups. The types of tours are depending on motivations of travellers; the demand of such tourists may be latent and can be motivated into active

demand. Generally, these types of tour packages include all components of tourism at inclusive prices. These are designed and developed for the first time travellers. Now-a-days various types of packages have become popular, such as:-

Congress, Convention, trade fair etc: Such tours are normally for highly paid tourists. So such businesses are much demanded among tourism people. The business class people travel for attending meetings, conventions, congress etc.

Sports and activity based packages: Sports and activity based packages are more famous among the youths e.g. Mountaineering, trekking, golfing, skiing, wild life safari, camel-safari in desert, aero based activities (e.g. ballooning, hang-gliding), water based activities (Rafting, Kayaking, Canoeing, boating etc.). Activity based tours are more popular among youth; in most cases such activities need more money and services than other forms of recreation. So such packages are more beneficial for tour operators.

Incentive Travel Trips: These are popular among people of various companies, corporate sector and other manufacturing units. Employees travelling on L.T.C. are also an example of incentive tourism. The cost of incentive travel trips depends on how the organisations (whose people will travel negotiate with suppliers. The tour operators add their special services to attract such people because they provide bulk business.

Religious or Pilgrimage Tours: Such tours are very common in India since time immemorial in the form of '*Tirthsatana*'. Previously they were self organised and people were travelling to four dharmas or other pilgrimages independently or in groups. Now tour operators are organising such tours with reserved/chartered bus or train (or few boggies). Such tours are very common and popular among small tour operators. The clients are mostly old people.

Cultural, Historical places. Fair and Festival Packages: In fact India is still a cultural destination for both-Indians as well as foreigners. Most of our tours cover historical -cultural places e.g. the golden triangle of Deihi-Agra-Jaipur. Besides these there are several types of package tours. It will not be relevant to mention them here.

Culture/Heritage Tours: Each Destination country is home to diverse ethnic groups each with their unique customs and traditions. Destination countries often have several ethnic or tribal groups each with distinct identities, which have been

preserved over several centuries. These diverse and unique cultures which exhibited through:

- Festivals
- Initiation Rites (Rites of Passage)
- Music and Dance Forms
- Arts and Crafts
- Fabric and Fashions
- Cuisine
- History through Folklore
- Social Interaction with indigenous people

In developing itineraries, the above elements are incorporated to make your trip an enjoyable and rewarding experience. Exposure to these elements serves as a means to become exposed to lifestyles that are invariably different but broaden ones perspective on life.

Business Tours: The globalization of the world economy has contributed to the increasing importance of Africa as an emerging market. The region is viewed by many as one of the last economic frontiers where markets for goods and services will be created in the twenty-first century. African countries have instituted democratic and investment frameworks to attract foreign investors and secure investments. Services provided in our business tour packages include:

- Information on and interpretation of Investment Frameworks
- Facilitation of Business and Political Access
- Business and Legal Advisory Services
- Market Research
- Operational Support

Through these services we hope to assist in promoting investment in lesser-developed regions of the world.

Special Interest Tours: In addition to the Standardized Tours and Special Event Tours we offer for specific festivals and theme packages, we give you an opportunity to create your own customized tours. With the assistance of our Destination Planners, customized tours can be created to include multiple destination countries and a combination of our diverse themes. Tour packages can be created for a variety of themes including religion, culinary, architecture, music and art.

Group Inclusive Tour (GIT) is a prepaid tour for a specified minimum number of People, travelling as a unit. Most group tours in the N.W.T. are comprised of 10 to 35 people (standard coach size is 47 passengers), GIT's are usually travel-escorted on chartered transportation and generally include all baggage handling,

entrance fees, taxes, and some meals. As the title indicated, an operation specifically tailored to accommodate a number of participants with similar interests. This type of tour product is often used to service lengthy itineraries utilizing a mixture of services, transportation, accommodations and attractions. Based on their duration and areas of operation, they fall into three distinct categories which are:

- Escorted
- Hosted
- Unescorted

A Fully Inclusive Tour (FIT) is a prearranged and prepaid tour, for one to ten people travelling without an escort or tour guide. Most typically, an air carrier originates the booking. The customers usually travel by public transportation or U-drive. FIT generally includes accommodation, transportation, and sightseeing. The traveler is issued a "voucher" for each component of the package. Taxes and baggage-handling are usually the responsibility of the individual traveler.

Example of a Tour Package: This tour is an inclusive tour package offered to first time tourists who wants to visit exotic tribal of Arunachal.

Come to the land of unspoiled hills! Arunachal Pradesh is sure to leave you spellbound with its majestic beauty spread lavishly on the green hills. A haven to impenetrable forests, deep gorges and wide rivers...discover the land of the Land of Dawn Lit Mountains. Simply because the land is a 'singer' – she calls out to the seasoned and the first time traveler...simply because the land has just about everything in it which takes you away from your stress filled days and sleepless nights. Simply because the jungle and the Himalayan ranges beckon you. Discover Arunachal with us while we take you into the heart of the land and explore it in its rustic element. Folk is a Highlights.

Itinerary details for "13 Days Exotic Tribal Tour of Arunachal tour package"

Day 1: Guwahati - Nameri National Park

Arrive in Guwahati. Transfer to Nameri National Park (230 kms/6 hrs) which is situated at the foothills of eastern. Rolling hills, deciduous forests and the river Jia Bhoreli have all added a unique charm to it.

A bird lover's paradise, the national park is home to numerous species of mammals like Assamese macaque, wild dog, Bengal fox, jungle cat, hog deer, mouse deer, leopard, tiger, fishing cat, wild boar, Indian porcupine, Indian pangolin, flying squirrel etc.; various species of flora like Bombax ceiba, sterculia villosa, zizyphus jujube along with non aquatic grassland species like andropogon, Ipomea reptans, enhydra flushians, nymphia, wichornia etc.

The park is also famous for birds and insects like white winged duck, drongos,

beautiful nuthatch, grey headed fishing eagle and many more insect life like butterflies, moths, spiders, ants and termites. Nameri is a treat for any entomologist. Travelling to this park also gives you an opportunity for water sports activities of river rafting, swimming, sunbathing in different river islands. Angling is also possible in the river islands for keen anglers subject to regulation by the forest department. Overnight Nameri National Park.

Day 2: Nameri – Itanagar

After breakfast drive down to Itanagar (265 kms/6 hrs). Situated at the foothills, Itanagar is the capital of Arunachal Pradesh. Arrive and check into your hotel. Later visit the State Museum where the life-style has been depicted, with help of maps and miniature diagrams. While the life-styles of all the major tribes have been depicted, the display covers a wide range of subjects such as people, house types, festivals, dances, handicrafts etc. Move on to the market where you can shop for souvenirs and then visit the tribal Nyishi village before returning to your hotel. Overnight at Itanagar.

Day 3: Itanagar - Ziro

After breakfast drive to Ziro- the land of Apatani tribes of Arunachal Pradesh. Located at an altitude of 5754 ft, this high town is almost a level valley enveloped in all sides by pine clad low stooping hills. A small picturesque destination with pine and bamboo grooves, villages, a craft center and a tagin fish farm – it brings in the rustic element to the travel. Enroute visit and explore Nishi Tribal Villages. Return to your hotel. Overnight at Ziro.

Day 4: Ziro – Apatani and Hong Tribal Villages - Ziro

Today after breakfast, explore the Apatani villages around Ziro. Visit the ethnic Hong Village. Hong village is said to be the second biggest and most organized tribal villages in Asia. The uniqueness of Apatani tribe is tattooing on women's face and its nose plug. Move on to other Apatani villages before returning to your hotel in Ziro. Overnight at Ziro.

Day 5: Ziro - Limekin Nishi tribal country - Ziro

Today after breakfast, explore Ziro Limekin Nishi tribal country. Overnight at Ziro.

Day 6: Ziro - Daporijo

Today after breakfast depart for Daporijo (176 kms/7 hrs). The land of Tagin and Hill Miris, it is located at an altitude of 600 mts and is the Headquarter of the Upper Subansiri district of Arunachal Pradesh.

The small town is endowed with scenic beauty. One can see suspension bridges over Subansiri River made from bamboo and cane - a testimony of rich tribal craftsmanship. Subansiri River is ideal for river rafting, angling and picnic. Enroute visit Nishi & Tagin villages. Arrive and check into your hotel. Overnight at Daporijo.

Day 7: Daporjzo

Today explore Tagin country towards Nacho Lymekin road. Overnight at

Daporijo.

Day 8: Daporijo - Along

Drive to Along (167 km/7 hrs). Along is the HQ of west Siang district, located on the south bank of river Siang. It's the territory of the Adi tribe, one of the largest tribes in Arunachal Pradesh with lots of subgroups with an altitude of 1020 ft. The Adi tribe has different sub tribes like Adi (Galong, Miniyong, Pasi, Padam, Bori and Borak) which differs from each other. Afternoon visit Kabo village.

Overnight at Along.

Day 9: Along

After breakfast, explore the Adi country. Visit a few villages like Jirdin, Kabu, Kaying to get an understanding of the culture and the lifestyle of the Gallong tribe. Overnight at Along.

Day 10: Along - Pasighat

After breakfast, drive to Pasighat (147 kms/5 hrs). The oldest city of Arunachal Pradesh, this city is the entrance point for Arunachal Pradesh. You could travel to the Siang District or even to unexplored Gelling, which is the confluence point of Rivers Sangpo and Siang. It is also the land of Passi and Minnyiong tribes.

Enroute enjoy the great view of Great Siang and Siyom confluence – the origin of Great River Brahmaputra. Also visit Minnyion villages before moving on to Pasighat.

Arrive and check into your hotel. Overnight at Pasighat.

Day 11: Pasighat - Dibrugarh

Drive and then cruise down on the Brahmaputra to Dibrugarh (6 hrs). Situated in the northernmost tip of Assam, Dibrugarh is the gateway to Aurnachal Pradesh. Famous for tea, it has world's largest area covered by tea gardens. Arrive and check into your hotel. Overnight at Dibrugarh.

Day 12: Dibrugarh - Tai Phake - Tinsukia

After breakfast, visit Tai Phake village near Naharkatia which is 80 kms/2 hrs east of Dibrugarh and revel in the beauty of the people of Tai Ahom with their unique culture. In the afternoon, visit the Borajan wildlife Sanctuary to see Hoolok Gibbon, the only Ape in India.

Overnight at Tinsukia.

Day 13: Tinsukia - Dibrugarh - Airport

After breakfast go for an exclusive tea tour to learn all about tea. Later drive down to Dibrugarh airport for your flight back home.

Check your progress – 2

Answer the following questions.

1. Explain Inclusive Tour Package.
2. Describe escorted tour package.

Check your answer with the one given at the end of the unit.

9.4 Importance and Limitations of tour package

Tour package business is becoming more profitable these days; many organizations are entering this venture. Tour operators are leveraging our research skills in developing carefully planned and dynamic itineraries. Professional and expert tour guides, whose unique understanding of indigenous cultures and domestic landscapes, lends to the ultimate success of your tour. From both a travel agent's and a consumer's perspective, package tours provide a number of advantages, which often outweigh the disadvantages.

Advantages for the consumer:

- Cost saving and budgeting - the price of a trip when organised as a package is generally less as travel agencies bulk buy their package deals and therefore can sell the tours at a lower and more competitive rate. This is an instant cost saving benefit for the consumer, as the discount travel agencies receive is generally passed on to the consumer. Also, as the tour often includes all meals or trips for example, this reduces any uncertainty about the additional costs and allows the consumer to budget properly for costs associated with their travel. For example, if airport pick-ups or taxi transfers are pre-booked and paid for beforehand there is no potentially expensive surprise when travelling to the accommodation on arrival at the destination.
- Responsibility is on the operator - the lack of responsibility on the traveller is an advantage. If something goes wrong, e.g. a flight is delayed, resulting in the traveller missing a connecting flight, it is not the traveller's responsibility to arrange a new ticket. The responsibility lies with the airline or tour operator. In a certain respect, travellers can relax knowing if something goes wrong, someone else is there to solve the problem.
- Convenience and time-saving - this is definitely the most convenient way to arranging a vacation or tour. The travel agency deals with all the arrangements relating to airlines, hotels, transfers directly through the tour provider. This saves the consumer the effort and the time of contacting each company/service individually.
- Social - this is frequently a main reason why people may opt to travel on a package tour. The chances of social interaction are higher, allowing the fostering of short or long term friendships. People regularly choose a tour which ensures they are socialising with people of a similar age, for example, young people who like to party may opt for an 18-30 party group tour, some adults may choose to stay in accommodation which caters to the needs of children and will opt for a family tour or some people may choose to go on adult only tours to avoid children completely!

- - Quality of service - tour operators (those who provide the travel agency with the tour package) spend a great deal of time assessing the airlines, hotels, sight-seeing operators etc, which they use to make up the tour package. By doing so they ensure a high standard of quality and the consumer can have peace of mind. Tour companies are eager to meet their own business needs and so they ensure that the most frequented areas of interest (cultural or geographical) are included in their tour, thus meeting the needs of the consumer.

Advantages for the travel agent:

- - Agent commission - travel agents normally receive 10% commission on all tours they confirm. Clearly the financial incentive means travel agencies find it extremely advantageous to sell tour packages and not solely flights and/ or accommodation.
- - Savings in time and cost – in order for a travel agent to put together all the components of a package tour, this would take extensive communication with the different service providers, initially to check rates and availability and then to send through deposits and secure bookings. By using a tour provider, the travel agent only needs to makes one call, send one email or use an online booking system once to confirm the tour package. Clearly this saves a great deal of time, freeing up the agent to work for other consumers, thus increasing sales and commission.
- - Wide variety of package tours available - this means the travel agent can always make suggestions on tours which match the needs of the consumer. The high number of very different packages available allows people with possibly lower budgets to still enjoy tours.
- Outstanding value in an all-inclusive trip, priced to make your travel experience affordable and elimination of any unexpected additional trip costs. Camaraderie, companionship and unique insights derived from the make up and size of our tour groups
 - Information on and interpretation of destinations.
 - Facilitation of Business and Political Access.
 - Business and Legal Advisory Services.
 - Market Research
 - Operational Support.
 - Saving of time
 - Low prices
 - Help the tourist to solve their problems.

Limitations of Tour Package

- Control - travel agents have little or no say over the tour operator's choice of services, restaurants, accommodation or attractions included in a tour

package. As a result they must ensure they carefully choose the correct package which provides a high standard of quality, or is the most appropriate for the particular market. Also the business of tour packages and the number of tour providers is vast. This makes is very difficult for all travel agents to become and remain knowledgeable of all the available tour 'products' and so extensive time must be spent researching choices and selecting the best one for the consumer.

- The saving in time and money a travel agent saves a consumer is invaluable. Contacts in the industry regarding reservations and availability then acquiring the best prices to suit an individual cannot be overlooked when considering travelling.
- Travel agencies receive 10% commission on most packaged tours; however if the agency has a preferred product arrangement with a certain company this amount could be higher. As a commission is taken out before forwarding the final payment to the tour operator, the agency is able to receive the reward for its effort without delay.
- Tour operators and wholesalers often reserve the right to alter their itineraries for various reasons such as weather, strikes or the outbreak of fighting in a particular area. Any price changes that might occur prior to departure are likely to be passed on the client
- Inflexibility - when a traveller purchases a tour they commit to follow the itinerary, flight schedule and accommodation arrangements. Generally they are unable to change or reschedule their tour and whilst on the tour they cannot change their plans as they wish. For example, they must be at a point of pick-up at a certain time and if they are not there they delay the rest of the tour (if they are booked onto a group tour that may create problems and possibly complaints from other travellers). Also, if travellers have any special requirements, again for example, dietary requirements, but they are out camping in the bush overnight, the tour provider may not be able to meet their needs but substituting the food provided.
- It is the responsibility of the travel agent at the time of booking to ensure all possible issues are raised and the traveller's needs are addressed due to the inflexible nature of a tour package.
- Partners have not got as much control over the quality of the total product.
- Package may increase the logistics required to handle a client.
- Packages may increase the potential for things to go wrong, as more players are involved in the package.
- Packages may create client volume that a partner does not have the capacity to handle.
- Package may create the feeling of inflexibility among customers, since most packages have predetermined components and often have pre-determined dates.

Check your progress- 3

Answer the following questions.

- 1.Explain advantages Tour Package
- 2.Describe disadvantages tour package ,

Check your answer with the one given at the end of the unit.

9.5 Summary

It is clear that tour package is the total tourism product designed and offered to the tourists. It covers various types of services reigning from the pre-departure to the post arrival. In this lesson we learnt the basic concept of tour package its types and factors affecting on the tour packages. In the next lesson we will discuss the concept of tour itinerary preparation and tour costing and pricing. This will help us to develop an understanding about the tour package and we will be able to design and develop new tour package as per the tourist's requirements as well as per market demand.

Answer to Check Your Progress

Check Your Progress - 1

- 1) See sec. 1.2
- 2) See sec. 1.2

Check Your Progress - 2

- 1) See sec. 1.3.
- 2) See sec. 1.3.

Check Your Progress - 3

- 1) See sec. 1.4
- 2) See sec. 1.4

9.6 Glossary

- **Educational Tour** - A tour designed around some educational activity such as studying Renaissance art.
- **Escorted Tour** - A prearranged travel program, usually for a group, escorted by a courier. In a fully-conducted tour, escort and/or guide service is provided throughout; 2) A sightseeing program conducted by a guide, such as a city tour.
- **Fam Tour** - Familiarization tour for travel agents or journalists planned and executed by a destination or region, usually in cooperation with an international airline.
- **Group Tour** - A prearranged, prepaid travel program for a group usually including transportation, accommodations, attraction admissions, and meals (see also Packaged Tour).

- **Inclusive Tour** - A tour in which specific elements - airfare, hotels, transfers, etc., are offered for a flat rate. An inclusive tour does not necessarily cover all costs.
- **Independent Tour** - An unescorted tour sold through agents to individuals. For one price the client receives air travel, a hotel room, attraction admissions, and typically a car rental.

9.7 Review Questions

- Explain the meaning and definition Tour package.
- List the importance of tour package.
- Describe various types of tour package with examples.
- Identify the factors affecting on tour package and illustrate them.

9.8 Suggested Readings

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UNIT 10: ELEMENTS AND STEPS INVOLVED IN FORMULATION STANDARD TOUR PACKAGE

Structure

- 10.0 Objectives
- 10.1 Introduction
- 10.2 What is a tour Package?
- 10.3 Elements of a standard tour Package
- 10.4 Steps involved in formulation standard tour Package
- 10.5 Summary
- 10.6 Glossary
- 10.7 Review Questions
- 10.8 Suggested Readings

10.0 Objectives

After reading this unit, you will be able to:

- Describe the elements standard tour Package
- Explain the Steps involved in formulation standard tour Package

10.1 Introduction

In the previous unit we discussed tour package concept and meaning. Now the students are familiar with the tour package concept and meaning. They are also introduced with the significance and limitations of tour package. Now our focus is to develop an understanding on what should be included in a standard tour package and how a tour package is developed.

10.2 What is a tour Package

A pre-planned, organized travel experience consisting of several and separate elements operated over a fixed itinerary and time frame. These programs may encompass a wide spectrum of interests, events and activities but must, by regulatory requirement, contain at least one night's confirmed accommodation any two of the following components:

- Air transportation
- Surface transportation
- Local transfers
- Car or recreation vehicle rental
- Sightseeing or guide services
- Meals and/or entertainment

Small tourism businesses often partner with other local services to create a more complete product. An example of this would be the canoe-guiding business that combines its service with a hotel to form a package.

The same tourism business may instead sell its service to a tour operator, thus becoming a supplier to, and part of, the tour operator's package. For example, a sea-kayaking business could be approached by a van-tour company that wants to include sea-kayaking in its brochure. The sea-kayaking company agrees and becomes part of the van-tour company's package.

Independent business operators from around the Northwest Territory may offer one component or service for sale to tour operators, thereby becoming a "supplier" to a tour operator. For example, an amateur live-stage theatre in Yellowknife may sell evening show tickets to a tour operator (FIT) selling Art Tours. A professional tour operator offers a variety of tours (comprised of many products and services) to more than one market. Tour operators are always seeking new products and services to include in their packages.

10.3 Elements standard tour Package

What should be a part or included in a standard tour package still a debatable issue. Generally, the elements or components of a tour package are based on the tourists likings or vary from company from company, market to , market and destination to destination. Packages may include a wide variety of components, and vary according to a key element or theme. Components may include:

- Transportation to or within the destination area (flights, vehicle or bicycle rental; van, boat or bus transport).
- Accommodations en route or at the destination (hotel, motel, bed and breakfast, cottage, campground).
- Meals at or en route to the destination (bed and breakfast plan, all meals included, meal vouchers at a variety of restaurants).
- Activities or entertainment, which may be the main reason for the package or be secondary to the tour (adventure, recreational or educational activities; workshops or conventions; visits to museums or galleries; evening slide presentations; sightseeing).
- Mementoes or souvenirs (T-shirts, photos of the client participating in an activity, gifts of local arts or crafts).
- Related services (interpreters, translators, guides, instructors, equipment rental or sale, equipment service, welcome reception, baggage handling).
- Extra and/or creative elements (photo service and film delivery, self-help coffee, discount coupons from local gift stores).

POTENTIAL PARTNERS IN PACKAGING

- Restaurants/Food & Beverage Services
- Accommodations
- Transportation Services
- Packager/Wholesaler

- Attractions
- Entertainment
- Special Events Festivals / Conferences / Adventure Tourism & Recreation

DISTRIBUTION OF TOUR PACKAGES

- Tourist operators
- Local Wholesalers
- Target Market Wholesalers
- Consumers
- Retail Travel Agencies

TRAVEL INDUSTRY TERMS OF REFERENCE

The benefits of tourism development are substantial with the opportunities to create new and lasting employment, supported by increased revenue generation, being the principal rewards. Tourism does not happen by accident and requires a number of elements to be brought together to formulate a coordinated and planned approach.

- Public Bodies
- Local Authorities
- Government Agencies
- Travel Trade
- Private Sector

The private sector providing the leading and critical component. As a global industry, the need for a common language is required.

- **TOUR OPERATOR:** The individual who runs his or her operation such as a river cruise or town tour. Assumes full responsibility for the day to day operation of the attraction
- **RECEPTIVE OPERATOR:** The travel industry principal who co-ordinates and contracts for the variety of services involved in the tour package, In general, these organizations are located in the region within which the programs operate and assume the role of BROKER between the product supplier (Tour Operator) and the external industry sales outlets.
- **TOUR WHOLESALE:** The tour wholesaler plans, packages and promotes the sale of the product in its region of operation. Traditionally, the wholesaler markets its offerings through retail travel agents by means of a brochure and pays a commission to the selling agency
- **TRAVEL AGENT:** A travel agency sells a multitude of travel services to its clientele. It acts as a middle man between the supplier and the individual traveler.

Check your progress-1

Answer the following questions.

1. Define the concept of tour

2. Identify elements in a standard tour package

Check your answer with the one given at the end of the unit

10.4 Steps involved in formulation standard tour Package

Over the years, the functions of tour manufacturers have diversified considerably. Obviously, the scope, pattern, structure and size of tour operation have increased manifold.

Today, tour operators are faced with intense international pressure in the form of competition and to cope with that they are to design and develop tour packages to meet the requirements of the ever demanding and sophisticated consumers.

Indeed, they must have a good grasp and knowledge of the tourist generating market and of the quality-price ratio of the packages they plan to introduce.

Many tour operators simply feel that they cannot design/plan tours because they do not have adequate knowledge, skills, expertise and enough 'something' to accomplish market requirements. However, if they approach it in a systematic, scientific and businesslike manner, can plan, design and operate tours both international and domestic.

Designing and developing tours, working with retail travel agencies, and vendors/ principal suppliers, formulating effective and extensive marketing plans, determining cost and price, operating and managing a tour, dealing with travel documents and legal formalities, handling the finance are the activities that are not easy to be handled rather involve commitment, determination, farsightedness on the one hand, and a great degree of risk, on the other.

Thus, the process of developing and planning a tour package and thereby satisfying the tourists can be conceived as a series of stages starting with market research and lasting with actual operation of a tour.

Stages of development:

- research and planning, eg new/repeat destinations, the competition, forecasting
- contracting, eg accommodation, transport
- costing
- brochure production
- loading products onto the reservation system
- package holiday goes on sale
- marketing
- pre-season and resort preparation, eg recruitment and training of resort staff, local contracting, eg transfers, excursions
- customers go on holiday
- analysis of sales, feedback from customers and resort staff.
- Time scale of development

Stages of Developing and Planning a Tour Package

1. Research – Destination and Market: The main object of tour packaging research is to analyze and understand the key elements associated with a particular tourist market and destination. Generally, many tour operators find that it is very difficult to arrange all things for all people. Conceptually, a tour operator undertakes the following steps before entering the tourism market as such:

- i. Identification of economic, political, social and climatic factors that influence the future development of package tours;
- ii. The target market, when the target market is small the tour operator must obtain a large percentage to make a tour successful, but if the market is large he tries to capture smaller percentage;
- iii. Making the tour to meet the exact needs of the target market;
- iv. Identification of key destinations and a comparative study of alternative destinations;
- v. Approaching the suppliers;
- vi. Making the policy decisions.

Basically, the positive progressive approach to be adopted by tour operators is based upon researching both tour ingredients and the market i.e. the clientele, competition and tourist resources at the destination area.

Therefore, it is certainly not to suggest that one should not enter the tour market but rather to stress the importance of undertaking marketing research prior to investing amount and time on a tour that the study would have shown to be unprofitable or unpromising.

2. Tour Itinerary Development: Once the study as regards the destination and the target market has been conducted, the second phase in the developmental process involves working out an effective tour itinerary. Generally, the new tour operators undertake ‘familiarization tour’ and after successful operation, they develop an itinerary. The itinerary is a summarized tour programme, which is designed to identify the origin points, destinations, en route points, accommodation, transportation, sightseeing activities and other services. Moreover, an itinerary shows the sequence of various tour ingredients and provides essential information such as assembling point, departure point, date of departure and duration of tour, legal requirements, features of destinations, optional activities, meal and perhaps more than these. Thus, itinerary development has become the crux and /or central point for the success a tour company.

3. Negotiations with Tourism Suppliers/Vendors: Once the itinerary is finalized, the next step is to negotiate with prospective vendors. The tour planner works with many vendors depending upon the nature and size of the tour. The major ones are airlines, lodging companies, transport operators, car rentals, ground operators, sightseeing vendors and so forth. A tour planner has an option to negotiate with air carrier directly or through a travel agency. If the tour

company has a long history of operating large number of inclusive air tours, the tour planner will usually be better placed to negotiate a better price and better terms/conditions than the tour planner/company could obtain through travel agency. Travel agencies buy considerably more airline seats from airlines than tour operators especially, small scale. Practically, a tour company works on several air tours and purchases a substantial number of air carrier seats, the tour planner is in a position to meet with airline's marketing executives and negotiate future tour group fares and ticketing. Therefore, any tour company wishing to obtain 'group' rates must abide by all rules and conditions (formal) in order to qualify for such rates. Further, the negotiations concerning various services and concessions from carriers will depend upon how badly the airline needs to have the seats filled.

Hotel negotiations are generally more informal than in case of air carriers. Negotiations with lodging properties should be initiated on an appointment basis, meeting with top executives in each property if at all possible. It is suggested that the negotiated arrangements agreed upon through discussions with property executives be detailed immediately after each meeting and the tour planner must strike a balance in obtaining quality accommodation at a price that is affordable for the target market being solicited for participation in the tour. It is always better if the executive with whom the negotiation is undertaken agrees to sign a binding contract with a penalty clause included in case the hotel fails to provide stated services and facilities.

Further, a tour operator also negotiates with other vendors such as ground operators, restaurants, transport operators, sightseeing vendors, insurance companies, banking companies, cruise organizations and even others who are indirectly dealing with tourist services, which are the part of a tour package.

4. Costing of a Package Tour: The concept of 'tour cost' is focal to understanding the connotation and practices of tour management in determining the monetary value of a tour package. In simple terms, 'cost' means the total expenses incurred to change the shape of individual ingredients into a tour package. As a general rule, the elements that make up the total cost of a tour package can be broken into various categories as, air travel cost, accommodation cost, local arrangement cost, payroll cost, research cost, marketing cost and other expenses.

Further, the cost sheet is designed to show the total cost/cost structure along with the break up of individual cost elements. It gives an idea how the profit margin is to be fixed.

Till today, there is no specific costing approach which is used in tour operator industry. However, as per the prevailing costing practices, one can visualize the following step-by-step procedure widely used in the tour operator industry. The costing process involves several steps. Even though, these steps are not standard or generalized ones but can be changed/modified to meet the individual needs of the tour company. However, it is suggested that, new tour operator

must adopt step-by-step approach of costing a tour package. Because the cost is the basis for the determination of 'right' amount of profit and so is a biggest challenge for the tour planner.

5. Tour Pricing: After costing of a package tour, tour planner determines exchange rates, estimates future selling prices and finalizes tour prices. The tour planner has to finalize price structure some ten months or more before the departure of a tour. Therefore, apart from the usual hazards of determining the tour price in advance, tour operators must evaluate the financial risks such as foreign exchange, for payment of airlines, hotels, and other destination agencies. The tour price is not solely determined in terms of the cost but also on the basis of expected goals such as Rate of return, Market share (both domestic and international) and Price competitiveness of the tour package.

Tour pricing is a very complex decision especially in view of the facts like the degree and intensity of linkages, the nature of tour ingredients, competitive tourism market, and problems involved in tourist demand.

Moreover, due to number of external and non-controllable factors – Government policies, climate, terrorism, inflation, competitive prices, market segments, exchange rate fluctuations and so forth.

Thereby as such no generalized tour pricing approach exists in the tour operator industry, and in actual practice, the approaches/methods adopted vary from one tour company to another.

.6. Administrative Staff: Since the tour operation business is seasonal in nature, it requires extra personnel to meet the increasing needs. Tour operators are usually clear about what they want while selecting administrative staff to perform the extra activities, may be at a particular destination or at a resort. Tour operators recruit persons with friendly and sociable personalities, organizational skills, good humour, a sense of ethics, the ability to make decisions and a love for people, places and travel. Tour managers see themselves in much the same way, but they also consider it important to oversee the whole tour, deal with problems, guide tour members in the culture and language, and generate business. Generally, the same staff come and works for the same operator every year, which reduces the need for training. Many tour operators recruit mostly reservation staff, guides, resort staff, sales representatives, international agents, and so forth on a part-time basis or at the most for a season.

7. Marketing of a Tour Package: The tour operators strategic position between the various vendors encompassing airlines, transport operators, hotels, etc. and the ability to combine the various elements of travel industry into relatively affordable and standardized tour package, have emerged as the key manipulators of tourism industry.

They play a pivotal role in determining tourist flows to a particular destination, in both developed and developing nations. This part is explained in detailed in subsequent units.

8. Developing a Tour Marketing Plan: Tour marketing plan is centred on organizational objectives. It is important to have a clear understanding of what the tour operator desires to achieve through marketing plan.

In fact, a tour company needs to understand both its product and its market before developing a marketing plan. For many tour companies, budget is the first step in the process of developing a tour marketing plan. It is normally based on a certain percentage of projected expenditures for the next year. However, the proportion varies from package to package or existing tour company to new tour company.

To decide on the tour marketing strategies is perhaps the most complicated stage in the planning process. The working out of an appropriate strategy is directly related to the nature and type of the tour i.e., which strategy is most befitting for inbound tours, outbound tours, or incentive tours is based on its ability to provide a substantial return on investment. Some strategies are used for only a specific season/ destination while some strategies will be undertaken on a regular basis and reviewed or monitored periodically or at regular intervals of time. After identifying marketing strategies, tour operator develops annual media plan, advertising plan, sales plan, direct mail plan, and telemarketing plan. Practically, tour operator develops marketing plans in a number of ways namely, annual marketing plan i.e. blueprint for the whole year and individual tour marketing plan.

It is of utmost significance that all marketing plan components need to be coordinated in a manner that they fit together easily and effectively and, consequently can be implemented economically.

9. Marketing Inbound and Outbound Tours: Generally, the international tour marketing is relatively more complex and difficult than domestic tour marketing. International tour market is composed mainly of tours organized and planned in another country and operated in other countries. Although the tour components in different types of tours are different but the tour marketing is similar to much extent. As an inbound tour operator handles these tours in different countries/destinations. Interestingly, obtaining contracts to handle inbound tours is quite different from handling outbound tours. For outbound tours, the tour operator usually is required to approach each and every tour member to sell its product (package), directly or through travel agencies. In many cases a tour operator undertakes substantial contracting with inbound tour operators or ground operators to provide services as prescribed in the tour programme.

However, for marketing inbound tours, a tour operator procures lists of those tour companies and travel agencies which are interested in travel business from the destinations served by the inbound tour operators.

This is generally achieved through participation in international meets, marts, conferences and other associations. Practically, these events are so planned that international tour companies and travel agencies may purchase from the different

country based inbound tour operators those travel ingredients required in order to operate their tours during the coming years.

Thus, it is clear that tour operator will either offer his tours directly to the market or sell them through travel agencies. Whichever method of distribution he chooses, sales will hinge on products being presented in brochures designed by the tour operators and marketing techniques as well as promotional campaigns being applied.

10. Tour Operator's Brochures: The tour operator's vital marketing tool is its tour brochure which contains comprehensive information to persuade and motivate potential holiday makers to purchase tourist products/services.

Middleton (1988) demonstrates that tour marketing relies on brochures to a much greater extent than other forms of consumer marketing.

It presents the product 'stock' at the retail level but, at the time of sale, the total tourism product is no more than an idea – the brochure establishes expectation of quality, value for money, product image and status. Holloway (1992) lists the information that should be included in a tour operator's brochure.

- Name of tour company responsible for tour;
- Transport mode(s) – carrier name, aircraft type and use of scheduled or charter services;
- Details of destinations, itinerary and travel time;
- Duration of tour – nights and days;
- Description of destinations;
- Type of accommodation and meals;
- Services of ground operators;
- Price;
- Extra charges clearly indicated;
- Details of special arrangements and facilities;
- Full booking conditions including cancellation terms;
- Any optional or compulsory insurance cover;
- Documentation required for travel to the destinations featured; and
- Any health hazards or inoculation recommended.

Thus, the tour brochure consists of several sections and sub-sections. The brochure cover shows the title, date, theme, tour code, and name of the tour company.

The inside pages/flaps highlight the tour features, a brief itinerary, modes of transportation, types of accommodation, payments, unique appeal of destination(s), payment conditions, insurance, currency, documents, internet address, website(s) and also contains a self-mail flag/page on which potential tourists may fill in tour registration information in order to sign up for the tour.

The large tour companies, especially in UK, US, India, Germany, Japan, and France print over one thousand copies of their tour brochures and distributes through retail travel agencies/ground operators, and their own retail outlets.

Sometimes the brochures are sent directly to the past clients and others who have been identified by market research, particularly corporate houses. However, tour operators must make an appropriate decision in this context, because about half of all tour brochures are eventually thrown away without being seen by the public/ corporate houses.

Therefore, wastage can be controlled or minimized by establishing accurate standards/norms. Thus, it is suggested that before distribution of tour brochures, sales managers must categorise their agents and clients. Definitely, it will prove instrumental in cutting down waste as well as costs.

In addition to tour brochures, tour operators often undertake various promotional programmes to market tour packages such as personal selling, sales promotion and advertising campaigns.

Tour promotion is the blend of communication activities designed and carried out to influence those clientele size on whom the tour operator's sales depend both in the short term and long-term. It is not sufficient to influence target markets only but also travel agents, suppliers, travel writers and journalists, destination companies, and Governments. Basically, the tour promotion is substantially different than other travel products/services because of variety of specialization in tour operation industry.

Therefore, a tour company must define marketing/promotion objectives very clearly to design and practice most effective promotional tools/techniques.

In actual practice, tour companies employ the following promotional techniques to create awareness and building brand image of tour packages:

- Advertising;
- Direct Mail;
- Sales Promotion;
- Public Relations;
- Personal Selling;
- Literature;
- Sponsorship;
- Exhibitions;
- Travel Marts;
- Films and Video;
- Familiarization Tours;
- Telemarketing;
- Conferences and Debates etc.

Paradoxically, the promotion of tour package relies on effective communication of tour ingredients. Tour package is an amalgam of various products/services which can really be experienced only at the moment of their consumption and which cannot be systematically reproduced in an identical way. Therefore, in an increasingly competitive tourism market, it is often the access to information which ensures the success of tour marketing. For tour operators, it is extremely important to participate in Computerized Reservation Networks and in

Global Distribution Systems. Today, tour companies have access to information on all air carriers, hotels and related products/services and can distribute their packages through a global distribution system network.

GDS terminals provide immediate access to all the suppliers which have opted to market their products through this network. GDS has, therefore, become extremely significant in the sale of air and other tour packages. Unfortunately, GDS has not been put to use by many tour operators especially small scale/ground operators and domestic operators because of being poorly equipped. They are still using the traditional methods. Many tour companies have designed effective tour reservations system to put a tour package into operation. Generally, tour operators have employed several methods to handle tour reservations. New and small tour operators tend to work with answering services and usually consider direct reservation from public through telephone, and through agency's computer reservation system.

11. Operation and Execution of a Tour: The success of a tour operator depends on how efficiently it operates a tour. This phase is very crucial and has capacity to convert promises into realities. So utmost care has to be taken to realize whatever had been promised in the package tour to offer to tourists. An experienced tour operator develops tour manual for tour manager, tour escort, tour guide, Destination Company and for other services to provide an understanding of how the tour company wants to operate and handle tour. A tour manual provides procedures and policies to conduct tours in more professional manner and the way in which procedures should be implemented as the tour progresses from beginning to end.

12. Post Tour Management: This phase is relatively more crucial, which involves preparation of several reports and their evaluation. In fact, it reveals the success of the tour, where tour planner should go for comparative analysis of the perceived goals, actual achievement and assessing the tourist satisfaction level, the financial gains, and the effectiveness of the tour packages. Many tour companies have a policy to obtain tour manager's perceptions regarding what tour participants (members) liked the most about the trip and what they disliked. Detailed vendor reports are often required to evaluate the services rendered and products provided by these vendors. These reports are evaluated and reviewed to identify real or potential problems. Generally, tour company decrees that if there were vendor problems which were serious enough to consider making a change, tour manager should expedite the reports so that tour planner may add the right ingredients in the next tour package. Normally, each evaluation response is statistically analysed to calculate a mean average in determining an overall tour member's opinion. Other statistical tools may, however, be used to obtain more accurate results. These findings give an idea of how the next tour is to be planned, designed and marketed.

Check your progress- 3

Answer the following questions.

1. What components to be included in a tour package?

2. What are the suppliers in tour operation?

Check your answer with the one given at the end of the unit

10.5 Summary

It is clear that a tour package provides basic, timely accurate and comparable information to the tourists. . In this unit we learnt the tour designing process steps. No doubt, these steps vary from tour to tour and company to company, however provide comprehensive information for development and designing of tour package.

Answer to Check Your Progress

Check Your Progress - 1

1) See sec. 10.3

2) See sec. 10.3

Check Your Progress - 2

1) See sec. 10.4

2) See sub sec. 10.4

10.6 Glossary

- **Escorted Tour** - A prearranged travel program, usually for a group, escorted by a courier. In a fully-conducted tour, escort and/or guide service is provided throughout; 2) A sightseeing program conducted by a guide, such as a city tour.
 - **Fam Tour** - Familiarization tour for travel agents or journalists planned and executed by a destination or region, usually in cooperation with an international airline.
 - **Group Tour** - A prearranged, prepaid travel program for a group usually including transportation, accommodations, attraction admissions, and meals (see also Packaged Tour).
 - **Accommodation Capacity**: The measure of accommodation stock at a defined destination. May be given by various different measures: e.g. number of establishments; number of main units within an establishment (e.g. rooms, caravan stances); capacity in terms of residents (e.g. bedspaces).
 - **Costing**: the process of itemizing and calculating all costs the tour operator will pay on a given tour. Costing is usually the function of the operations manager.
 - **Cost-plus pricing**: A method of pricing where an amount, to cover profit, is added to costs to establish the selling price, this is an internally orientated pricing method.
-

- **Suppliers:** Individuals, companies or other organisations which provide goods or services to a recognisable customer or consumer.
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10.7 Review Questions

- Illustrate various steps involved in a standard tour package
 - Discuss the Tour Research in the context adventure tour packages.
 - As a tour planner, how would you negotiate with the hoteliers? List the points.
 - “Today, tour operation industry has become competitive” in the light, describe your strategy to develop tour package.
 - Explain Negotiation with Travel Vendors i.e. airlines and cruise companies.
-

10.8 Suggested Reading

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UNIT 11: COSTING AND PRICING OF TOUR PACKAGES - COMPLETION ANALYSIS AND STRATEGIC COSTING

Structure

- 11.0 Objectives
- 11.1 Introduction
- 11.2 costing and Pricing- Concepts and meaning
- 11.3 Key pricing factors in tour pricing
- 11.4 Competitive Pricing
- 11.5 Completion analysis
- 11.6 Strategic costing
- 11.7 Summary
- 11.8 Glossary
- 11.9 Review Questions
- 11.10 Suggested Readings

11.0 Objectives

After reading this unit, you will be able to:

- Describe the meaning and concept tour costing & pricing ;
- Explain the Key pricing factors in tour pricing
- Describe competitive Pricing,
- Discuss the strategic costing

11.1 Introduction

Tour packages involve creating a complete experience. This involves combining two or more travel components, like accommodations, meals, attractions or guides, to be offered together at one inclusive price. Individual businesses in your community may come together to create a package that benefits each of their entities. Or, one business may expand to offer a variety of services that are marketed as a package under one retailer. Consumers often enjoy package deals because they offer “one stop shopping” to plan a whole vacation with one arrangement and one payment. Customers not only save time and frustration, but packages are often designed to be more economical than purchasing each component of the trip separately. However, just because it is more economical for the consumer doesn't mean the retailer is losing anything. Packaging adds value to existing products and expands interest in these popular products. Packages are also useful in attracting visitors during times when

tourism demands are low. Because businesses can often purchase package components at wholesale prices, they can mark the price up for a profit, but still offer a more competitive price to customers. Tailoring package deals to meet certain audiences' needs and marketing these specific packages to niche markets is likely to return higher profits if properly marketed. In addition, when businesses come together to package tourism deals, each business greatly cuts marketing costs by splitting advertising, public relations, and research costs. This unit develops an understanding of tour costing and pricing.

11.2 Costing and pricing - Concepts and Meaning

When we think about cost, we think only the cost/ expenses incurred to produce a product. However, it is the amount which is the base for determination of price of a tour product. In fact, it is the amount which is largely depends on the consumer's ability to pay for a particular product / service. Thus, the concept of net value assessment by a customer depends upon the costs he or she may have to bear, it is important to understand the costs associated with a service like tourism. There are several important costs that a potential tourist may incur in order to avail/ consume tourism product. These may be:

i) Monetary Cost: this involves the actual rupee value spent on getting benefit of tourism.

ii) Time: Time is a valuable commodity for most people, one which always has a fixed up per limit for each individual. In addition spending time for tourism involves an opportunity cost i.e. cost of the value lost had the time spent in tourism been spent in alternative gainful activities.

iii) Physical Effort: To quite a lot of people, physical effort entailed in getting out of their established life patterns to travel and be weary, is a substantial cost.

iv) Sensory Costs: Travelling in addition to the pleasure associated has discomforts owing to noise and pollution, excessive climate vagaries, uncomfortable modes of travel, in transit delays, unpleasant tastes, smells and sometime even unappealing environment. Sometimes past experience with some of these sensory costs may actively act as an inhibitor of purchase or significantly lower the net value of the package to the customer.

v) Psychic costs: sometimes attached to the use of a service. These could be unfavourable perceptions, insecurities about certain destinations or simply a fear of taking on the uncertain.

The key principle of costing is to calculate the true cost of a product or service while pricing is determined by demand, market conditions and factors which influence pricing such as advertising, promotional activity and the ability to differentiate from competitive or alternative products and services.

Costing is based on the simple principle of recovering cost. Cost are classified as Variable or Fixed.

Variable costs are those costs which vary in direct proportion to output. For every unit of output there is a clear unit of input - usually material and labour. Fixed costs are those that exist regardless of the level of output or activity. These will include rent and rates, insurance etc. For costing to be effective there must be a clear and unambiguous understanding of the cost structure of the business and what is actually happening in the business, ie, levels of productivity, material yield, breakdowns etc.

Activity Based Costing has been developed to cater for these variables. The principles of ABC are straight forward. The overhead is allocated according to the amount of activity which can be attributed to each product. It can be simplified by looking at product groups as common areas of allocation.

Marginal Costing is another area which is important, particularly when faced with competitive pricing considerations. Once a level of sales has been achieved which recovers all the fixed costs for the period each additional unit of sale "recovers" the full gross margin value. Businesses use this to either drive "premium" profit or to enable aggressive discounting. Effectively this point is reached when sales pass the break even point. Marginal costing as a means of driving pricing policy should be approached with caution. Sales fluctuate over time and if a discount is applied too soon losses can be generated at a rapid rate. Good financial control throughout the business is crucial.

What Is a Price?

In the narrowest sense, **price** is the amount of money charged for a product or a service. More broadly, price is the sum of all the values that customers give up to gain the benefits of having or using a product or service. Historically, price has been the major factor affecting buyer choice. In recent decades, non-price factors have gained increasing importance. However, price still remains one of the most important elements that determines a firm's market share and profitability. Price is the only element in the marketing mix that produces revenue; all other elements represent costs. Price is also one of the most flexible marketing mix elements. Unlike product features and channel commitments, prices can be changed quickly. At the same time, pricing is the number-one problem facing many marketing executives, and many companies do not handle pricing well. Some managers view pricing as a big headache, preferring instead to focus on other marketing mix elements. However, smart managers treat pricing as a key strategic tool for creating and capturing customer value. Prices have a direct impact on a firm's bottom line. A small percentage improvement in price can generate a large percentage increase in profitability. More importantly, as part of a company's overall value proposition, price plays a key role in creating customer value and building customer relationships.

The first principle is to understand the true costs of the business and what factors influence these costs. If the product or service is part of an existing

market structure then price which can be charged is partly driven by competitive pressures. In commodity markets price is determined almost exclusively by market conditions and competitive pressures. Small premiums can be justified by high quality and outstanding customer service. The focus in such businesses operating in mature markets is to maintain the highest standards of quality and service for the chosen price points and then attack internal costs and efficiencies to achieve the lowest possible cost base. With a new product or service pricing becomes more problematic particularly if there are no competitive pressures. In these situations it is important that there is a clear vision and strategy for the future which anticipates the real costs of launching, supporting and developing the product or service and looks realistically at the product life cycle. Bear in mind that product life cycle are generally getting shorter as the pace of technological change accelerates and customer expectations develop.

11.3 Key pricing factors in tour pricing

In determining the rate for your product, you need to consider your operating costs, profit margin and distribution network costs (often referred to as commissions).

- Operating costs
- Operating costs include both fixed and variable costs.
- Fixed costs

These are costs that are independent of output. They remain the same regardless of level of sales. Fixed costs include:

- Rent;
- buildings;
- Machinery;
- And insurances.

Variable costs: These are costs that vary with output. Generally variable costs increase at a constant rate relative to labour and capital. Variable costs include:

- Wages;
- Gas;
- Electricity;
- Cleaning, maintenance, repairs;
- Materials used in production, etc.
- Stock, including stationery, linen, food, petrol, machinery and uniforms;
- Bank fees;
- and marketing including research, advertisements, promotions, brochures, consumer or trade events, familiarisations for industry or media and travel costs.

Profit margin: Be realistic when calculating your costs to ensure you obtain a profit while retaining a competitive edge. It is important to check what your

competitors are offering and determine which of your products can sustain a higher profit margin.

Distribution network costs: The distribution network consists of retail travel agents, domestic and overseas wholesalers and inbound tourism operators (ITOs). Your distribution network assists in distributing your product and raising your profile to consumers. Some operators may choose to sell their product directly to consumers, however, using a distribution network to sell a product can improve sales and profitability. Working with distribution partners will incur costs, known as commissions. Commissions are the fees paid to your partners to distribute and sell your product. This is their income, which pays for the services they provide. These are not upfront costs, but costs incurred after a sale is made. To include your product in their brochure, some distributors charge a fee or ask for a marketing contribution towards the brochure production costs. Be sure to find out if this is a requirement before agreeing to any brochure inclusion, and ensure that it will be an effective return on investment for your company.

Competitive pricing

Discounted prices: Discounts are often applied in the off season or to assist with yield management and can also be useful in gaining immediate business on websites such as Usually, discounted pricing does not differentiate a product from the competition – as it can be quickly matched by competitors. Be cautious not to devalue your business by regularly discounting. This is also called dynamic pricing.

Value-adding: Value-adding is adding features to your product that enhance the perceived value. In comparison to discounting, value-adding can create a competitive edge and attract a greater market share. It can also help to prevent business fluctuations for products subject to regular peaks and troughs.

Examples of product value-adding are:

- A purchase incentive, such as champagne on arrival or complimentary parking;
- A package, such as three nights accommodation including tickets to a particular attraction;
- And bundling your products with others in the region to offer an experience.

Package pricing: The following pricing methods are applied to packages and the most appropriate method depends on the type of product being sold.

Disguised pricing: Generally, discounted package components, such as accommodation, meals, entry fees, transport, are presented as one upfront cost. This method disguises the exact cost of individual components and also the extent of discount provided by individual operators. In general, a minimum of three elements should be included to disguise pricing.

Visible pricing: By offering a range of activities, attractions and options with each component costed at its full price, the final package cost may be too expensive to be appealing. This can be overcome by offering a flexible package with each component priced separately and available for purchase individually.

The customer is then able to select their preferred package components according to their travel preferences and budget.

For more information on pricing, go to:

- Your local business enterprise centre:
- Your local tourist information centre or regional tourism organisation;

Pricing tips:

- Do have a totally consistent rate schedule.
- Ensure you show any seasonal variations in product and clearly identify the rates and dates for each season.
- Don't have too many rate periods as it is confusing and makes your product more difficult to sell for distributors.
- Keep a record of who you have distributed rates to, so you can update them.
- Make sure validity dates and booking conditions are stated on rate schedules. Conditions might include child rates and ages, cancellation charges, amendment charges, free of charge (FOC) policy, minimum night stays, days of operation etc.
- Guarantee your rates for the period 1 April to 31 March and have rates available up to 18 months in advance.
- Ensure commissions for all distributors are factored into the retail rate.
- Be sure of different pricing levels for different distributors and quote accordingly.

Check your progress-1

Answer the following questions.

1. What is cost?
2. What is price?
3. Explain Profit margin.

Check your answer with the one given at the end of the unit.

11.4 Competitive Pricing

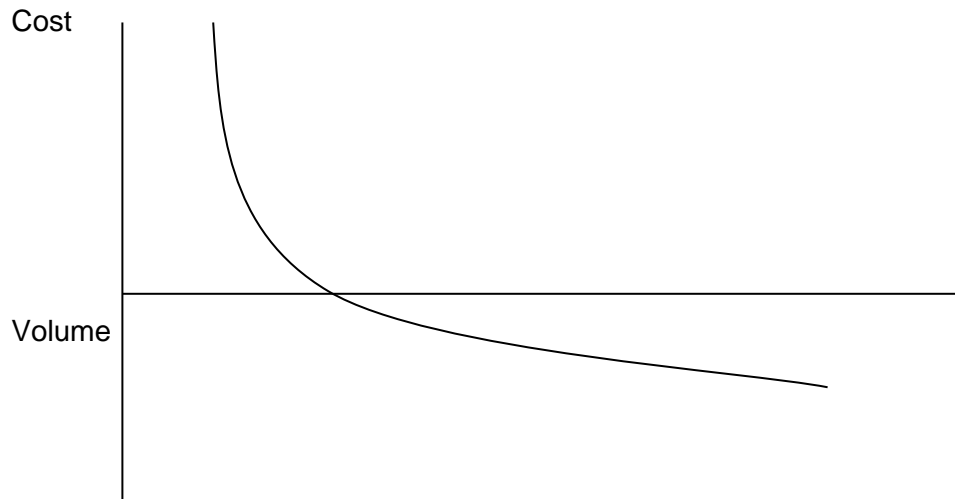
When a new product is launched on the market the pricing policy lies between the two extremes of market penetration and market skimming.

Market penetration pricing is a policy of low prices from launch in order to maximise penetration in the early stages. Short term profits are sacrificed for the sake of long term profits and market share. This policy will tend to discourage rivals from entering the market. The approach tends to shorten the initial period of the product life cycle bringing the growth and maturity stages as quickly as possible. This relates to a high elasticity of demand for the product.

The business may deliberately build excess capacity and set prices low. As demand increases the spare capacity will be used up and unit costs will fall.

There may even be scope for further price reductions as unit costs fall. Early losses (or low profits) will enable the business to dominate the market and have the lowest costs.

The above thinking is partly driven by the simple but important graphical representation:



This is another example of the vital importance of why it is so important to understand and control the cost base of the business.

Market skimming is the achievement of high unit profits very early on in the product's life.

The business charges very high prices when the product is first launched.

There is heavy expenditure on advertising and sales promotion to win customers.

As the product moves through its product life cycle - growth, maturity and decline - prices are progressively lowered. The early profit is therefore skimmed off. Skimming is suitable:

- When the product is new and different
- If demand elasticity is unknown (it is easier to reduce prices than raise them)
- High initial cash flows are important at the possible expense of long term profit maximisation
- To help to identify different market segments for the product each prepared to pay progressively lower prices.

The high initial prices may attract competitors who see the market as lucrative. The big risk comes from a competitor prepared to take the risks of market penetration which could immediately negate the premium of the skimming policy.

Between these two extremes of policy are a wide range of options. Most of these options are determined by the ability to identify clear segmentation opportunities, ie niches of the market which can be identified and targeted with a specific product offering and pricing policy.

A further consideration is evaluating the benefits of a new product to the customer. A new paint is developed for jet aircraft. The paint is lighter and

thinner than conventional paints and improves the aerodynamic qualities of the aircraft. It also lasts twice as long between applications.

At cost price the value of the product for each painting of an aircraft is £10,000.

What do you charge for it?

Bear in mind:

There is a 2% reduction in fuel cost for the aircraft.

Painting a jet takes 6 days and needs to be done at least once per year.

Would Rs. 100,000 per application be expensive or cheap?

The following is an example of price elasticity of demand:

Activity from the Markets Study Guide

A supplier discovered that when it raised the prices of its products by 10% the sales of its products fell by 20%.

1. Can you calculate the price elasticity of demand for the above case?
2. Is the demand for the product elastic or inelastic with respect to its price?
3. Would the firm's revenue have increased or decreased when the product's price was raised?

11.5 Completion analysis

Competition analysis in marketing is an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of current and potential competitors. This analysis provides both an offensive and defensive strategic context to identify opportunities and threats. Profiling coalesces all of the relevant sources of competitor analysis into one framework in the support of efficient and effective strategy formulation, implementation, monitoring and adjustment. Competitor analysis is an essential component of corporate strategy. It is argued that most firms do not conduct this type of analysis systematically enough. Instead, many enterprises operate on what is called "informal impressions, conjectures, and intuition gained through the tidbits of information about competitors every manager continually receives."

As a result, traditional environmental scanning places many firms at risk of dangerous competitive blind spots due to a lack of robust competitor analysis

The strategic rationale of competitor profiling is powerfully simple. Superior knowledge of rivals offers a legitimate source of competitive advantage. The raw material of competitive advantage consists of offering superior customer value in the firm's chosen market. The definitive characteristic of customer value is the adjective, superior. Customer value is defined relative to rival offerings making competitor knowledge an intrinsic component of corporate strategy. Profiling facilitates this strategic objective in three important ways. First, profiling can reveal strategic weaknesses in rivals that the firm may exploit. Second, the proactive stance of competitor profiling will allow the firm to anticipate the strategic response of their rivals to the firm's planned strategies, the strategies of other competing firms, and changes in the environment. Third, this proactive knowledge will give the firms strategic agility. Offensive strategy can be

implemented more quickly in order to exploit opportunities and capitalize on strengths. Similarly, defensive strategy can be employed more deftly in order to counter the threat of rival firms from exploiting the firm's own weaknesses.

Clearly, those firms practicing systematic and advanced competitor profiling have a significant advantage. As such, a comprehensive profiling capability is rapidly becoming a core competence required for successful competition. An appropriate analogy is to consider this advantage as akin to having a good idea of the next move that your opponent in a chess match will make. By staying one move ahead, checkmate is one step closer. Indeed, as in chess, a good offense is the best defense in the game of business as well. A common technique is to create detailed profiles on each of your major competitors. These profiles give an in-depth description of the competitor's background, finances, products, markets, facilities, personnel, and strategies. This involves:

- **Background**
 - location of offices, plants, and online presences
 - history - key personalities, dates, events, and trends
 - ownership, corporate governance, and organizational structure
- **Financials**
 - P-E ratios, dividend policy, and profitability
 - various financial ratios, liquidity, and cash flow
 - profit growth profile; method of growth (organic or acquisitive)
- **Products**
 - products offered, depth and breadth of product line, and product portfolio balance
 - new products developed, new product success rate, and R&D strengths
 - brands, strength of brand portfolio, brand loyalty and brand awareness
 - patents and licenses
 - quality control conformance
- **Marketing**
 - segments served, market shares, customer base, growth rate, and customer loyalty
 - promotional mix, promotional budgets, advertising themes, ad agency used, sales force success rate, online promotional strategy
 - distribution channels used (direct & indirect), exclusivity agreements, alliances, and geographical coverage
 - pricing, discounts, and allowances
- **Facilities**
 - plant capacity, capacity utilization rate, age of plant, plant efficiency, capital investment
 - location, shipping logistics, and product mix by plant
- **Personnel**
 - number of employees, key employees, and skill sets
 - strength of management, and management style

- compensation, benefits, and employee morale & retention rates

- **Corporate and marketing strategies**

- objectives, mission statement, growth plans, acquisitions, and divestitures
- Marketing strategies

Thus, competition analysis involves following aspect in tour operation costing and pricing: Market Assessment, Insights and Analysis (an in-depth market understanding to achieve desired business objectives)

- Market Assessment
- Market Sizing, Share and Segmentation
- Regulatory Impact Assessment

Trade, Distribution and End-user Insights and Analysis (insights across product features / design, pricing, promotion, branding & communication)

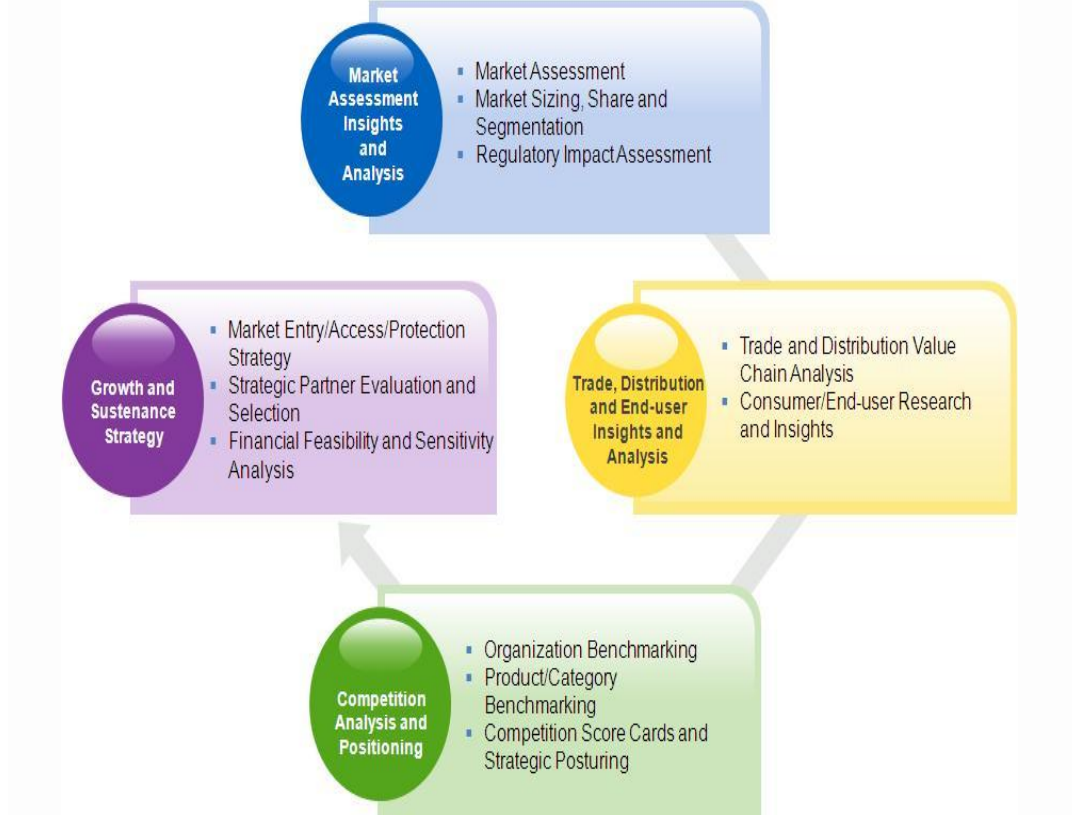
- Trade and Distribution Value Chain Analysis
- Consumer / End-user Research and Insights

Competition Analysis and positioning (benchmarking performance at a product, therapeutic category and organization level)

- Organization Benchmarking
- Product / Category Benchmarking
- Competition Score Cards and Strategic Posturing

Growth and Sustenance Strategy (business recommendations for a sustainable business and operating model (re)design)

- Market Entry / Access / Protection Strategy
- Strategic Partner Evaluation and Selection
- Financial Feasibility and Sensitivity Analysis



Check your progress- 2

Answer the following questions.

1. What competitive price?
2. Discuss competitive analysis.

Check your answer with the one given at the end of the unit

11.6 Strategic Costing

Strategic costing is a managerial use of cost information for the purpose(s) of establishing organizational strategy, controlling the success methods to achieve the strategies, and evaluating the level of success in meeting the proclaimed strategies.

In fact, strategic costing concept is widely used in modern organizations today, but unfortunately he has no invariable definition. Strategic cost describes the methods and activities used by managers in planning and control decisions on short and long term that allow increased commercial value of products and services organization and reduced costs. Managers may, for example, decisions on the amount and type of materials used and on changes in production processes and product design. Information provided by current accounting information systems help managers to take such decisions, but this information and accounting information systems is not a strategic cost management.

Strategic cost management has a wide application, it includes (but not limited to), for example, the objective of reducing ongoing costs. Planning and cost control are generally inseparable from income and capital planning. Spores to revenues and profits, for example, managers can deliberately employ additional costs for publicity and to modify certain characteristics that make the products or services of their organization, their customers, to be unique. Also, the success of business organizations and is to provide customers a good value for money, while differentiating its competitors. The strategy is just to identify how an organization can achieve this goal. Successful strategies chosen largely depend upon the effectiveness of its implementation. Management accountant can and must contribute to strategies, the establishment of necessary resources and capacities and to implement strategies selected.

Competitive advantage can be achieved by the firm in several ways, which will determine and differentiate their strategies. According to this criterion strategies companies can be: aimed at reducing costs, product differentiation oriented, focused on finding a niche market and focused on product quality. Strategic cost management (SCM - Strategic Cost Management), as a tool for competitive advantage is the combination of three main components:

1. Value chain analysis and supply chain;
2. Analysis of strategic positioning;
3. Sources of cost analysis.

There are several techniques that can support *strategic costing decisions*:

- *calculation and management of the activities* - strategic orientation of this technique lies in management activities with which it is possible to define actions aimed at obtaining a competitive advantage;
- *determining cost attributes* - such products / services as a set of attributes (features) that differentiate products and whose costs are determined, this technique can be interpreted as an externally oriented services as attributes are determined by customer requirements;
- *benchmarking* - involves the identification of best practices and organizational performance comparison with the practices aimed at improving performance, this technique aims external orientation by competitors;
- *monitoring the position of competitors* - aimed at obtaining information on competitors on sales, market share, unit costs, sales volume etc. from this information the organization can assess its position compared to major competitors;
- *costing competitors* - unlike the previous technique, costing competitors focus only on their cost structure, the main criticism of this technique the sources of information;
- *competitors on the basis of the performance assessment of a county published* -the financial statements are a source of relevant information and

the harmonization of international accounting allows for comparisons between organizations;

- *analyzing customers* - this technique considers customers or customer groups that book review sections and cover a aprieciare profit, sales or costs derived from those dealing with customer segments;
- *integrated performance measurement* - involves defining an integrated performance measurement system, which includes both financial ratios and non-financial (eg balanced scorecard);
- *life cycle cost* - aimed at calculating the total cost of the product throughout its life cycle, from conception and design to decline, it's here on a long term perspective and market-oriented accounting;
- *cost of quality* - quality is a prerequisite for market success, this technique involves the costs of prevention and management of quality assessment, and internal and external nonconformities;
- *strategic approach to calculation* - computer systems must be integrated into strategic management process, which means that they must follow permanent strategy and achieving long-term competitive advantage;
- *strategic approach to pricing* - involves using information on competitors, on their reactions to changes in prices, their elasticity, economies of scale, etc.
- *target cost system* - in this technique is using a number of external factors;
- *value chain analysis* - proposes an approach to accounting that takes account of all activities performed from conception to the marketing of product policy implications concerning the operation and efficiency savings arising from the organization's external relations with both customers and with suppliers.

Check your progress- 3

Answer the following questions.

1. What strategic cost?
2. Discuss strategic costing tools.

Check your answer with the one given at the end of the unit.

11.7 Summary

The cost of a tour package means sum of all expense incurred on the components of a tour package by the tour operator. There are different types of tour cost like accommodation, transportation, marketing, travel cost, food and beverage cost, administrative cost and miscellaneous cost.

Price is the exchange value of a product. Pricing is one of the most important decisions for marketing of a product. As mentioned earlier tourists are sensitive to price and after certain change in price, they can see for alternatives. Pricing is a difficult task when an agency

has to set it for first time. There are several internal and external factors which influences the decision of pricing. Pricing strategies vary from tour operator to tour operator.

Answer to Check Your Progress

Check Your Progress - 1

- 1) See sec. 11.2
- 2) See sec. 11.2
- 3) See sec. 11.3

Check Your Progress - 1

- 1) See sec. 11.4
- 2) See sub sec. 11.5

Check Your Progress - 1

- 1) See sec. 11.6
- 2) See sub sec. 11.6

11.8 Glossary

- **The time period.** Markets are constantly changing and consumers may adjust their buying habits over a period of time when faced with a price increase, finding substitute products or alternative suppliers. Inelastic demand may become elastic over a period of time.
- **Competitor pricing.** If a competitor keeps prices unchanged in the face of a price increase then the firm raising prices is likely to lose market share, ie demand is elastic. If a price reduction is matched by the competitors then it is likely to produce inelastic demand at lower prices.
- **Market skimming** is the achievement of high unit profits very early on in the product's life.
- **Costing competitors** - unlike the previous technique, costing competitors focus only on their cost structure, the main criticism of this technique the sources of information;
- **Benchmarking** - involves the identification of best practices and organizational performance comparison with the practices aimed at improving performance, this technique aims external orientation by competitors;

11.9 Review Questions

- Discuss the Meaning and Concept of Tour costing & pricing, also state various types of Tour costs.
- Give the costing process of Golden triangle.
- What do you mean by Pricing of a Package Tour? What are the Factors affecting tour pricing?

- What are the various pricing strategies used in Indian tour operator industry? Illustrate.
- What do you understand by “tour package promotion”? What are various channels for tour package promotion?
- How strategic costing helpful in tour pricing? Dicuss.
- What is competitive analysis? How it is useful for costing and pricing?

11.10 Suggested Readings

- Gee, Chuck and Y. Makens, Professional Travel Agency Management, Prentice Hall, New York, 1990.
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UNIT 12: MARKETING OF TOUR PACKAGES: NEED FOR PRE-ACTIVE APPROACH

Structure

- 12.0 Objectives
- 12.1 Introduction
- 12.2 Tour package marketing- Concept and meaning
- 12.3 Developing a Tour Marketing Plan/ approach
- 12.4 Summary
- 12.5 Glossary
- 12.6 Review Questions
- 12.7 Suggested Readings

12.0 Objectives

After reading this unit, you will be able to:

- Describe the meaning and concept of tour package marketing ;
- Explain the Tour Marketing Plan/ approach
- Discuss the Need for pre-active approach

12.1 Introduction

Marketing your tourism products is an essential part of the development and management of your tourism industry. To effectively market your product, it is important to be familiar with the different ways the tourism industry markets its products. Your correspondences with the media, a strong public relations campaign and your direct relationship with consumers play a large role in creating an influential approach to marketing. Advertising has a large impact on how well your product is received. But, perhaps the most important part of marketing your product is the hospitality and service you exhibit on a regular basis. This unit enlightened the students with the meaning, concept of tour package marketing. It also helps the students to identify need for pre-active approach in tour marketing.

12.2 - Tour package marketing - Concept and meaning

The tour operators strategic position between the various vendors encompassing airlines, transport operators, hotels, etc. and the ability to combine the various elements of travel industry into relatively affordable and standardized tour package, have emerged as the key manipulators of tourism industry. When tourists choose to book a package or decide to go on holiday, how do they determine which package to buy especially in view of the consumer's inability to inspect the ingredients making up the tour package prior to travel? It is the tour 'marketing' which applies much more sophisticated strategies of trying to know

what the tourist will want and satisfying the needs of the clients by means of the services rendered as well as the other customer's value satisfactions associated with planning, preparing, and experiencing his travels.

Definitions

Kotler (1988) defines marketing as 'a social and managerial process by which individuals and groups obtain what they need and want through creating and exchanging products and values with other'.

The American Marketing Association (1984) defines marketing as "the performance of business activities that direct the flow of goods and services from producer to the consumer or users".

In simple words, marketing is the creation of a demand that results in satisfying consumers and accomplishing corporate objectives. Thus, the most important aspect that should be central to any marketing definition is based not only on identifying different consumer needs, but also on delivering a tourist product/service whose experiences provide sets of satisfactions which are preferable to those of the competitors.

Tour package marketing is significantly different from the marketing of other tourism elements. This is because of the nature and types of tour packages offered by tour operators. Moreover, in the tour industry the marketing strategies that are effective and profitable for the mass tour operators, will often be substantially different than the marketing strategies adopted by tour specialists. For example marketing strategies of adventure tour operators will be different from strategies used by ground operators/or inbound tour operators. Even the marketing strategies of multiple tours involving multi-destinations will usually be different from the one day/one destination tours.

Thus, it has become imperative for a tour operator (if wants to be effective in marketing) to analyse profoundly what has been beneficial or productive for other tour companies in the same tour/similar destinations. Marketing of inclusive tours is largely the responsibility of the tour operators. The main tour marketing objectives are:

- To make attitudes more favorable to a particular product.
- To build an image for the product.
- To stop existing users turning to competitive products.
- To get across the idea of a unique product.
- To create a brand leader to help the launch of additional products at a future date.
- To win back previous product users who have defected to a competitive product.
- To expand the whole market
- To reduce existing negative attitudes.
- To keep building loyalty.

- To establish the brand and position it in a particular way. e.g. as warm and friendly.
- To create a brand leader in a particular market.
- To increase sales among existing users.
- To improve the frequency of purchase.
- To keep new entrants out of the market.
- To convey the idea that the product is value for money'.
- To say how much people like the product.
- To improve market share compared with competitors.
- To maintain brand distribution.

Check your progress-1

Answer the following questions.

1. Define the concept of tour marketing.
2. Identify main objectives of Tour marketing.

Check your answer with the one given at the end of the unit.

12.3 - Developing a Tour Marketing Plan/ approach

When developing a complete tourism package, marketing research is very important. You must understand your customers and what they think is important in order to make the right combinations for them. Businesses that intend to be involved in creating a package must have their managers meet to discuss their interest and ideas for their contributions to the package. A package should be planned with an overlying theme or concept in mind. It might be a targeted theme, like a ski, theater or nature-inspired package, or an event theme centered on Valentine's Day or Christmas. Major events like home-town celebrations or events of historic significance can also serve as a central theme of a packaged deal. Often, lodging and transportation are the largest and most important part of a tourist's experience. These two elements are often the main ingredients for a good package. In addition to these basics, packages can include tickets to attractions, meals, entertainment, educational opportunities, drinks, events and other services. A good package includes things a traveler wants in order to have an enjoyable experience.

Tour marketing plan is centred on organizational objectives. It is important to have a clear understanding of what the tour operator desires to achieve through marketing plan. In fact, a tour company needs to understand both its product and its market before developing a marketing plan. For many tour companies, budget is the first step in the process of developing a tour marketing plan.

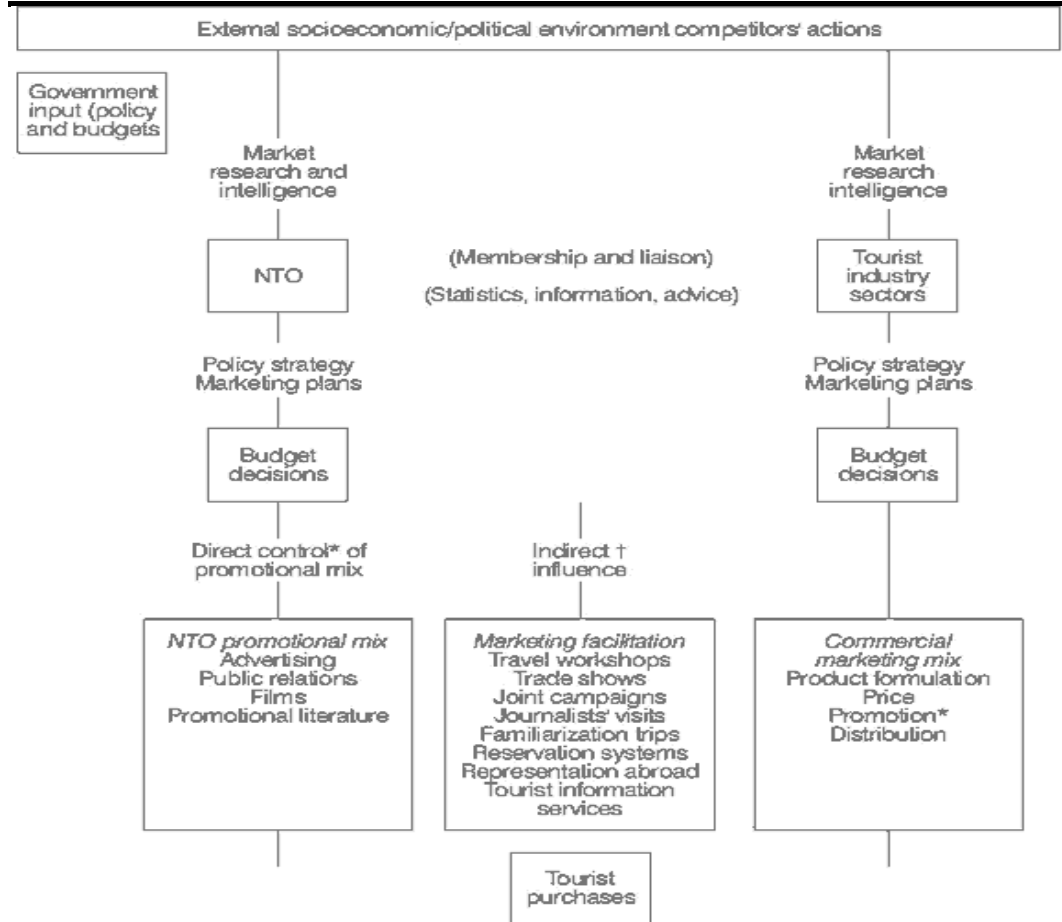


Figure 12.1 Applying marketing in the tour operation industry

Organizing a successful group tour requires a minimum of one year lead time. This allows:

- Three months to research, plan, negotiate, book, price the tour, and produce promotional materials,
- Six months for a promotional and sales campaign, and
- Ninety days for billing, dispatch, and wrap-up.

Tour operators packaging around a large event make their plans up to five years in advance.

It does not mean that short time tour package can not be operated. Many program and package offerings from smaller businesses may operate on a much shorter time frame when marketing to short-haul markets.

The tour marketing plan is a component of your overall business plan. The business plan may include: corporate plans for the coming year, operational problems and opportunities, strategies for pricing, a marketing plan, and a budget. The business plan lays the foundation of company expectations for the coming year.

The marketing plan is an objective document against which progress can be measured. Used as a yardstick to determine achievement of set objectives within a rapidly changing business environment, it is generally written every year as part of the yearly financial budget.

Basic marketing may be done through the following methods.

- Cooperating with regional tourism associations
- Networking
- Cooperating with other like-minded regional businesses
- Direct mailing
- Fam tours (displays first-hand the attitudes of management/staff)
- Slide and video travel shows
- Advertising
- Direct sales
- Internet

The tour marketing plan is normally a short term plan which guides the tour operator for one to three years. It provides a clear direction of the tour marketing operation based upon a systematic approach to planning and action. It also co-ordinates the resources of the tour company to achieve the set targets. Recognizing the importance of tour marketing, tour operator develops the required mechanism to build effective tour marketing strategies. It illustrates how the tour marketing planning process should function and ensure that marketing activities match the resources, time requirements and objectives of the tour company. To decide on the tour marketing strategies is perhaps the most complicated stage in the planning process. The working out of an appropriate strategy is directly related to the nature and type of the tour i.e., which strategy is most befitting for inbound tours, outbound tours, or incentive tours is based on its ability to provide a substantial return on investment.

Marketing Inbound and Outbound Tours

Generally, the international tour marketing is relatively more complex and difficult than domestic tour marketing. International tour market is composed mainly of tours organized and planned in another country and operated in other countries. Although the tour components in different types of tours are different but the tour marketing is similar to much extent. As an inbound tour operator handles these tours in different countries/destinations. For example, the India based tour operator handling international inbound tours will be expected to provide full tour services that are included in the package in the similar way as US, UK and French tour operators do, but the components may be different. Interestingly, obtaining contracts to handle inbound tours is quite different from handling outbound tours. For outbound tours, the tour operator usually is required to approach each and every tour member to sell its product (package), directly or through travel agencies. In many cases a tour operator undertakes

substantial contracting with inbound tour operators or ground operators to provide services as prescribed in the tour programme. However, for marketing inbound tours, a tour operator procures lists of those tour companies and travel agencies which are interested in travel business from the destinations served by the inbound tour operators.

This is generally achieved through participation in international meets, marts, conferences and other associations. Practically, these events are so planned that international tour companies and travel agencies may purchase from the different country based inbound tour operators those travel ingredients required in order to operate their tours during the coming years.

Thus, it is clear that tour operator will either offer his tours directly to the market or sell them through travel agencies. Whichever method of distribution he chooses, sales will hinge on products being presented in brochures designed by the tour operators and marketing techniques as well as promotional campaigns being applied.

The tour operator's vital marketing tool is its tour brochure which contains comprehensive information to persuade and motivate potential holiday makers to purchase tourist products/services.

Holloway (1992) lists the information that should be included in a tour operator's brochure.

- Name of tour company responsible for tour;
- Transport mode(s) – carrier name, aircraft type and use of scheduled or charter services;
- Details of destinations, itinerary and travel time;
- Duration of tour – nights and days;
- Description of destinations;
- Type of accommodation and meals;
- Services of ground operators;
- Price;
- Extra charges clearly indicated;
- Details of special arrangements and facilities;
- Full booking conditions including cancellation terms;
- Any optional or compulsory insurance cover;
- Documentation required for travel to the destinations featured; and
- Any health hazards or inoculation recommended.

Thus, the tour brochure consists of several sections and sub-sections. The brochure cover shows the title, date, theme, tour code, and name of the tour company. Tour promotion is the blend of communication activities designed and carried out to influence those clientele size on whom the tour operator's sales depend both in the short term and long-term.

It is not sufficient to influence target markets only but also travel agents, suppliers, travel writers and journalists, destination companies, and

Governments. Basically, the tour promotion is substantially different than other travel products/services because of variety of specialization in tour operation industry.

Therefore, a tour company must define marketing/promotion objectives very clearly to design and practice most effective promotional tools/techniques.

In actual practice, tour companies employ the following promotional techniques to create awareness and building brand image of tour packages:

- Advertising;
- Direct Mail;
- Sales Promotion;
- Public Relations;
- Personal Selling;
- Literature;
- Sponsorship;
- Exhibitions;
- Travel Marts;
- Films and Video;
- Familiarization Tours;
- Telemarketing;
- Conferences and Debates etc.

Paradoxically, the promotion of tour package relies on effective communication of tour ingredients. Tour package is an amalgam of various products/services which can really be experienced only at the moment of their consumption and which cannot be systematically reproduced in an identical way. Therefore, in an increasingly competitive tourism market, it is often the access to information which ensures the success of tour marketing. For tour operators, it is extremely important to participate in Computerized Reservation Networks and in Global Distribution Systems.

Today, tour companies have access to information on all air carriers, hotels and related products/services and can distribute their packages through a global distribution system network. GDS terminals provide immediate access to all the suppliers which have opted to market their products through this network. GDS has, therefore, become extremely significant in the sale of air and other tour packages.

The tour operator companies must manage a complex marketing communications system. The company communicates with its marketing intermediaries, consumers, and various public. A company's total marketing communication program, called its promotion mix, consists of a specific blend of advertising sales promotion, public relations, and personal selling to achieve advertising and marketing objectives.

The promoter has to clearly identify the target audience. The Target audience may be potential buyers or current users, those who

make the purchasing decision, or those who influence it keeping the target market in mind, he has to choose the message and message content. Ideally, the message should get attention, hold interest arouse desire and obtain action (a frame work known as AIDA model). The communicator has to choose the message content in terms of the appeal or theme that will produce the desired response. Philip Kotler has identified three types of appeals, i.e; rational appeal, emotional appeal and moral appeal.

(a) Rational appeal relate to audience self-interest. They show that the product will produce desired benefits. Occasionally, rational appeals are overlooked.

(b) Emotional appeal attempt to provoke emotions that motivate purchase. These include fear guilt and shame that entice people to do things that they should or stop doing things they should not. Emotional appeals are widely used by resorts and hotels to stimulate cross purchase.

(c) Moral appeals are directed to the audience's Senses of what is right and proper. They are often used to urge people to support such social causes as a cleaner environment, better race relations, equal rights and help to the needy.

PROMOTIONAL TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES

At his stage it will be prudent enough to discuss the various promotional tools. The promoter has to make a choice of promotional tools out of the various options available with him/her. Each individual medium or tool has its special advantages and cost benefits. Advertising gives the marketer complete control over timing, message and target: public relations activity may be more powerful cheaper and effective in sales terms, but control is much more limited. PR has a special value in changing attitude, reassurance, mitigating damage and, over a period, helping to create a fashion or special appeal.

No medium can be effective on its own so the mix or combination is important. They must all be dovetailed into the marketing mix, or the total marketing programme of the organization embracing product price, promotion and market place. The marketer does not ask shall I use advertising or not? Without considering all the other marketing tools and how they inter-relate one with the other.

Advertising

The American Marketing Association defines advertising as any paid form of non-personal presentation of goods, ideas or services by an identified sponsor'. An alternative definition is non-personal persuasive communication in media which is not managed by the

company, eg press, magazines, radio, television, posters, cinema. Advertising can be precise in terms of message and timing and can be more specifically targeted at the right audience than some other marketing tools. It is part of the total promotional effort and must always be very clearly aligned with, and indeed governed by, the objectives of the organisation.

Advertising even though it can be fairly precisely targeted, uses mass media to talk directly to the potential buyers of the product. So it must persuade these potential buyers that the product will satisfy their wants and needs in a unique way. It becomes generally more cost efficient as a medium when the number of consumers needed to be reached is large. Furthermore, unlike most products, a tourist destination cannot be taken to the market place, the consumer has to travel to the product and that product must be presented in an appealing and attractive way through the advertising and other vehicles too.

Research can give useful guidance on the holiday decision process, the gestation period of decision, planning and buying. It can also help to determine the target audience. The marketer must clearly define the consumer who is likely to buy his product in terms of age, sex, socio-economic group, standard of education, purchasing power, region of residence and the size and nature of the target audience has a bearing on the size of the advertising appropriation. This is particularly true of socioeconomic group and region of residence.

It is the agency's job to produce advertising ideas but it is the promoter's job to produce the right brief, to have a clear picture of what image the organisation wishes to project for the product and to agree the copy theme. The guidance needed to fulfil these tasks should come from research and from the Marketing Plan: then more research to check that the advertising is working.

Advertising is that part of the marketing process which communicates effectively and economically to a chosen group of consumers. It exists as a substitute for personal selling and it should be designed to do the best selling job possible. It is more effective when it is precisely focused and projected on a backcloth of receptivity created through good public relations.

Public relations

This is a vitally important part of the communications strategy of an organisation and generally operates on three levels:

(1) The corporate level - creating the best climate and reputation for the organisation in terms of receptivity and favourable.

(2) The consumer level - creating the right background onto which the organisation can project more precisely focused messages.

(3) The trade level - who in turn can influence the consumer either directly or indirectly and for destination public authorities guiding and influencing standards.

Public relations however are different from advertising. While its purpose, like that of advertising, is communication it is different inasmuch - as it does not use paid media space, may well not identify the sponsor, and does not target the message as precisely as advertising does in terms of timing, media or message. The promoter can get lucky of course and have an independent journalist write things which he may well think twice about claiming in the advertising. Public relations activity is vital in tourism as it is the most powerful medium in guarding of the image.

In tour operations, public relations can be the most cost-effective of all the weapons in the marketer's armoury and it is capable of working effectively not only at the three levels identified above, but multi-dimensionally in communicating the messages which the marketer/promoter wishes to get across to particular audiences.

At the corporate level, there is a need to seek to influence the shareholders. In the case of a resort tourist officer this may well be the elected members on the local authority and the commercial interests in the resort who benefit from the tourist spendings. At the regional level it will be a number of local authorities and commercial operators in the region, who may well subscribe funds on a membership basis to the regional tourist board. At these levels there is a need to create a favourable climate and a positive image of the organisation and what it is achieving in terms of economic benefit, job creation, conservation or general public good.

There are a number of tools and techniques available to the PR departments which are used to communicate to these audiences. Press releases to newspaper's and magazines, feature stories, press interviews, press conferences, newsletters and magazines are all effective in their various ways. Newsletters and magazines should be published regularly and mailed to a prescribed audience. Press conferences should normally be used sparingly. In the case of an organisation whose marketing work is conducted principally overseas, it is important to ensure that the influencers and decision-makers are aware of what it does and how effective its work is in terms of expected benefits.

Direct mail

A marketing technique once used almost exclusively by book clubs and record clubs, it is being used increasingly by most promoters from blue chip corporations to charities.

The most important key to success in any direct mail campaign is the mailing list. To reach the right market you need the right mailing list. Lists can be rented from a list broker and the number and variety of lists is almost infinite, from income levels to members of social clubs, affinity groups to members of learned societies or professions. There is a high level of wastage for junk mail, yet the technique with generally a two to five per cent response rate is highly profitable. Success in getting the mailing shot accepted by the consumer is in the real or perceived value of the product. The offer must be right and also the way the price is positioned and presented. The direct mail shot is in effect a sales presentation for both high and low cost items and its success is determined by the format and the creative treatment.

Tourist organisations and operators can develop their own mailing lists. Hoteliers can maintain records of guests. Tourist offices receive enquiries by letter, by telephone and in person.

Literature

Brochure production is expensive and considerable thought should be given to the print programme before rushing into production. In the case of international marketing, translation of copy into a number of languages will be required and these can pose quite a problem.

Objectives, purpose and target audience must be carefully researched, agreed and planned. All too often tour operators will produce a poster without any real thought as to where, how or who will produce a poster without any real thought as to where, how or who will see it.

In the case of print, the medium is the product and the target audience must be firmly in the marketer's mind when he produces the pagination and design brief. There is a trade audience and a consumer audience and each have their specific needs.

Print can very broadly be subdivided into three stages. First, the promotional print or 'come on', where the marketer must try and persuade. The reader to select a particular destination. Second, is the guide on how to travel, what to see and do guide, designed to ensure that the visitor gains the maximum satisfaction from his trip. Great guide books fall into this third category.

Once the page lay-outs are available, it is possible to check headlines and position of illustrations - usually the first chance that a non-expert can really judge what it is going to look like. Once the page film is made it becomes very expensive to start making corrections and once the four colour proof has been submitted nothing should be corrected unless it is critical, like mis-spelling the name of the destination.

Exhibitions

There are consumer exhibitions and trade exhibitions. An exhibition, provided it is the right exhibition, can be an excellent showcase for products, services or destination. It can also be a very cost effective way of generating sales leads and names and addresses for mailing lists. All too often the opportunities afforded are thrown away, either because of poor location, bad stand design, weak publicity or because of untrained staff on the stand. The marketer must assess the exhibition like other sales media in terms of the marketing objectives and in the context of the marketing mix. He must then seek the best possible location, having evaluated traffic flows, stand shape, position vis-à-vis competition and cost.

Exhibition space is usually sold as 'space' or 'shell', that is to say the organiser of the exhibition will rent the floor space to the exhibitor who then has to brief a stand designer and stand fitter, who will construct the stand. The 'shell' scheme is sold by the organiser as space plus a simple stand. Do check precisely what is included in the 'shell' price. Does it include lighting, and if so what? Does it include floor covering, and if so what? Often it is lino or carpet tiles. The shell price usually includes the fascia but excludes such things as electric points, plants, furniture and cleaning. Most exhibition organisers will provide attendance figures for previous shows and number of exhibitors, making it possible to evaluate the show.

Films and video

Making a film or video is increasingly attractive. The widespread availability of video equipment makes it an attractive new medium and if it is done well, it is a very effective marketing tool for the tourism marketer. It can be more effective in taking the product to the market place, yet production is complex and costly and there are many pitfalls on the way. The brochure can be read and a passage can be reread if need be; the video is necessarily more impressionistic. The cost will be determined by the number of locations, travel costs between locations, hotel accommodation, hire of actors perhaps, complicated lighting set-ups. All this apart from the basic cost of film and duplication, if there is music, clearance can be expensive and it may well be cheaper to commission a score and record specially. It will almost certainly be necessary to hire a professional narrator. So the costs mount. In any video production there are three processes shooting, editing and post-production, mastering and duplication. Add to this the fact that there are different systems in overseas markets if it is intended to use it internationally. The marketer should have a clear idea of why he wants to make a film or video, where and to whom it will be shown. It is a

complex subject and mistakes can be costly. So the best advice is to hire a good production company and provide them with a clear brief, Just as important, there must be adequate control of the audience through plans which ensure that the film is shown to potential travellers.

Finally, there are some marketing techniques which are of particular relevance to the tourism industry, though not uniquely so.

Check your progress – 2

Answer the following questions.

1. Define the concept of tour brochure
2. Identify marketing techniques for tour package ,

Check your answer with the one given at the end of the unit

12.4 Summary

In this Unit, we have familiarised you with guidelines regarding the marketing of tour package. It is essential for a tour operator to equip himself/herself as well as one's employees with market conditions and product knowledge. The best method for the first hand product knowledge in either case would be the utilisation of familiarisation trips being offered by providers of services. As an effective manager you are required to plan and manage various activities related to inbound and outbound tour operations. It is for sure that if you are able to handle these vital issues with the objective of providing customer care, nothing can stop you from becoming a successful tour operator. You should not forget that today as a result of technological revolution destinations which were hitherto been unknown and inaccessible to people have come within their reach. Thus, once again you are required to update yourself on various new travel circuits that have been developed on global tourist map and consequent changes in rules, regulation and fees. It is clear from the above discussion that effective marketing of a tour package one should have pre-active approach. So that we can achieve tour marketing objectives of the tour operation company.

Answer to Check Your Progress

Check Your Progress - 1

- 1) See sec. 12.2
- 2) See sec. 12.2

Check Your Progress - 2

- 1) See sec. 12.3.
- 2) See sec. 12.3

12.5 Glossary

- **Market segmentation:** Market segmentation is a marketing approach that encompasses the identification of different groups of customers with different needs or responses to marketing activity. The market segmentation process also considers which of these segments to target.
- **Service marketing mix:** The addition of People, Physical Evidence and Process to the four areas of activity more usually associated with marketing products, Price, Place, Promotion and Product.
- **Direct mail:** The delivery of an advertising or promotional message to customers or potential customers by mail.
- **Direct marketing:** The planned recording, analysis and tracking of customer behaviour to develop a relational marketing strategies.
- **Marketing concept:** The marketing concept is about matching a business' capabilities with customer wants.
- **Marketing plan** A detailed statement (usually prepared annually) of how a company's marketing mix will be used to achieve its market objectives. A marketing plan is usually prepared following a marketing audit.

12.6 Review Questions

- Why is Market Analysis necessary in Tour Operations Business?
- What is the importance of analysing Business Environment for packaging Tours?
- What is the significance of Brochures in Tour Operations and Tour Operators'?
- Elaborate the need and significance of pre-active approach in tour marketing.

12.7 Suggested Readings

1. Gee, Chuck and Y. Makens, Professional Travel Agency Management, Prentice Hall, New York, 1990.
2. Foster .D.L. The Business of Travel Agency Operations and Administration, McGraw Hill, Singapore, 1990.
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10. IATA Manual
11. Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India, Reports and guidelines for travel agency and tour operators.

BLOCK 4**Tour Packaging in Indian Context- Case Examples**

Today, it has become a fashion for most of the people and business for many entrepreneurs. Adventure tourism is a type of niche tourism involving exploration or travel to remote areas, where the traveler should expect the unexpected. Adventure tourism is rapidly growing in popularity as tourists seek unusual holidays, different from the typical beach vacation. Adventure tourism typically involves traveling into remote, inaccessible and possibly hostile areas. Aero sports are bound to give you the adrenaline rush you require and as you experience the thrill of soaring through the sky, you may also enjoy a bird's eye view of the stunning nature beneath. A number of places in the Himalayan and peninsular region offer ample options for aero sports.

Moreover, the block will cover the tour packaging in Indian context. It will explain and clarify how a well-structured and planed approach to tour package can deliver substantial benefits to all stakeholders: tourists as well as tour operators. This block comprises the following units:

Unit 13 focuses on Land based Adventure Tourism Packages – Trekking, Mountaineering, skiing and wildlife watching. Finally the unit discusses the Significance of land based adventure tour package. The **14 unit** of the course entitled “components and elements of an effective Tour Itinerary” describes the meaning and concept of tour itinerary, explain the main components of tour itinerary and finally understanding of elements of effective tour itinerary. **Unit 15** deals with discussion of Cultural tourism Packages-Pilgrimage, festival and monuments and museum visits. In this unit you will learn about the various Cultural tour packages: Pilgrimage, Festival; Monument and Museum to develop tour itinerary. Further, the unit describes the importance of cultural tour packages. **In unit 16** we will describe about the Special Interest Tour Package- Ethnic, eco, medical and health and holiday packages. The unit also discusses significance of special interest tour package.

Block Objectives

After studying this block, you will be able to:

- Describe the meaning and concept of Land based adventure tour package ;
- Explain the Trekking, Mountaineering, skiing tour package ;
- Describe the meaning and concept of aero based sports;
- Explain the water based sports,
- Describe the meaning and concept of Cultural Tourism packages.
- Understand meaning and concept of Special Interest Tourism
- Explain Special Interest Tourism in India
- Itinerary development for Special Interest Tourism in India.

UNIT 13: LAND BASED ADVENTURE TOURISM PACKAGES – TREKKING, MOUNTAINEERING, SKIING AND WILDLIFE WATCHING

Structure

- 13.0 Objectives
- 13.1 Introduction
- 13.2 Land based adventure tour package - concepts and meaning
- 13.3 Trekking, mountaineering, skiing- package
- 13.4 wildlife watching- package tours
- 13.5 Significance of land based adventure tour package
- 13.6 Summary
- 13.7 Answer to check your progress
- 13.7 Glossary
- 13.8 Review questions
- 13.9 Suggested readings

13.0 Objectives

After reading this unit, you will be able to:

- Describe the meaning and concept of Land based adventure tour package;
- Explain the Trekking, Mountaineering, skiing tour package;
- Discuss the wildlife watching- package tours;
- Understand the significance of land based adventure tour package.

13.1 Introduction

In the previous units we described how a tour package marketed to ultimate users. Now we turn our discussion to elaborate the meaning and concept of Land based adventure tourism in India. In fact, India is a home for adventure lovers having marvelous adventure tourist resources. Besides cultural exchange or interaction, tourists are engaged with nature, mountaineering expeditions, trekking, bungee jumping, rafting and rock climbing.

13.2 Adventure Tourism in India - Concepts and Meaning

Since long people used to travel for adventure, in fact, in the beginning travel was itself an adventure. Today, it has become a fashion for most of the people and business for many entrepreneurs. Adventure tourism is a type of niche tourism involving exploration or travel to remote areas, where the traveler should expect the unexpected. Adventure tourism is rapidly growing in popularity as tourists seek unusual holidays, different from the typical beach vacation. Adventure tourism typically involves traveling into remote, inaccessible and possibly hostile areas. It may include the performance of acts that require significant effort and grit and may also involve some degree of risk.

According to the (U.S.-based) global Adventure Travel Trade Association, "adventure travel" may be any tourist activity including two of the following three components: a physical activity, a cultural exchange or interaction, and engagement with nature. Mountaineering expeditions, trekking, bungee jumping, rafting and rock climbing are frequently cited as an examples of adventure tourism. In fact, to define adventure travel, various components including activity, motivation, risk, performance, experience, and environment must be considered. Equally important is how these components can be combined to compose a definition. Ewert (1989) suggested that outdoor adventure involves an interaction with the natural environment, and this interaction requires an element of risk, often exposed to physical danger.

Thus, adventure travel has been defined as: any number of leisure pursuits which provide exposure to physical danger and a variety of self-initiated activities utilizing an interaction with the natural environment, that contain elements of real or apparent danger, in which the outcome, while uncertain, can be influenced by the participant and circumstance .

India has now emerged as an important travel destination for discerning adventure sports enthusiasts in recent years. India is arguably the only country in the world, which offers such a sheer variety of adventure opportunities. And surely enough, this diversity is utterly amazing - from heli-skiing and rock climbing in the mighty Himalayas to river-rafting in the white waters of the raging Ganga, Teesta or Indus; from ballooning and hang-gliding over the great Indian plains to an exotic encounter with the camel-safaris in the vast expanse of the Thar desert of Rajasthan; from tracking the legendary Royal Bengal Tiger on the backs of elephants to trekking in the Himalayan ranges - the options are endless. Some of the popular adventure tourism activities offered in India are discussed as under.

Popular adventure sport activities in India

Some of the most popular adventure sport activities in India are listed below:

- Angling and Fishing
- Cycling
- Motor Biking
- Camel Safari
- Gliding
- Mountaineering
- Rafting
- Skiing
- Trekking
- Wildlife Safari

Mountaineering in India offers the choice of climbing some of the highest peaks in the world. Traveling in the mighty Himalayas offers endless adventure,

cultural learning and recreation opportunities. India has been blessed with several mountain ranges that are perfect to undertake mountaineering. Mountaineering is an ideal activity during the summers that lets you escape from the heat of the plains.

Some of the best mountaineering spots can be found in the Garhwal and Kumaon regions, Himachal Pradesh, Ladakh region of Jammu and Kashmir, and the Northeast. Num and Kun, and the Zaskar range in Jammu and Kashmir are renowned summits with the mountaineers. Besides amateur mountaineers, technical climbing skills are put to test at Kishtawar at peaks that are as high as 6,500 m above ground level. Lahaul and Spiti in Leh, and the Kullu valley also have several challenging peaks. In India the peaks are categorized into open', 'virgin', 'border', 'trekking', and 'others' and one can make several choices in each category.

White Water Rafting in India

White water rafting means cruising down the gushing waters of river in an inflatable rubber raft or white water kayak over roaring waves and swirling fast-moving water. India has earned a reputation as one of the best destinations in the world for white water rafting. Its rushing waters, coming from the glaciers of the mighty Himalayas, offer matchless thrills for rafting and immersing oneself in the landscape.

India has a multitude of rivers and abundance of locations that are perfect for white water rafting. Most of the water rafting destinations are located in the Himalayas, and the River Ganges is the most popular of them all. Several camps are organized along the 70-km stretch from Rishikesh to Devprayag to Rapids have been graded according to the difficulty of their run. The rivers Yamuna, Alaknanda, Tons, Mandakini, Kalisor, Bhilangana and Bhagirathi offer many stretches, for both professionals as well as amateur rafters. Ranges in Ladakh and Sikkim also offer Great River stretches for rafting.

Skiing in India

Skiing is one such adventure sports that has gained immense popularity all over the world. Skiing in India has gradually become quiet attention grabbing sport because of the Himalayas. In India there are many favorable destinations like Jammu and Kashmir, the hills of Kumaon, Himachal Pradesh, and the Northeastern states of India, which have become favorite ski hideouts for skiing enthusiasts. Gulmarg is the ultimate beginner's skiing resort. Skiing involves a lot of skill that needs an initial bit of practice and patience. The adventure sport of skiing is known as a fun sport for its ease, its sense of freedom and the thrill of flying down a slope with the wind direction. India has all kind of sites for amateurs to professional's skiers that provide several choices in each category.

13.3 Trekking, Mountaineering, Skiing- Package

India is a spectacular adventure destination especially among the trekkers. No mountaineer can resist the temptation of having a trek in the verdant slopes of Himalayas. Nature has been bountiful in providing India majestic mountains and this has resulted in the attraction of a large number of people to this beautiful land.

The Western Himalayas covering the states of Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, and Uttarakhand form a major trekking area in India. It is followed by the Eastern Himalayas covering Darjeeling in West Bengal and the northeastern states of Sikkim, and Arunachal Pradesh. The areas around Gangotri and Yamunotri and those below the Kumaon region are also famous for trekking.

Itineraries for Adventure Tourism with examples



Itinerary: 1 Trekking Tour to Uttrakhand (An itinerary with route map)

Duration: 12 Nights / 13 Days

Places Covered: Delhi - Rishikesh - Nandprayag - Pipelkoti - Auli Buggial - Auli - Govindahat - Gangria - Joshimath - Augustmuni - Rishikesh - Delhi

Brief Description: For those who are found of trekking, and adventure, the hills in Uttarakhand are perfect destinations. Fabulous surroundings, swift rivers and pollution free environment rejuvenate lost vigour and vitality. Tour is through the fantastic mountain ranges of Rishikesh and Nandprayag, and Augustmuni that are also Hindu-pilgrimages.

Day 01: Arrive Delhi

Transfer to Hotel Overnight Hotel in Delhi

Day 02: Delhi – Rishikesh

Morning city tour of Delhi. Afternoon leave for Rishikesh 230 kms/6 hrs. On arrival transfer to hotel. Overnight hotel in Rishikesh.

Day 03: Rishikesh

Full day sightseeing visiting different temples & ashrams overnight hotel in Rishikesh.

Day 04: Rishikesh – Nandprayag

Today drive to Nandprayag via Deveprayg confluence of Bhagirathi & Alakanada river. Arrive Nandprayag & transfer to the camp. A beautiful site next to Hanuman Temple

Day 05: Nandprayag- Pipelkoti

Today drive to Pipelkoti Beautiful drive, as we drive through Forests & beautiful scenery. Arrive Pipelkoti & camp for overnight. A beautiful camp site.

Day 06: Pipelkoti - Auli Buggial

Spectacular drive to Auli commanding a stuning view MT Kament Nandakot, Trishul Range and above all the mighty Nanda Devi

Day 07: Auli

Full day to explore or rest Camp fire. Overnight stay in camp

Day 08: Auli - Govindahat - Gangria

Leave early morning towards Govindghat from here our there days trek starts, after trekking for about 13 kms. We camp at Gangria.

Day 09: Gangria - Valley of Flowers

Today trek to valley of flowers, a 4 kms trek passes through dense forests and then open meadow. Arrive valley of Flowers and after lunch you will be given time to explore before we trek back to Gangria.

Day 10: Gangria – Joshimath

Retrace the route - Arrive Joshimath & stay in Hotel for overnight.

Day 11: Joshimath - Augustmuni

Drive to Augustmuni via Rudraprayag and camp for overnight.

Day 12: Augustmuni – Rishikesh

Drive to Rishikesh and transfer to Hotel overnight stay.

Day 13: Rishikesh - Delhi Out

Drive to Delhi. On arrival in Delhi to International Airport to catch flight for onward destination. (Hotel checkout 12: 00 hrs)

Itinerary: 2 Rafting on River Ganges (A specific itinerary for rafting with route map)

Duration: 04 Nights / 05 Days

Places Covered: Delhi - Rishikesh - Shivpuri - Delhi

Day 01: Arive Delhi.

Transfer to Hotel. Overnight Hotel in Delhi

Day 02: Delhi - Rishikesh.

Leave for Rishikesh which is 226 kms - 6 hrs. Means the "Plaits of the sage". It is said that a great sage, Raivya Rishi meditated among the mountains where he saw vision of God. It is an altitude of 365 meters on the right bank of the Ganga and today it has

become a centre of learning and research in yoga and meditation as an instrument of Mental & Physical health. Sightseeing in Rishikesh. Later drive to Shivpuri.

Shivpuri - An experience by itself - with idyllic surrounding gushing pure waters of the sacred river Ganges in forested hilly area and white sandy beaches- A truly unparalleled holiday. Overnight in Shivpuri.

Day 03: Rafting from Shivpuri to Rishikesh.

Overnight at Rishikesh

Day 04: Rishikesh - Delhi.

Drive back to Delhi and check into hotel in Delhi

Day 05: Delhi / Back to home.

Transfer to airport to connect Flight for onward destination.



13.4 Wildlife watching- package tours

In recent years India's emergence as one of the Hub of diverse wildlife has led India as a most sought-after wild life tourism destination. The Indian wildlife heritage has a unique status worldwide. It has the second largest base of bio diversity in the world, with 441 Wildlife Sanctuaries and 80 National Parks, which have become destinations for visitors from all around the world. Accounts of man-eaters of Kumaon and other wildlife encountered by Jim Corbett, are fascinating and true, and just a glimpse of many other mysteries and delights of the Indian wildlife that is housed in the sanctuaries around the country.

Another incredible feature of these amazing conservatories of exotic wildlife is that they are home to the largest number of tigers and one-horned rhinoceros in the world, as well as the almost extinct Asiatic Lion, and a large percentage of the total elephant population. Also, India's wildlife sanctuaries which cover about 90,000 sq km house more than 500 species of mammals, over 2000 species of birds, over 500 species of reptiles and amphibians and around 30000 species of insects. All these resources provides a huge potential and scope for wild life tourism in India.

Wildlife tourism:

Wildlife tourism involves travel to observe wildlife in natural environments and preferably their native habitat. It is a further subset of nature tourism and one in which significantly high levels of domestic and international interest exist. Wildlife tourism involves wild and non-domesticated animals and can encompass free-ranging and captive circumstances. Wildlife tourism encompasses the chance to encounter fauna and flora in terrestrial, aquatic/marine and aerial settings and to gain some further understanding of a wide variety of species (including viewing kangaroos, koalas, whales, dolphins, seals, fish and birds). Undertaking this activity in a manner that is environmentally responsible is important to ensure fewer disturbances to Wildlife and habitats.

In terms of major visitor trends, 'appreciative tourism' involving observation, photography and interaction with wild animals is large scale, prominent and growing. Consumptive tourism involving such activities as hunting and (non-catch and release) fishing is also large scale, but declining (*Paul Eagles, Sustainable Wildlife Tourism Convention, Hobart, 2001*). Ideally, Wildlife tourism include some element of education and an increased appreciation of nature and conservation issues. Potential new models for Wildlife tourism are being developed. These involve Wildlife sanctuaries with feral free habitats attempting to use tourism and other enterprise based revenue sources as a means to help protect endangered native species and develop recovery plans for the species.

ITINERARIES FOR WILDLIFE PARKS AND SANCTURIES

Itinerary: 1 North East India Wildlife Tour

Delhi - Sariska - Jaipur - Ranthambore - Bharatpur - Agra - Khajuraho - Bandhavgarh – Kanha - Nagpur - Bhubaneshwar - Kolkata - Guwahati - Kaziranga - Guwahati - Delhi.

Day 1: Arrive at Delhi

The first destination on North East India wildlife tour is Delhi, the capital city of India. On arrival, transfer to the hotel and check in. In the afternoon sightseeing tour of Old and New Delhi. Old Delhi include the Red Fort, Jama Masjid, and the colorful bazaars of Chandni Chowk, Raj Ghat, Humayun's Tomb and the Qutab Minar. In New Delhi would include Rashtrapati Bhavan, Parliament House, India Gate, the Lotus Temple and many shopping arcades in New Delhi. Overnight stay at the hotel.

Day 02: Delhi - Sariska

Proceed further to Sariska where there is a visit to popular Tiger Reserve famous for its tiger population. In the afternoon, a tour of the jungle, where one can view numerous carnivores including Leopard, Wild Dog, Jungle Cat, Hyena, Jackal, and Tiger. Overnight stay at the hotel.

Day 03: Sariska - Jaipur

After lunch drive to Jaipur, enroute visiting the Amber Fort built by Raja Man Singh, Mirza Raja Jai Singh and Sawai Jai Singh. On arrival, check-in at the hotel and later on go for city tour to see City Palace, Jantar Mantar and observatory.

Day 04: Jaipur - Ranthambore

In the morning drive down to Sawai Madhopur, popular for the Ranthambore Tiger Reserve. This tiger reserve is famous for Royal Bengal Tiger.

Day 05: Ranthambore

Morning and evening Jungle excursion roaming around the forest area to observe the rich wildlife, which includes 300 trees, 50 aquatic plants, 272 birds, 12 reptiles including the Marsh Crocodile, amphibians and 30 mammals.

Day 06: Ranthambore

Spend the day at the national park observing the large herds of Sambhar, Chital, Nilgai, Gazelle, Boars, Mongoose, Indian Hare and Monitor Lizards. Overnight stay at the hotel.

Day 07: Ranthambore - Bharatpur

Continuing the North East India wildlife tour we move on to Bharatpur. Visit the Keoladeo Ghana National Park known for its 300 indigenous bird species. Evening, a short walk to the Jungle to observe the roosting of large bird swarms.

Day 08: Bharatpur

At this national park one can also enjoy a boat ride and have a better look at the colonies of birds, which reside in the interiors of the park.

Day 09: Bharatpur - Agra

In the morning bird viewing at the Bharatpur sanctuary where there is a wide variety of migratory birds like Cranes, Pelicans, Geese, Ducks, Eagles, Hawks, Shanks, Stints, Wagtails, Warblers, White Ears, Flycatchers, Buntings, Larks and Pipits. Later drive on to Agra to see the Taj Mahal. Afternoon city tour covering the Agra Fort and other tourist places in Agra.

Day 10: Agra - Khajuraho - Bandhavgarh

Moving on to our next destination on this wildlife tour i.e. Khajuraho. The place is famous for its temples. On arrival visit the Western Group of Temples including the temples of Kandariya Mahadeo and Chuansat Yogini. Later drive on to Bandhavgarh National Park in Madhya Pradesh.

Overnight stay at the Bandhavgarh Jungle Resort.

Day 11: Bandhavgarh

Morning and evening jungle excursion to explore the wildlife, flora and fauna within the national park.

Overnight stay at the lodge.

Day 12: Bandhavgarh

Morning and evening excursion to the National Park encompassed by the towering Vindhya ranges.

Overnight at the lodge.

Day 13: Bandhavgarh - Kanha

Morning drive on to Kanha National Park. Drive deep into this sanctuary surrounded by tall Sal trees forest. On arrival transfer to Kanha Jungle Resort for overnight.

Day 14: Kanha

Morning and evening jungle excursion, nature walks and Elephant rides in the National Park and Tiger Reserve in the Mandala district of Madhya Pradesh. Overnight stay at the lodge.

Day 15: Kanha

Morning and evening jungle excursion, nature walks and Elephant rides to observe the large herds of the rare Barasingha and Swamp deer. Overnight stay at the lodge.

Day 16: Kanha - Nagpur

Morning Jungle excursion where you can go into the interiors of the deep Sal and Bamboo forests. Afternoon drive to Nagpur and overnight stay at the hotel.

Day 17: Nagpur – Bhubaneshwar

Morning fly to Bhubaneshwar, the capital city of Orissa while attending the short excursion to Konarak Temple just a few kilometers away from the city.

Day 18: Bhubaneshwar - Kolkata

In the morning catch a flight for Kolkata, the capital of West Bengal. Afternoon sightseeing of the city, which would cover the Victoria Memorial, Kali temple, Howrah Bridge.

Day 19: Kolkata - Guwahati - Kaziranga

Morning fly to Guwahati and drive to Kaziranga National park, famous as the only natural habitat of the Great Indian Rhinoceros.

Day 20: Kaziranga

Spend the day at the national park to see some of the rare species such as Oriental Honey Buzzard, Black-Shouldered Kite, Black Kite, Brahminy Kite, Pallas's Fishing Eagle, White Tailed Eagle, Grey-Headed Fishing Eagle, Himalayan Griffon, etc. Huge numbers of migratory birds descend on the parks lakes and marshy areas during winters, including Greylag Geese, Bar-Headed Geese, Ruddy Shelduck, Gadwall, Falcated Duck, Red-Crested Pochard and Northern Shoveller.

Day 21: Kaziranga

Spend a day taking a tour of the area with jungle rides, nature walks and Elephant rides available within the sanctuary.

Day 22: Kaziranga - Guwahati - Delhi

In the morning, drive back to Guwahati to catch a flight to Delhi. Rest of the day at leisure.

Day 23: Delhi -Departure

Spend your day at leisure. Later on you will be transferred to the International Airport to catch a flight for your onward destination.

INDIAN WILDLIFE SANCTUARY TOURS (AN ITINERARY WITH ROUTE MAP)

Duration : 12 Nights / 13 Days

Places Covered : Delhi - Sariska - Jaipur - Sawai Madhopur - Bharatpur - Agra - Corbett - Nainital - Delhi

Your best friends for ten days during this tour are eagles, tigers, hyenas, crocodiles, bears and Panthers. You will like them, they are healthy and not very boring, and they smile often. The only thing of problem is that they like to live in the jungles. And hence we will arrange some jeeps when you need the most. But you will have to bring your own camera to save some of the best models of the jungle, the birds. There are many rare varieties too, or should we say super models? And while you pass through this wild part of your life in the best known national parks and sanctuaries of Northern India, do take some breaks to watch the palaces, forts and other pink-things in Jaipur.

Day 01: Delhi

Arrive Delhi. Transfer to hotel.

Day 02: Delhi - Sariska – Jaipur

Drive to Sariska (190 kms / 4 hrs). Afternoon jeep safari in Sariska Tiger Reserve -this 800 sq km sanctuary comprises dry deciduous forest and is beautifully set in a valley surrounded by the barren Aravali hills. A variety of deers include nilgai, chital and sambar. One can see wild boar, jackals, hyenas, hares and porcupines, though tigers and leopards are little difficult to spot. Over night stay at hotel.

Day 03: Sariska – Jaipur

Morning drive to Jaipur (105 kms / 2 hrs.) and visit Amber Fort where an elephant ride will be provided up to the fort. Afternoon continue sight seeing of Jaipur - the pink city visiting Hawa Mahal, the observatory and Jantar Mantar.

Day 04: Jaipur - Sawai Madhopur

Drive to Sawai Madhopur (130 kms. / 3 hrs). Afternoon safari to Ranthambhore National Park (Ranthambhore) which is an outstanding example of Project Tiger's efforts at tiger conservation in the country. With the conservation efforts, tigers have become more and more active during the day. They can be seen lolling around lazily in the sun or feverishly hunting down the sambar around the lakes. Ranthambhore is probably the most ideal location for wildlife photography. The other permanent residents of the park include crocodiles, hyenas, jungle cats, wild dogs, sloth bears and panthers. Sambars are in abundance and so are Chitals, nilgai and some chinkaras. During the winter months there are a lot of migratory birds apart from the permanent residents like storks, quails, Bonelli's eagles, spur fowls, crested serpent eagles etc.

Day 05: Sawai Madhopur - (Ranthambhore)

Early morning and afternoon jungle safaris in Ranthambhore National Park.

Day 06: Sawai Madhopur - Bharatpur (240 kms / 5 hrs)

Morning Jungle safari. After a late breakfast drive to Bharatpur (5.5 hrs). In the afternoon experience a Rikshaw-ride in Keoladeo Ghana National Park -one of the most spectacular bird sanctuaries in India, nesting indigenous water-birds as well as migratory water birds and water side birds. More than 300 species of birds are found in this small park of 29 sq. km of which 11 sq km are marshes and the rest, scrubland and grassland.

Day 07: Bharatpur - Agra (60 km / 1 ½ hrs)

Morning optional 2nd visit to the National Park. Later in the morning drive to Agra (1 Hr) enroute visiting Fatehpur Sikhri -beautifully laid out capital of the Mughal Empire Akbar's reign. Afternoon visit world famous Taj Mahal and then Agra Fort. Overnight in Agra. (Taj Mahal is closed on all Fridays)

Day 08: Agra - Corbett (350 kms / 8 hrs)

Morning optional 2nd visit to Taj Mahal. Then drive to Corbett situated at a distance of about 350 kms / 8 Hrs, it has one of the most wildlife reserves in India. Upon arrival, check-in at hotel.

Corbett National Park is covering an area of 1318 sq. kms situated in the Himalayan foothills with open grasslands the Ramganga River flowing through its entire length. It is named after the famous hunter-naturalist Corbett who, between 1907 and 1939 tracked down and killed man-eaters, which had claimed an aggregate of 1300 human lives. It is India's first and biggest Tiger reserve sponsored by 'World Wildlife Fund.

Day 09: Corbett

Early morning and afternoon, Jeep safari into the park for wildlife viewing. Corbett has the highest density of Tiger in the country along with four species of deer, hog deer, sambar, chital and barking deer and other prey like the wild boars are prey for the tiger. The national park is a haven for 50 mammals, 580 kinds of birds and 25 reptile species. The park has elephants, the Himalayan black bear in the higher elevations, sloth bear, varieties of lesser cats, dhole (the wild dog) and an entire spectrum of colorful birds including water birds, pheasants, jungle fowl and the Indian hornbill. Here you can find a variety of fishes including the goonch and the brown trout. Rest of the day at leisure for own activities. Stay overnight at the hotel.

Day 10: Corbett - Nainital (80 kms / 3-4 hrs)

Drive to Nainital (80 kms 3-4 hrs approx.) surrounded by hill ranges and covered by dense forest, the region was a favorite grazing spot of the herbery from surrounding villages who brought their flocks to forage in the green pasture of the valley. Within a maximum depth of 29 meters, Nanilake which seems to change its hue simultaneously with a change in the sky, has a circumference of 3620 meters creating a beautiful promenade that skirts the lake, To Sailors all over the country the Nainital Yatchi Clu has been an embodiment of tradition, and repository of sailing heritage. In the heart of the town is playground and rendezvours of Nainital the flats here one must come to go to either bazaar the

club, cinema temple mosque or church, the seven peaks that surrounded the lake provide excellent hiking routes. Overnight at Hotel.

Day 11: Nainital

Free day to explore area, hike and / or relax.

Day 12: Nainital - Delhi (350 kms / 7-8 hrs)

Drive to Delhi (350 kms / 7-8 hrs Approx) - Enroute enjoy the real villages and on arrival check at the hotel over night in to the hotel

Day 13: Delhi – Out

Morning city tour of Delhi. Aternoon transfer to International airport to connect flight for onward destination (hotel check-out time 12:00 Hrs)

Check your progress-1

Answer the following questions.

1. Gliding is an example of _____ based adventure sports.
2. The Great Indian Desert of Thar is famous for _____ safari
3. River Ganges is the most popular destinations in the India world for _____ type of adventure sport activity.
4. Gulmarg skiing resort is located in _____ state.

Check your answer with the one given at the end of the unit.

13.5 Significance of itineraries for adventure tourism

Tourism is today a key sector of globalised neoliberal capitalism, the world's biggest industry, propelling the economies of industrial developing world. The travel and tourism sector creates more jobs per million rupees of investment than any other sector of the economy and is capable of providing employment to a wide spectrum of job seekers from the unskilled to the specialized, even in the remote parts of the country As per Global Status and Trends by WTTC Sports and adventure holidays will continue to be popular with the young and expected to contribute higher towards socio-economic development.

Adventure Tours with a professional itinerary offer many important benefits such as social interaction, personal enjoyment, promoting team building and leadership, skills development (for example physical, mental, managerial), contribution to health and fitness, to gain qualifications.

Apart from above itinerary also offer following benefits

- **Savings:** Tours with a professional itinerary offer many important benefits. Key among these is savings. Package tours having an itinerary results in to cost cutting as it has a well tour planning which results into saving from unnecessary expenditure on search for accommodation, transportation, sightseeing that helps to achieve substantial economies.
- **Convenient Purchasing:** In addition, proper planning enables them to secure accommodations, air charters and other arrangements that would be virtually impossible to obtain at last movement.

- Peace of Mind: Itinerary also means peace of mind. Since, you know what the cost will be in advance and can budget for your expenditures with greater certainty.
- Benefits to the local community: Benefits to the local community could include apprenticeships, in-kind contributions, employment of local residents, partnerships with community-based organizations etc.
- Producers are able to sell tourism products in bulk brings more socio-economic benefits to the local economies even to an extent that sometimes it also helps in removing seasonality problems.
- Suppliers can reduce promotion costs by focusing on the travel trade rather on consumer promotion which is more expensive.
- It makes the traveling process more simple for tourist.
- Since the itinerary provides visual description of the destination that help the customer to match the type of product to his or her likings and needs.

Check your progress- 2

Answer the following questions.

1. Why we need tour itinerary for adventure?
2. What is the importance of adventure tourism?

Check your answer with the one given at the end of the unit

13.6 Summary

Youth tourism has been identified as one of the largest segments of global and domestic tourism. The young travellers are primarily adventure experience seekers, collecting, enquiring unique experiences. Adventure and risk have a special role to play in the behaviour and attitudes of young travellers. The growing number of young travellers is being fuelled by a number of factors such as increased participation in higher education, falling level of youth unemployment, increased travel budget through parental contribution, search for an even more exciting and unique experience and cheaper long distance travel. Youth and adventure tourism appears to have considerable growth potential. The rising income in some major potential source markets such as the Central and Eastern Europe, Asia and Latin America, combined with the lower travel cost, growing student populations around the world particularly in developing countries, has fuelled the demand. India: a heaven for adventure tourism. India has been an attraction for travellers from all over the world. The trend has been showing an increased movement year after year with the development of facilities and greater awareness about adventure tourism options. So, in order to tape the existing potential Itineraries can prove to be an efficient tool to enhance adventure tourism vis-a vis their benefits to a country like India. Apart from socio-economic benefits adventure tours with a professional itinerary also help to

enhance social interaction, personal enjoyment, promoting team building and leadership, skills development (for example physical, mental, managerial), contribution to health and fitness, finally leading to an overall development.

Answer to Check Your Progress

Check Your Progress - 1

- 1) See sec. 1.2
- 2) See sec. 1.2
- 3) See sec. 1.3
- 4) See sec. 1.4

Check Your Progress - 2

- 1) See sec. 1.5
- 2) See sec. 1.5

13.7 Glossary

- **Adventure Tourism** - Outdoor recreational activities provided on a fee-for-service basis, with a focus on experiences associated with the natural environment. Also known as nature-based tourism or commercial recreation.
- **Crown land** - Land or land covered by water (such as rivers or lakes) that is owned by the provincial government. The vast majority of British Columbia's land area - fully 94 per cent - is Crown land.
- **Adventure Traveller:** Trips and tours designed for the active traveller often including hiking to see a remote icon scenic spot or flora and fauna, hiking, destination swimming i.e. from the bank of a gorge to the bottom of a waterfall, trekking, rafting, camping, terrain exploring. For the fit and adventurous who want to get off the beaten track.
- **'Safari in Style':** Safari accommodation (large permanent twin share tents) with proper beds, pillow, linen, towels, fans and lighting. Campsites have permanent cooking facilities, screened eating areas, share showers & toilets. Kings Canyon.

13.8 Review Questions

1. What do you mean by Adventure? How can adventure sports be developed as a product in tourism.
2. Explain the role and significance of itineraries towards development of adventure tourism
3. Explain the scope and potential of adventure tourism in India.
4. Explain various adventure tourism activities possible in India along with the favourable destinations for each sports activity
5. Develop an itinerary (with route map) for a group of college students from Japan interested in adventure tourism in India.

6. Develop an itinerary for a group of a police officers interested for an exciting expeditions in Himalayas.

13.9 Suggested Readings

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UNIT 14: AERO - SPORTS AND WATER - SPORTS BASED PACKAGES

Structure

- 14.0 Objectives
- 14.1 Introduction
- 14.2 Aero based sports tour package - Concepts and meaning
- 14.3 Water based sports tour package - concept and significance
- 14.4 Summary
- 14.5 Glossary
- 14.6 Suggested Readings

14.0 Objectives

After reading this unit, you will be able to:

- Describe the meaning and concept of aero based sports;
- Explain the water based sports,
- Discuss the significance of aero based sports.

14.1 Introduction

Recently, India has become more popular as the land of adventure sports. In fact, India has risen to be a prominent and distinguished destination for the adventure enthusiasts from across the globe. There exists a sheer variety of adventure sports in India that you will simply love to indulge in. The diverse opportunities for adventure offered by the only country on the planet Earth catapults several adventure lovers to this place each year. This unit describes the meaning and concept of aero based sports; explain the water based sports and finally unit ends with discussing the significance of aero based sports in India.

14.2 Aero based sports- Concepts and meaning

While man has always been fascinated with flying, airplanes and helicopters have fulfilled his desire to do so. But if you really want to go off on your own, and not as part of a crowd, you should head for some super exciting aero sports in India. Aero sports, as a part of adventure travel (remove 'the' before this), have recently gained popularity in India. Take up any aero sport like paragliding, hang gliding, parasailing, hot air ballooning, bungee jumping or sky diving and soar up high in the air on your own. Aero sports are bound to give you the adrenaline rush you require and as you experience the thrill of soaring through the sky, you may also enjoy a bird's eye view of the stunning nature beneath. A number of

places in the Himalayan and peninsular region offer ample options for aero sports. Listed below are various aero sports available in India and some important information including the destinations where you can take up these aero sports?

Aero Sports in India

Hang Gliding

Go hang gliding - it's the closest you will ever come to flying like bird in the sky! Hang gliding is an extreme sport and can be done by anyone who has a little training. So strap yourself up in the harness, wing your way through the clouds and feel free as a bird...

Hang Gliding Places in India

Himachal Pradesh has been offering sites for hang gliding since 1984 when the International Hang Gliding Rally was organized at Billing, 20 kms from Palampur in Kangra district. In the month of May/June a tented colony is set up by Himachal Tourism to facilitate hang gliders.

Some of the most excellent locations for hang gliding in India are:

- Himachal Pradesh: Shimla , Kasauli Dharamshala, Bir (this place is near Billing and has hosted three International and five National Hang Gliding championships)
- Maharashtra: Satara, Sinhgarh, Pune Kamshet
- Tamil Nadu: Ooty
- Meghalaya: Shilong
- Sikkim: Yumthang, Jorethang
- Madhya Pradesh: Mhow, Indore
- Karnataka: Maysore

Skydiving

Skydiving is one of the most visually stimulating aero sports and is fast becoming a popular activity amongst adventure enthusiasts. Skydiving is a diversion from simple parachuting, as one has to jump from an aircraft that is at certain altitude and fly free in the air without using the parachute at the start. Participants can perform an assortment of aerial manoeuvres before landing by parachute to slow their descent, allowing them to come gently to rest on the land. You need some serious training and several safety measures before enjoying this unique adventure sport in India or rather anywhere in the world. Compared to other aero sports and activities, skydiving in India is considered relatively more costly, but if done right, is totally worth it.

Destinations for Skydiving

Some of the recommended and best places for skydiving in India are:

Haryana: Pinjore (Panchkula)

Rajasthan: Jaipur;

Madhya Pradesh: Dhana;

Karnataka: Bengaluru

Best time to go Skydiving

You can go skydiving at anytime of the year except the monsoon and rainy seasons. However for skydiving, timing is more important than month to indulge in this sport. It is recommended that on a clear day you may go skydiving either from 8:00 am to 10:00 am or from 4:00 pm till 5:00 pm. This is primarily because this is when the best light is available without you having the sun directly on your head.

Tips

- Make sure to choose a reputed and certified organizer for sky diving
- Before skydiving just relax and recall the lessons your instructor has taught you. This is necessary because the fear in this sport arise most of the times due to lack of knowledge, which might not let you enjoy the thrill and fun of the sport
- Do remember that it is not really that complicated.
- Do not take up this sport if you suffer from high blood pressure, heart problem, fear of heights or if you are expecting

Hot Air-Ballooning

View the world from the top and get a different perspective altogether of the land below. Hot air ballooning is fast gaining popularity as it allows you the opportunity to do just that. You don't have to be a daredevil, nor do you have to have nerves of steel- just climb aboard the wicker basket attached to the helium filled balloon and sail through the sky while you admire the scenery.

This is one of the oldest flying form amongst all flight technologies, where you experience the excitement of floating in a huge balloon powered by an open flame that heats up the air thus taking the balloon up in the air.

Attached to the balloon is gondola or a wicker basket, which will carry you through the blue skies while experiencing the most amazing views of nature from above. The experience of enjoying a beautiful sunset or sunrise while on a hot air ride in India will be etched in your memory forever!

Bunjee Jumping

For an adventure enthusiast nothing can beat the thrill of freefalling from a crane or a bridge while being attached to an elastic cord. In Bungee jumping, one end of the thick elastic cord is tied to the jumper's body and the other end of the cord is tied to a stationary object at the jumping point.

Bungee Jumping in India has become popular over last few years and there are many organizers who take good care of all safety measures while offering this sport. Considered an extreme sport, Bungee jumping if done correctly and under professional guidance can be really a exhilarating experience.

Destinations in India for Bungee Jumping

Visit Rishikesh (Shivpuri) in Uttrakhand to enjoy Bungee Jumping or head to Bangalore where Xtreme Sports has set up a huge crane (150meters high) in Palace Grounds plus Ozone Adventures has set up their jumping pad at Kanteerva stadium for bungee jumping.

In Delhi, Wanderlust has set up a mobile crane for bungee jumping at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium or go to Goa where the organizers have set up a permanent tower for bungee jumping.

Best time to go Bungee Jumping

The best time for bungee jumping are the months between September and November and then between February and May. Avoid the months of monsoon.

Tips

- Please remember that before a jump you will be required to sign an indemnity bond which states that if something happens to you during the jumping process will your responsibility and not of the organiser
- Avoid wearing hats, loose clothes, short skirts and jewellery on the day of your jump. Also make sure that your shoes are securely tied to your feet lest they fly off
- There are certain precautions you need to take care before going for bungee jumping. Pregnant women, people with severe back problems, fear of heights, high BP are not allowed to jump

Also if a jumper is over 50years he or she needs a medical certificate

- Declaring him or her fit enough to jump.
- Do check all the bungee gears thoroughly for their quality and safety

Paragliding

For paragliding in India the pilot sits in a harness suspended below a hollow fabric wing whose shape is formed by its suspension lines. The pilot is clipped into a harness and is in a comfortable sitting position.

When the air pressure enters in the vents of the front wing, the aerodynamic forces of the air flow over the parachute, allowing you to fly with the natural air currents.

You can climb to higher altitudes of a few thousand meters and enjoy flying really high in the air for hours. Paragliders are fun to operate and you can

fly for one to two hours while covering certain distances. The speed range of paragliders is typically 20-75 kilometres per hour.

Billing is the first place in India which was the venue for the first ever paragliding competition according to the Federation of Aeronautics Himalayan Para Gliding Open Championship records.

Destinations for Paragliding in India

Destinations in India for paragliding which provide excellent paragliding opportunities are:

- Himachal Pradesh: Billing, Kullu, Solang, Lahaul & Spiti
- Uttarakhand: Naukuchiatal in Nainital, Dayara Bugyal and Dhanolti Ridge in Garhwal, Bedni Bugyal in Kumaon
- Rajasthan: Jaipur, Jaisalmer, Jodhpur, Udaipur and Bikaner
- Maharashtra: Matheran
- Tamil Nadu: Yelagiri

Best time to go Paragliding

- You may experience and enjoy paragliding throughout the year except during the monsoon season. The best time to undertake this sport is from March till early June and then from September till November.

Tips

- Paragliding is actually the simplest form to enjoy non-motorized flying experience. With just few tips you can undertake this sport and enjoy the scenic beauty and the thrill of flying together.
- You need to be physically fit
- Do not try to make too many stunts if you are not well trained
- Be mentally alert and simply follow the instructions given by your guide.

Keep the basics in mind and learn thoroughly the techniques of paragliding that include - launching, turning and landing.

Parasailing

Parasailing has become a very popular water sport in recent years and everyone should try it at least once. In fact, Parasailing in India is an exhilarating sport that gives you a chance to enjoy a dramatic view of the sea and beaches while flying in the air.

A long rope harnesses the parasailor with the parachute at one end and the boat at the other. The boat speeds ahead and lifts the sailor up into the air. There are two types of parasailing: Winch boat parasailing and the other is Beach parasailing.

Winch boat Parasailing

This sport involves a parachute and a boat. This type of parasailing is done with a well-equipped boat that has a parasail inflation system and hydraulic winch powered by the main drive engine.

These equipments help in launching and retrieving the parasailor from the flight deck. A parachute is attached to a boat and the person practicing parasailing is attached to a parachute. The boat drives off around the waterfront with parasail behind it, keeping the person off the ground

Beach Parasailing

For this type of parasailing, the beach is the main ground for both taking off and landing. Unlike winch boat parasailing, one has to run a few steps and then the rope attached to the boat helps to lift the passenger up in the air. Parasailing is also considered by many as a hobby rather than a sport, since the person on the parachute has no control over movement and speed and therefore becomes simply a passenger.

After taking some safety measures, this sport becomes safe and definitely very enjoyable. Goa is a popular place for beach parasailing.

Destinations for Parasailing in India

- Goa: Considered as one of the best destination for parasailing in India. The popular Goa Beaches that provide parasailing facilities are Miramar, Calangute, Candolim, Sinkerim, Mobor, Arossim and Cansaulim
- Pune: Places for parasailing in and near Pune are Kanifnath (20 kms from Pune on Saswad road) and Purandar (45 kms South-east from Pune) and Panchgani. Lakes: Pawna, Panshet, Mulshi, Khadakvasla
- Sanasar in Jammu & Kashmir
- Andaman and Nicobar Islands

Best time to go Parasailing

All seasons are good to enjoy parasailing in India except the monsoon season (July / August).

Tips

- Ensure that the company you choose to organize and operate parasailing for you should be fully licensed operating from a well-established location, insured by a licensed insurance company
- If you are untrained avoid parasailing in winds that exceed 15 knots
- Never take up parasailing activity in rain, fog or an approaching storm
- Avoid flying over 600 feet as this is the maximum recommended altitude for using hand signals and recovery over open oceans and 300 feet over small lakes or bays

- Avoid para-sailing in close proximity to the shoreline or buildings and other objects
- You can very easily get complete information and instructions about various types of parasail equipment, and passenger support devices like harness, tandem bar, ridged chair methods etc from the organizing company's guide

Aero Based Sports Tour Package

Skiing Tour

Destinations Covered: Delhi - Joshimath - Auli – Rishikesh;

Duration: 07 Nights / 08 Days

Day 01: Arrival at Delhi

Our representative shall pick you at the airport and take you to the hotel for check in. Overnight stay will be at the hotel.

Day 02: Delhi Sightseeing

After having breakfast, you will visit the various tourist places of Delhi such as Red Fort, Qutub Minar, India Gate, Lotus Temple, Jama Masjid, Purana Quila, Moughal Gardens, Akshardham Temple, etc. Return to hotel for overnight stay.

Day 03: Delhi - Joshimath

In the morning, you will be driven to Joshimath. Check into a resort as soon as you reach Joshimath. You must visit the famous Valley of Flowers in Joshimath. Return to resort to retire for night.

Day 04: Joshimath - Auli

After having breakfast, have the spell binding experience of traveling to Auli in the longest cable car of Asia. The cable car is 3.96 km long ascending from 1100 meters to 3016 meters. Check into the Auli sky resort as soon as you reach there.

Overnight stay will be in the resort.

Day 05: Auli Sightseeing

Auli attracts tourists from all over the place because of its scenic beauty. Auli is also known for skiing. When you reach Auli, make sure you give yourself the pleasure of skiing. Here, professional instructors will give you train you in skiing. Return to resort for overnight stay.

Day 06: Auli Sightseeing

You shall be spending this day also amidst the scenic beauty of Auli. You can enjoy by skiing on snow and perfecting yourself in this sport. Return to hotel for

overnight stay.

Day 07: Auli - Rishikesh

After having your breakfast you will be driven to Rishikesh. Check into a hotel as soon as you reach Rishikesh. During evening, you will be seeing the various tourist places of Rishikesh such as Gita Bhavan, Lakshman Jhula, Triveni Ghat, etc. Return to hotel for overnight stay.

Day 08: Rishikesh - Delhi

Today, you will be driven back to Delhi where after having lunch you head towards your onward destination with wonderful memories of skiing and enjoyment in India.

Check your progress – 1

Answer the following questions.

1. Define the aero sports
2. Identify major aero sports activities in India,

Check your answer with the one given at the end of the unit

14.3 Water based sports tour package - concept and significance

India's coastline, all of 7000 odd kms, has some very pretty beaches. A few are fairly famous- especially in 'beach bum' paradise, Goa- but there are also dozens of others in lesser known places, big and small. Many of them perfect for water sports. Some are good for swimming and some offer a wider spectrum of facilities, including snorkelling, surfing, kayaking and scuba diving.

States like Goa, Kerala and certain specific resorts, such as Kadmat or Bangaram in the Lakshadweep Islands, have developed infrastructure and these are the places you will find good equipment on hire, and institutions which conduct training courses. Good beaches in more obscure locations exist too, though they may not have too many facilities other than basic accommodation, eating places, and transport. In Rishikesh, one can also go kayaking in Himalayan Rivers. On the whole, the western coast is more suitable for water sports than the eastern coast, as the waters of the Arabian Sea tend to be calmer than those of the Bay of Bengal. So pack your swimwear, your snorkel and your suntan lotion- and head for the beach. Go snorkeling and discover the beauty of the underwater world.

Water Sports in India

Kayaking

Kayaking is a sport that can be enjoyed swooshing down a fast running river or paddling in the ocean that hugs the vast coastline of India. Strap yourself up in your kayak, haul on your helmet and protective gear and get set to have the

time of your life as you skillfully negotiate the gushing waters. A kayak is a narrow boat that is primarily designed to be driven manually by means of a double blade paddle and kayaking is all about using these kayaks to move across in lake/river or ocean. Kayaking is a wonderful way to experience sailing in water. Keeping in mind some easy safety measures and with a little skill anyone can enjoy this water sport. **Kayaking in India** can be taken up as a recreational activity if undertaken on the still waters of a lake or can also be enjoyed as an adventure sport in the rushing waters of rivers or in oceans as well. Recreational kayaking is done in a specially designed kayak that is for a casual paddler which is easier to manoeuvre when compared to the kayaks designed for high currents of a gushing river or ocean waters.

Kayaking in High Ocean currents require tremendous skills and specialized boats to overcome the water pressure. The kayak used for ocean waters has a larger cockpit and has lesser capacity in terms of speed, weight, direction and feasibility. These are widely used as they are less expensive and can be handled easily in and out of water.

Destinations in India for Kayaking

The Ganga and its tributaries like the Kali Ganga, the Indus, the Zanskar, the Teesta and the Rangeet are some of the **rivers for kayaking**. Other than these you can find many other rivers in northern India like the Sutlej, the Chenab, the Chandrabhaga, the Beas and the Spiti River which are good for kayaking.

Best time to go Kayaking

The Himalayan Rivers are inaccessible during winters in India. Rivers like Zanskar are frozen and most of the others are too cold for one to indulge in any water sport. The monsoon months bring heavy rains to the lower reaches of the Himalayas, and melting snows in the mountains result in higher waters in all of the rivers, making it dangerous to negotiate the waters. Only on the Teesta river can one take up kayaking in the winter months, between October and April.

Therefore summers in India are **best time to go kayaking**. In August and September the water is more manageable and these months are best to go for kayaking, however skilled people can opt early summer months like June or July. Spring in India is also a good time to enjoy kayaking.

Tips

- Considerable amount of skill and experience is required for higher seas and unpredictable weather
- First time kayakers can quickly get the hang of the sport under proper guidance, in the calmer waters
- Weather conditions, tides, currents and many other factors must be closely monitored to ensure safety. Therefore choose a reputable, experienced guid

- Carefully choose your paddling destination as various kayaking areas have widely varied kayaking conditions. First timers may avoid areas those are subject to high winds and vast expanses of water

Consider taking proper training and gathering an in depth knowledge of equipments and rowing techniques before taking up this adventure sport.

Scuba Diving

Scuba diving in the swirling oceans along the coastline whether it is the Arabian Sea or Bay of Bengal gives you a perspective of another kind. Explore coral reefs, marvel at the colourful marine life and underwater world and go where not many choose to go - discover another wonderful world under the water. Moreover, scuba diving is the best way to explore the beautiful azure underwater world in India. The vast coastline stretching thousands of kilometers in India dotted with island groups, finest beaches and fascinating marine life offers great scuba diving opportunities.

Destinations in India for Scuba Diving

Andaman and Nicobar islands, Lakshadweep islands, Goa and Karnataka are the perfect destinations for scuba diving in India.

Andaman/Nicobar Islands: Mahatma Gandhi Marine National Park, Carbyn's Cove Tourism Complex, Havelock.

Lakshadweep Islands: Bangaram, Kadmat

There are a number of stunning spots for **scuba diving in Goa**. Visit Grand Island off the Mormugao Harbour and enjoy some good diving sites as under

- Suzy's Wreck- Depth: 2-13 meters; Visibility: 4-12 meters; Conditions: Calm, occasional rush with negligible current
- Sail Rock- Depth: 8-24 meters; Visibility: 6-15 meters; Conditions: Gentle to strong current
- Davy Jones Locker- Depth: 11-18 meters; Visibility: 6-15 meters; Conditions: Moderate current
- Umma Gumma Reef- Depth: 6-12 meters; Visibility: 6-12 meters; Conditions: Calm, occasional and moderate current
- Lobster Avenue- Depth: 2-10 meters; Visibility: 6-12 meters; Conditions: Calm, occasional rush with negligible current
- Shelter Cove- Depth: 2-10 meters; Visibility: 6-12 meters; Conditions: Calm, occasional current
- The Jetty- Depth: 2-10 meters; Visibility: 6-12 meters; Conditions: Calm with no current

Best time to go Scuba Diving

- Any time of the year is good to go for scuba diving in India depending on the region. India has a variety of climatic conditions in various regions therefore leaving out the monsoon months the oceans off the Indian coastline is good

to go scuba diving at any time of the year, however the best time for scuba diving in Goa is from November to April

Tips

- Physical fitness comes first for scuba diving
- Proper training is imperative where scuba diving. The lessons given by instructors are to be kept in mind and it also gives the diver a chance to learn tasks like neutral buoyancy, underwater flexibility of movement, use of gear and familiarization with safety measures to be taken underwater
- Beware of animal stings. Avoid touching underwater animals without your guide's permission. Touching or playing roughly with the marine life might make them irritated and bear in mind that the really poisonous animals are most of the time very little
- Follow the instructions given by you trainer plus try and avoid unnecessarily touching the rocks around because species like rock fish etc look like rocks that might seriously hurt you very fast
- While diving you should keep in mind that to remove a coral or damage it is a legal offence in the Marine Park and anyways you should avoid disturbing the natural underwater habitat
- Practice diving over sand away from coral before snorkeling. Basically you have to learn controlled floating in order to float away from coral and reef animals in order to avoid damaging or hurting them

Do not try to grab or ride swimming animals in water and avoid obstructing their path

Snorkelling

Snorkeling is a sport in which you equip yourself with a diving mask, snorkel (a tube) and swim fins while swimming in the sea. This equipment allows the snorkeler to see the underwater marine life and coral reefs without diving in deep waters and needs relatively less effort than scuba-diving. Snorkelling is basically a less strenuous activity than scuba diving. The clear blue, green and turquoise waters of Indian coast line present a striking view of the most amazing Coral Sea beds while snorkeling. Snorkel off the beaches or try the mesmerizing islands of Lakshadweep & Andamans/Nicobar, these islands are paradise for snorkeling in India with absolutely clear waters & a stunning range of marine life.

Destinations in India for Snorkelling

Islands of Lakshadweep: Bangaram, Kadmat

Lakshadweep as it is known as one of the most scenic snorkeling destinations in India. With an extensive coastline, coral islands and an amazing variety of marine life you will have the best snorkeling experience here.

Andaman Islands: Mahatma Gandhi Marine National Park, Corbyn's Cove Tourism Complex, Havelock. Go to the Andaman Islands to enjoy the underwater marine life and view the rarest varieties of corals.

Goa, Karnataka: Netrani Island and Marharashtra

Explore the underwater world of the Arabian Sea at Konkan and visit the beach in Tarkarli to enjoy snorkeling in the clear waters.

Best time to go Snorkelling

Major snorkeling operators in India are Barracuda diving, Lacadives DiveIndia, Casino Resort at Bangaram Island and Planet Scuba India.

Things to keep in mind while taking up snorkeling are:

- Make sure your equipment is of good quality and that you are familiar with it
- Be aware of waves, currents and potential hazards such as rocks
- Be well hydrated when you enter the water, and use sunscreen
- Avoid touching marine life or obstructing their path. Also avoid touching or disturbing coral reefs
- Try not to stir up sediment in water
- Learn, practice and develop controlled floating ability, so as to float away from coral and reef animals

If you get tired while snorkeling, try to use rest stations or if your legs become tired or if you develop a cramp while snorkeling try flipping over onto your back. This will let you tread water easily while remaining afloat on the surface of the water

Surfing

Surfing is an exhilarating sport and it is not as easy as it looks! Get your high by riding the waves, feel the spray on your face as you skim the waters and conquer the breakers. So what are you waiting for? Pick up a surfboard and head into the waves to have the most invigorating time of your life. We promise once you start you will get hooked. Ride the waves-go surfing in India. With an enormous stretched coastline exposed to parts of the Arabian Sea, the Indian Ocean and the Bay of Bengal, India has many spots just right for surfing. Surfing is a sport which basically lets the surfer ride his surfboard on the crest of the sea waves that carry him towards the shore.

There are very many **surfing spots** you could find on the southern tip of India. So gear up and get ready to ride the waves and have the most unforgettable experience

Destinations in India for Surfing

You can go **surfing in India** at following destinations:

- Karnataka: Gokarna, Mangalore (Panambur Beach), Udupi (Kodi Bengre), Mulki
- Tamil Nadu: Chennai, Mamallapuram on the east coast

- Orissa: Puri, Konark (Marine Drive beach, Balighai Beach)
- Kerala: Thiruvananthapuram (Varkala)
- North Goa

Best time to go Surfing

The best time to go **surfing in India** is considered to be in the months of September, October and November. The surf at this time can be approximately 8 feet. Few months can make your surf a little blown out with the tropical hurricanes and cyclones which are common between April to June and end-September to December. However it is possible to get perfect surfing conditions during these months particularly early in the morning.

October is basically good for beginners. March till June and August till November is also a good time to go surfing on the West coast of India.

Tips: Things to keep in mind while taking up snorkeling are:

- Surfboards are designed to float on the water no matter what. They have a natural center of gravity. There is a point on the surf board that balances your body weight. In order to maintain your body weight on the surf board stand with your chin aligned to that particular spot
- One should always wear a leash or leg rope tied to their surfboard
- Never keep your board between yourself and the coming waves. This will cause collision
- If the surf board's nose digs into the water it is called 'pearling' and when this happens you must move the location of your chin back in order to avoid falling and maintaining the balance
- Don't put too much weight towards the back of the board as you will lose balance
- Wear the safety nose guard for safety measures
- Wear a vest, rash guard or a tee shirt to avoid a rash you may get from the waves or surfboard

Water based sports tour package

1. White Water Rafting Tour

Destinations Covered: Delhi - Rishikesh – Haridwar;

Duration: 04 Nights / 05 Days

Day 01: Arrival at Delhi

Our representative shall pick you at the airport and help you to check into a hotel. After having lunch, you will be visiting the various tourist places in Delhi such as Red Fort, Purana Quila, Lotus Temple, Connaught Place etc. Return to hotel for overnight stay.

Day 02: Delhi - Rishikesh

after having breakfast, you will be driven to Rishikesh. Check into a hotel as soon as you reach Rishikesh. After lunch, you will be visiting the famous tourists spots in Rishikesh such as Ram Jhula, Triveni Ghat etc. You will also be enjoying a raft

trip on River Ganges. Return back to hotel for overnight stay.

Day 03: Rishikesh - Haridwar

following breakfast, you will be visiting various other tourist places in Rishikesh such as Shivanand Jhoola, Raghunath Temple, Venkateshwar Temple, Bharat Mandir, etc. In the evening, you will be driven to Haridwar. Check into a hotel for overnight stay as soon as you reach Haridwar.

Day 04: Haridwar Sightseeing

In the morning, you will be visiting the various places of tourist interests in Haridwar such as Rajaji National Park, Sureshwari Devi Temple, Mansa Devi temple, Har ki Pauri etc. Return to hotel to retire for night.

Day 05: Haridwar - Delhi

On this day, you will be driven back to Delhi airport, from where you will be proceeding towards your onward destination

2. Package Duration : 4 Days / 3 Nights,

Destination Covered: Andaman Islands - Port Blair

- **Day 1: Port Blair-** On arrival at Port Blair in the morning by flight, you will be received and transfer to your hotel. In the afternoon hours by 02:30 PM start for a tour of places in and around Port Blair - covering Carbyn's cove (Carbyn's Cove Beach, the coconut-palm-fringed beach and ideal for sun basking. Historical remains like Japanese bunkers can seen on the way), Science Center, Marina Park & Jogas Park. Reach back your hotel by 6 PM at the end of the trip. Overnight stay at Port Blair.
- **Day 2: Port Blair-** In the morning by 8. 45 hours start for a full day tour by boat to visit ROSS ISLAND from where Britisher's governed the entire Andaman and Nicobar Island, prior to India's Independence. Proceed to a visit to NORTH BAY ISLAND (Coral Island) an ideal spot for coral viewing by glass bottom boat and Snorkeling. Afterwards, enjoy the cruise journey (HARBOUR CRUISE) along the Port Blair harbour - which takes one to VIPER ISLAND. Reach back your hotel by 5. 30 PM at the end of the trip. Overnight stay at Port Blair.
- **Day 3: Port Blair-** Chatham Saw Mill, Anthropological Museum, Sagarika Emporium, National Memorial Cellular Jail, Light & Sound Show (By 5. 30 PM attend the enthralling SOUND AND LIGHT SHOW at Cellular Jail, where the heroic saga of the Indian freedom struggle is brought alive). Reach back your hotel by 7 PM at the end of the trip. Overnight stay at Port Blair.
- **Day 4: Port Blair-** At appropriate time transfer to Airport/Harbor to reach your home destination with lovely memories to cherish

Includes:

• **Inclusions**

- Accommodation on twin sharing as per the package chosen.
- Transportation: Non Ac for Economic Budget, Standard Budget & Deluxe Budget and Ac for Suit Budget.

- Meals Economic Budget is not applicable. For Standard Budget, Deluxe Budget & Suit Budget Breakfast only.
- Entry permits/Entry tickets/Boat tickets/Ferry tickets wherever required.
- All kind of transport and luxury Taxes.
- Parking Charges.
- **Exclusions**
 - All kind of personal expenses such as tips, laundry, telephone bills and beverages.
 - It also does not include any meals unless and otherwise specifically mentioned.
 - Domestic and International airfare.
 - Optional, suggested or unspecified activities.
 - Camera fee (still or video) Hotel shifting, snorkeling, Guide Charges, repetition of any tour.

Check your progress – 2

Answer the following questions.

1. Define water based sports?
2. What are the main water sports in India?

Check your answer with the one given at the end of the unit.

14.4 Summary

India, more popular as the land of snake charmers is the talk of the past. In the recent years, India has risen to be a prominent and distinguished destination for the adventure enthusiasts from across the globe. There exists a sheer variety of adventure sports in India that you will simply love to indulge in. The diverse opportunities for adventure offered by the only country on the planet Earth catapults several adventure lovers to this place each year. From rock climbing to trekking in the Himalayas to river rafting in Uttaranchal, from hot air ballooning in the plains of India to camel rides amidst the golden sands of the Thar Desert. If all this is offered by the North India, South India offers immense opportunities for indulging in water sports. This unit introduced aero sports and water sports to the students and described various popular destinations so that students can develop aero sports tour package.

Answer to Check Your Progress

Check Your Progress - 1

- 1) See sec. 1.2
- 2) See sec. 1.2

Check Your Progress - 2

- 1) See sec. 1.3

2) See sec. 1.3

14.5 Glossary

- **Paragliding:** it is the recreational and competitive adventure sport of flying paragliders
 - **Bungee jumping:** it is an activity that involves jumping from a tall structure while connected to a large elastic cord.
 - **White water rafting:** it is the challenging recreational outdoor activity of using an inflatable raft to navigate a river or other bodies of water
-

14.6 Review Questions

1. What are the various aero sports in India?
 2. Elaborate the uniqueness of aero sports in Himachal Himalaya.
 3. Suggest an itinerary for British tourists who are the aero sports lover in Himalaya.
 4. Prepare a tour package for White water rafting in south India.
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14.7 Suggested Readings

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UNIT 15: CULTURAL TOURISM PACKAGES - PILGRIMAGE, FESTIVAL AND MONUMENTS AND MUSEUM VISITS

Structure

15.0 Objectives

15.1 Introduction

15.2 Cultural Tourism - Concepts and meaning

15.3 Cultural Tour Package: Pilgrimage; Festival; Monument and Museum

15.4 Summary

15.5 Glossary

15.6 Review Questions

15.7 Suggested Readings

15.0 Objectives

After reading this unit, you will be able to:

- Describe the meaning and concept of Cultural Tourism packages
- Explain the Pilgrimage and Festival tour package.
- Discuss the Monument and Museum tour package.

15.1 Introduction

Cultural tourism is the subset of tourism concerned with a country or region's culture, specifically the lifestyle of the people in those geographical areas, the history of those people, their art, architecture, religion(s), and other elements that helped shape their way of life. Cultural tourism includes particularly historic or large cities and their cultural facilities such as museums, and theatres. It can also include tourism in rural areas showcasing the traditions of indigenous cultural communities (i.e. festivals, rituals), and their values and lifestyle. It is generally agreed that cultural tourists spend substantially more than standard tourists do. This form of tourism is also becoming generally more popular throughout the world. This Unit attempt; to fiuniliarise you with the Cultural Tourism along with the basic knowledge to prepare cultural tour itineraries.

15.2 Cultural Tourism - Concepts and Meaning

According to the World Travel and Tourism Council Tourism in India is a large industry generated \$121 billion or 6.4% of the nation's GDP in 2011. It was responsible for 39,3 million jobs, 7.9% of its total employment. The GDP of the tourism sector has expanded 229% between 1990 and 2011. The sector is

predicted to grow at an average annual rate of 7,7% in the next decade. In a 2011 forecast the World Travel and Tourism Council predicted the annual growth to be 8,8% between 2011 and 2021. This gave India the fifth rank among countries with the fastest growing tourism industry. India's rich history and its cultural and geographical diversity make its international tourism appeal large and diverse. It presents heritage and cultural tourism along with medical, business and sports tourism. India has long been known as a very spiritual, religious heavy area of the world. In India, religion is a way of life. It is an integral part of the entire Indian tradition. For the majority of Indians, religion permeates every aspect of life, from common-place daily chores to education and politics. Secular India is home to Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism and other innumerable religious traditions. Hinduism is the dominant faith, practiced by over 80% of the population. Besides Hindus, Muslims are the most prominent religious group and are an integral part of Indian society. In fact India has the second largest population of Muslims in the world after Indonesia. Common practices have crept into most religious faiths in India and many of the festivals that mark each year with music, dance and feasting are shared by all communities. Each has its own cultural /pilgrimage sites, heroes, legends and even culinary specialties, mingling in a unique diversity that is the very pulse of society.

Cultural tourism India is the predominant factor behind India's meteoric rise in the tourism segment in recent years, because from time immemorial, India has been considered the land of ancient history, heritage, and culture. The government of India has set up the Ministry of Tourism and Culture to boost cultural tourism in India. The ministry in recent years has launched the 'Incredible India!' campaign and this has led to the growth of culture tourism in India.

India has had many rulers over the centuries and all of them made an impact on India's culture. One can see the influence of various cultures in dance, music, festivities, architecture, traditional customs, food, and languages. It is due to the influence of all these various cultures that the heritage and culture of India is exhaustive and vibrant. This richness in culture goes a long way in projecting India as the ultimate cultural tourism destination given boost to tourism in culture in India. The most popular states in India for cultural tourism are:

- Rajasthan
- Tamil Nadu
- Uttar Pradesh
- Uttaranchal

The concept of cultural tourism again is very complex and so there is a long debate among scholars about its definition and conceptualisation. Cultural tourism is tourism that focuses on the culture of a destination - the lifestyle, heritage, arts, industries and leisure pursuits of the local population.

According to UNWTO "All movements of persons might be included in the definition because they satisfy the human need for diversity, tending to raise

the cultural level of the individual and giving rise to new knowledge, experience and encounters. (Broad Definition).

Movements of persons for essentially cultural motivations such as study tours, performing arts and cultural tours, travel to festivals and other cultural events, visits to sites and monuments.(Narrow Definition).”

The most important components of cultural tourism are as:

Types of cultural tourism	Tourism products, activities
Heritage tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural and cultural heritage (very much connected to nature-based or ecotourism); • Material <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - built heritage, - architectural sites, - world heritage sites, - national and historical memorials • Non material <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - literature, - arts, - folklore • Cultural heritage sites <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - museums, collections, - libraries, - theatres, - event locations, - memories connected to historical persons
Cultural thematic routes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • wide range of themes and types: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - spiritual, - industrial, - artistic, - gastronomic, - architectural, - linguistic, - vernacular, - minority
Cultural city tourism, cultural tours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “classic” city tourism, sightseeing • Cultural Capitals of Europe • “Cities as creative spaces for cultural tourism”
Traditions, ethnic tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local cultures’ traditions • Ethnic diversity
Event and festival tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural festivals and events <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Music festivals and events (classic and light or pop music) - Fine arts festivals and events

15.3 Cultural Tour Package: Pilgrimage; Festival; Monument and Museum

Since time immemorial, India has been known for its spirituality, religious tolerance and its secular character. India is called the "yogabhoomi" and the gateway to the heavens. Innumerable saints and seers, in their quest for knowledge, have contributed largely to the development of various religious monuments viz. Temples, Mosques, Monasteries etc. built lavishly across the length and breadth of the country. For this very reason, India is also known as the of temple country. The architectural exuberance is expressed in its places of worship, which form an integral part of its cultural diversity. It has been a tradition in India to commemorate all the deities, gods and goddesses by building shrines, which is evident in the various temples. In the olden times, kings of various dynasties used to worship a particular deity, and thus it was a common practice to build huge temples, which are in themselves, architectural marvels. India is famous for its places of worship. The cosmopolitan flavour of its religions is well reflected in its multitude of holy shrines. Apart from the pilgrim centres that India is known for, a large number of places of worship are known among devotees for eternal powers and wish fulfillment.

Char Dham Tour

Duration :- 09 Nights / 10 days

Destinations:- Delhi - Haridwar - Mussoorie - Barkot - Jankichatti - Yamunotri - Uttarkashi - Gangani - Gangotri - Guptkashi - Gaurikund - Kedarnath - Joshimath - Badrinath - Haridwar - Delhi

Day 01: Arrive Delhi - Arrive Delhi and check in at hotel and relax. Later proceed for sightseeing city tour in Delhi visit monuments. Overnight stay at the hotel.

Day 02: Delhi-Haridwar - In the morning after breakfast just proceed for Haridwar. Check in at hotel and relax. Later proceed for Haridwar visit including Ramghat, Vishvkarma ghat, Ganga temple, Shankar temple. In the evening attend Ganga Aarti. Return to the hotel for dinner and overnight stay.

Day 03: Haridwar - Mussoorie - Barkot - In the morning after relish your breakfast just proceed for Barkot via Mussoorie, visit Kempty Fall enroute. Night stay at barkot.

Day 04: Barkot - Jankichatti - Yamunotri - In the morning proceed for Janakichatti then Yamunotri. Attend Yamunotri Pooja and Holy dip in Yamunotri. In the evening return to the barkot and overnight stay.

Day 05: Yamunotri - Uttarkashi - In the morning after breakfast proceed for Uttarkashi. Visit Shiv cave enroute and Kashi Vishwanath temple. Overnight stay at Uttarkashi.

Day 06: Uttarkashi - Gangani - Gangotri - Uttarkashi - In the mornig after

breakfast proceed for Gangnani and Gangotri. Attend Holy dip in Taptkund, Pooja and darshan in Gangnani and Gangotri. In the evening return to the Uttarkashi and overnight stay.

Day 07: Uttarkashi - Guptkashi - In the morning after breakfast proceed for Guptkashi and visit Guptkashi temple. Overnight stay at Guptkashi.

Day 08: Guptkashi - Gaurikund - Kedarnath - Eearly morning, pick up your packed lunch and drive to Gaurikund by road covering 32 km in approx 1 hrs & . Start steep 14 km Trek to Kedarnath, Stop for lunch en route and continue after that to arrive by late afternoon. After freshening up, perform Pooja and visit (darshan) Shri KedarnathJi. In the evening also visit the Adi Shankaracharya Samadhi behind the temple. Dinner and overnight at Kedarnath.

Day 09: Kedarnath - Gaurikund - Guptkashi - In the morning attend pooja and darshan. After breakfast, trek back to Gaurikund and drive to Chardham Camp Resort, Guptkashi, arriving there by evening. Relax with Ayurvedic Massage. Dinner and overnight at the camp resort.

Day 10: Guptkashi - Joshimath - Eearly morning after breakfast leave for Joshimath by road covering 175 km in approx 6 hours, stopping at Chopta and Pipalkoti. This is one of the most beautiful sites of the whole trip. Arrive at Chardham Camp Resort, Joshimath by late afternoon. Evening free for you to explore Joshimath. Dinner and overnight at the camp resort.

Day 11:- Joshimath - Badrinath - Joshimath - After breakfast leave for Shri Badrinathji by road covering 90 km in approx 3 hrs. On arrival take the holy Darshan and spend time visiting Mana village -the last village before the Tibetan border. Return to the resort for an Ayurvedic massage. Dinner and overnight at Joshimath.

Day 12:- Joshimath - Haridwar - Delhi - After breakfast leave for Haridwar. Reach Haridwar in the late evening and and relax with an Ayurvedic massage. In the evening proceed for Delhi to onward journey.

Fair and Festival Tourism in India

India is the land of fun and frolic. The Indians celebrate the various fairs and festivals to the extent that there are more number of fairs and festivals in a year than the total number of days. The rites and the rituals followed by the Indians, the enthusiasm and faith that are constant features add to the charm of the fairs and festivals.

Most the Indian festivals are regional, seasonal or religious. The unity of the diverse country like India can be seen at the national festivals of the Republic day (26th January), Independence Day (15th August), Gandhi Jayanti i.e. the birth anniversary of the father of the nation (2nd October) and Children's Day i.e. the birth anniversary of Jawaharlal Nehru (14th November). The entire population of the nation rejoices on these occasions that are landmarks events in the history of the nation and reveal the integration. On Republic Day the colorful parade with

tableaus from the different states and the daring display of developments by the three wings, army, navy and air force held near the India Gate in Delhi is amazing as well as novel. There is a big list of the religious festivals that are celebrated in India. In the secular country of India people light up their homes with as many lights on Diwali as on Christmas, the fireworks are as loud as on Onam. The colors of Holi are spread across the castes and creeds. Hindus commemorate the birth anniversaries of their deities as Ram Navami, Maha Shivratri, Janam Ashtami similarly, the Sikhs remember their gurus on Gurgurab. On the occasion of Raksha Bandhan an unspoken pledge is exchanged between, a brother and sister cementing their fraternal relationship.

RAJASTHAN WITH FAIRS AND FESTIVALS

The above itinerary has been framed in such a way that it can be operated for the various festivals as mentioned above. Basically the itinerary will remain the same but we will be able to participate in different festivals as per the decided dates. I don't know if you are interested in these fairs and festivals and would like to incorporate in the programmes.

Day 1 Arrive Delhi transfer to hotel for over night.

Day 2 Morning combined sightseeing of Delhi. Evening transfer to Train Station to board train for Bikaner.

Day 3 Arrive Bikaner, transfer to hotel. Further sightseeing of Bikaner .Overnight at hotel.

Day 4 Drive to Panchoo en route visit the Rat Temple, to start our Camel Safari in the Thar Desert.

ABOUT CAMEL SAFARI: The Camel Safari is the experience of the tough life, journey through the desert that has a charm of its own. A true show on the sands, which attracts even the much-traveled visitor. Bikaner is an Enchanting place, which comes alive with music and dance. It is fast gaining popularity as the Visitor finds an Opportunity to see some unusual folk programme, camel race, camel dance etc. The people of the desert have been using Camels for times immemorable. Rather it is still their only means of transport. Camel is a ship for a survival in the desert. The camel safari can be done according To the holidays available from one day to 10 days.

Day 5. 6, 7 Camel Safari through the desert.

Day 8 Camel Safari finishes at Jamba, drive to Jaisalmer. Overnight in hotel.

Day 9 Morning visit Jaisalmer Fort, the Havelis, and Sam Sand dunes for Sunset

Viewing, and Jain Temple.

Day10 Drive to Jodhpur. Afternoon Sightseeing of Mehrangarh Fort, Jaswant Thada, night in Hotel.

Day 11 Drive to Pushkar via Ajmer a 5 hrs drive. A) For Pushker Festival.

PUSHKAR: According to religious texts this lake is supposed to have appeared miraculously when a lotus flower fell from the hands of Lord Brahma and dropped into this valley. Pushkar Lake, believed by the Hindus to be as old as creation, has been a place of Pilgrimage through the centuries. Pushkar has stood witness to the procession of history from the time of Rama, the hero of the earliest Hindu epic the Ramayana, to Fa-Hein's accounts of Pushkar in the 4th century A.D. and to the time of the Muslim invasions.

Day 12 in Pushkar during Festival.

Day13 In Pushker

Day14 Pushkar to Jaipur 142 kms and 5 hours drive. Evening explore market.

Day15 Morning visit Amber Fort on Elephant back. After Pink City .Over night in Hotel.

Day16 Drive to Jaipur to Bharatpur. 176 kms. and 5hrs.drive over night in Hotel.

Day 17 Full day in Bharatpur for A.M & P.M. Visits to Sanctuary. Over Night in hotel

Day18 Drive for Agra and enroute visit Fatehpur Sikri 3 hrs and 56 kms drive.Over night in Hotel in Agra.

Day 19 Morning Sightseeing of Agra, Taj Mahal, Red Fort, Utmad-ul-Dulla .and market. Over night in hotel.

Day 20 Drive Agra to Delhi. Arrive Delhi check in hotel. Late transfer to International Airport

Popular Itineraries for Pilgrimage Tourism

Day 1: Flight to India (Delhi) Around Midnight arrival in Delhi.

The cosmopolitan City and capital Delhi is the main gateway for travelers. You are met by an Virtual Tours representative and transferred to your Hotel.

Day 2: Delhi

Today full day city tour covering - Qutab Minar, Laxmi Narayan Temple - The Place of Gods, India Gate - The memorial of martyrs, Parliament House - The Government Headquarters. In the afternoon take a city tour of Old Delhi covering Jama Masjid - The largest mosque in Asia, Red Fort - The red stone magic, Humayun Tomb, Gandhi memorial - The memoir of father of the nation. Overnight hotel.

Day 3: Delhi Haridwar.

Today, we shall drive you to Haridwar. On arrival check in into hotel. Later we shall take you for a visit to the Har - Ki - Pauri, enjoy the AARTI in the evening. Later back to hotel for overnight stay at the hotel.

Day 4: HARIDWAR-SYANACHATTI

Today we shall drive you to Syana Chatti - a scenic spot on the banks of River Yamuna. Overnight stay at hotel.

Day 5: SYANA CHATTI - YAMUNOTRI - SYANA CHATTI

5 kms By Road & 13 Kms trek one side Drive to Hanuman Chatti, trek start to Yamunotri & Back. Overnight stay at Syana Chatti. Hanuman Chatti: The confluence of Hanuman

Ganga & Yamuna River. Yamunotri Temple: Maharani Gularia of Jaipur built the temple in the 19th Century. It was destroyed twice in the present century and rebuilt again. Surya Kund: There are a Number of thermal springs in the vicinity of the temple, which flows into numerous pools. The most important of these is Surya Kund.

Day 6: SYANACHATTI-UTTARKASHI

Drive to Uttarkashi via Badkot. Uttarkashi: Situated at the bank of river Bhagirathi. The temple of Lord Vishwanath is located here where a massive iron trident is erected. The other important temples situated here are Ekadash Rudra, Bhairav, Gyaneshwar and Goddess Kuteti Devi.

Day 7: UTTARKASHI-GANGOTRI-UTTARKASHI

Drive to Gangotri. Gangotri Temple: The temple, constructed by the Gorkha General Amar Singh Thapa in the 18th Century, is situated on the right bank of Bhagirathi. Submerged Shivling: Submerged in the river, this natural rock Shivling is the place where, according to mythology Lord Shiva sat when he received the Ganga in his matted lock. It is visible in winter months when water level decreases. Kedar Ganga Sangam: Starting from the Kedar Valle, this river meets the Bhagirathi on its left bank. Gaumukh: The Gaumukh Glacier is the source of Bhagirathi & is held in the high esteem by the devouts who do not miss the opportunity to have a holy dip in the BONE CHILLING icy water. It is 18 km from Gangotri by trek.

Day 8: UTTARKASHI-RUDRAPRAYAG

After early breakfast, drive to Rudraprayag. Overnight Stay at Skylark. s Resort at Rudraprayag. Rudraprayag: It is the confluence of river Mandakini and river Alaknanda. Temples: Rudranath and Chamunda Devi, Koteswar Temple (3Kms).Overnighthotel.

Day 9: RUDRAPRAYAG-GAURIKUND-KEDARNATH

Drive to Gaurikund, Trek start from Gaurikund to Kedarnath. Gaurikund: At a distance of 5kms from Sonprayag and at an altitude of 1982 meters. One can take bath in the hot water pond here and visit the Gauri Temple. This is the place where Goddess Parvathi meditated to attain Lord Shiva.

It is thebaseforatrektoKedarnath

Day 10: KEDARNATH - GAURIKUND - RUDRAPRAYAG

14kms Trek (Back) & 78 kms/3hr later back to Gaurikund from Kedarnath. Drive to Rudraprayag from Gaurikund. Check in into resort at Rudraprayag. Overnight hotel.

Day 11: RUDRAPRAYAG - JOSHIMATH

Joshimath is situated on the slopes above the confluence of Alaknanda and Dhauliganga. Of the four 'Maths' established by Adi Shankaracharya, Joshimath is in the Badrinath to Joshimath and installed in the temple for people to worship. Overnight hotel.

Day 12: JOSHIMATH - BADRINATH

Drive to Badrinath via Govind Ghat. Badrinath: one of the' Four Dhams. is one of the most celebrated pilgrimage spots of the country and is situated at an elevation of 3,133 meters, guarded on either side by the two mountain ranges known as Nar & Narayan with the towering Neelkanth Peak providing a splendid backdrop. This revered spot was once carpeted with wild berries. Thus the place got the name "Badri van", meaning "forest of berries". Overnight hotel.

Day 13: BADRINATH - GOVINDGHAT

Today we shall drive you to Govindghat. On arrival check in into hotel. Overnight hotel.

Day 14: GOVINDGHAT - HARIDWAR - DELHI

Today we shall drive you back to Haridwar in time enough to catch the Shatabdi Express to Delhi. On arrival check in into hotel. Overnight hotel.

Buddhist Pilgrimage and Leh Tour

This tour \ itinerary covers following destinations: Delhi - Lucknow - Sravasti - Lumbini - Kushinagar- Vaishali - Patna - Nalanda - Rajgir - Bodhgaya - Varanasi - Delhi - Leh - Alchi - Lamayuru - Leh - Delhi - Agra - Delhi
Further, the duration is 16 Nights / 17 Days

Day 01: Arrival Delhi

On arrival at Delhi International Airport, you will be met and transferred to your Hotel. Check into the Hotel and relax. Overnight stay will be at Delhi

Day 02: Delhi - Lucknow - Sravasti

After breakfast, in time transfer to airport to board a morning flight for Lucknow. Arrive Lucknow and check into your hotel. Afternoon, enjoy an excursion to Sravasti, a place where Lord Buddha spent his last 20 rainy seasons. Visit the ancient villages of Maheth and Saheth, which have the remains of the Jetavana Monastery. These Sravasti villages also have the ruins and relics of Jain temples.

Overnight stay will be at Sravasti.

Day 03: Sravasti - Lumbini

After breakfast, we drive to Lumbini, the birthplace of the Lord Buddha, in Nepal. Arrive Lumbini and check into the Hotel. Afternoon, enjoy a visit to the location where Lord Buddha is believed to be born. Overnight stay will be at Lumbini.

Day 04: Lumbini - Kushinagar

After breakfast, we drive to Kushinagar, where Lord Buddha breathed his last. Arrive at Kushinagar and check into your hotel. After freshen up, visit the Mahaparinirvana Temple and Ramabhar Stupa.

Overnight stay will be at Kushinagar.

Day 05: Kushinagar - Vaishali - Patna

After breakfast at hotel, we proceed to Patna by surface, enroute visiting Vaishali. Vaishali is one of the important ancient historic cities of India, where Lord Buddha preached his last sermon. Arrive at Patna and check into the Hotel. Overnight stay will be at Patna.

Day 06: Patna - Nalanda - Rajgir - Bodhgaya

After breakfast at hotel, we drive to Bodhgaya visiting Nalanda and Rajgir, enroute. While Rajgir was an ancient capital city, Nalanda is a famous Buddhist site known for its ancient university. Arrive at Bodhgaya and check into the hotel and relax. Overnight stay will be at Bodhgaya.

Day 07: Bodhgaya

After breakfast at the hotel, visit the sacred Mahabodhi Temple - where the Buddha attained enlightenment under a Bodhi Tree after years of search for the truth and knowledge. Afternoon, enjoy a sightseeing tour of Bodhgaya visiting

Niranjana River, Sujata Village and many beautiful monasteries. Evening, visit the Mahabodhi Temple for prayer. Overnight stay will be Bodhgaya

Day 08: Bodhgaya - Varanasi

After breakfast at hotel, we drive to Varanasi. Arrive and check into the Hotel. Evening free at leisure. Overnight stay will be at Varanasi.

Day 09: Varanasi - Delhi

Early morning visit to lively Ghats of the Ganges to enjoy the breathtaking view of the sunrise and rituals performed by thousands on its banks. Enjoy an unforgettable boat cruise on the Ganges, indeed a wonderful experience. Afternoon, in time transfer to airport for flight to Delhi. Arrive at Delhi and check into the hotel. Overnight stay will be at Delhi.

Day 10: Delhi - Leh

Wake up early and board a morning flight to Leh. Arrive at Leh and check-in at hotel. Rest of the day free at your leisure for the acclimatization, as Leh is at an altitude of 3,500 meters above sea level. In the evening, enjoy a short walk around Leh market. Overnight stay will be at Leh.

Day 11: Leh

After breakfast at hotel, enjoy a full day excursion to the famous monasteries of Leh. Visit the famous Thiksey Monastery to see the morning praying ceremony. Further proceed to visit Hemis Monastery, one of the most famous and enchanting monasteries in the Ladakh region. Return to Leh, enroute visiting enchanting Shey Palace. Overnight stay will be at Leh.

Day 12: Leh

After breakfast at hotel, enjoy a full day excursion to Khardongla Pass, the highest pass in the world at an altitude of 5,600 meters above the sea level. From the top, enjoy the breathtaking view of snow-capped mountains and valleys. Late afternoon return to Leh. Evening free at leisure. Overnight stay will be at Leh.

Day 13: Leh - Alchi

After breakfast at hotel, we proceed for Alchi, enroute visiting Basgo Palace and Likir Monastery. Arrive at Alchi and check-in at the hotel. After freshening up, visit the amazing Alchi Monastery. Overnight stay will be at Alchi.

Day 14: Alchi - Lamayuru - Leh

After breakfast at hotel, we proceed for Lamayuru via Khalsti (passport checking point). In Lamayuru, visit the enchanting 10th century Buddhist Monastery. Return to Leh. Overnight stay will be at Leh.

Day 15: Leh - Delhi - Agra

After breakfast at hotel, in time transfer to domestic airport for flight to Delhi. Arrive at Delhi and we straightaway drive to Agra. Arrive at Agra and check into the hotel.

Day 16: Agra - Delhi

After breakfast, visit the Taj Mahal - the most beautiful monument in the world

and the magnificent Agra Fort. After lunch, we proceed to Delhi by road. Arrive at Delhi and check into the hotel.

Overnight stay will be at Delhi.

Day 17: Delhi - Tour Concludes

After breakfast at the Hotel, enjoy a morning sightseeing tour of old Delhi. Visit and see the magnificent Red Fort, Jama Masjid (Biggest mosque in India), Chandni Chowk Bazaar (oldest market of Delhi) and Raj Ghat (Mahatma Gandhi memorial).

Afternoon, enjoy a sightseeing of New Delhi visiting India Gate, President House, Parliament House and Laxmi Narayan Temple. Evening free for Shopping.

After dinner, in time transfer to international airport to board the flight for your onward destination or way back home with sweet memories of India. Overnight stay will be at Agra.

- Visiting religious sites and monuments (churches, clusters, exhibition places)
- Taking part in religious events (holy days, religious cultural and music programmes, visiting religious persons) Pilgrimage
- Organised groups visiting sacred places as a tourism destinations (either with religious motivation or with a motivation desired by the architectural and cultural importance of the sight)
- Individually organised visitors with their own programme organisation
Such cultural tourists who have unique interests
- The development of the regional culture
- Protection of the natural habitat
- The accentuation of tourism regions
- Strengthening of the local traditions and culture
- Less seasonal, can extend the tourism season
- Can be an important form of sustainable tourism.

Check your progress - 1

Answer the following questions.

1. Define culture tourism?
2. Explain pilgrimage?
3. Describe heritage
4. Discuss significance of culture tour package.

Check your answer with the one given at the end of the unit.

15.4 Summary

This Unit has given you an idea about the cultural tourism. It has acquainted with the procedure for preparation of cultural tour package. The

students are now in a position to focus on specific segment of culture such as heritage, festival and so forth. Finally the unit highlighted the significance of cultural tour packages.

Answer to Check Your Progress

- 1) See sec. 1.2
- 2) See sec. 1.2
- 3) See sec. 1.3
- 4) See sub sec. 1.4

15.5 Glossary

- **Cultural tourism** - type of international tourist travel, where tourists get familiar with national cultures, customs and traditions in the host country.
- **Nostalgic (ethnic) tourism** - type of tourism, which is carried out by people to the places of their former/historical residence. Participants of nostalgic tourism are mostly elderly people who had previously lived in the area
- **Museum tourism** - type of tourism, the specificity of which consists in the use of the tourist potential of museums and the surrounding areas. The cooperation of museums and tourism is based on the formation of the system of historical and cultural and natural areas
- **Pilgrimage tourism** – type of religious tourism, carried out by believers of different faiths to certain sacred places.

15.6 Review Questions

- Describe the meaning and concept of Cultural Tourism packages
- Explain the Pilgrimage and Festival tour package.
- Discuss the Monument and Museum tour package
- Prepare a cultural tour package for international tourists covering destinations from Rajasthan.
- Elaborate the significance of culture tour package for destinations.

15.7 Suggested Readings

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UNIT 16: SPECIAL INTEREST TOUR PACKAGE- ETHNIC, ECO, MEDICAL AND HEALTH AND HOLIDAY PACKAGES

Structure

- 16.0 Objectives
- 16.1 Introduction
- 16.2 Special Interest tour package: Concepts and meaning
- 16.3 Special Interest tourism: Ethnic and eco-tour package and Medical and Health package
- 16.4 Significance and future trends of Special Interest tour package
- 16.5 Summary

16.0 Objectives

After reading this unit, you will be able to:

- Understand meaning and concept of Special Interest Tourism
- Explain Special Interest Tourism in India
- Types of Special Interest Tourism in India
- Itinerary development for Special Interest Tourism in India
- Understand significance of itineraries for Special Interest Tourism.

16.1 Introduction

Special Interest Tourism is one of the emerging type tourism in India. Actually is a very comfortable area of tourism, which needs a minimum investment to develop in a short and medium term. It is the preferred activity for tourists with interest in environmentally oriented outdoor sport activities. The Special Interest Tourism offers adventure, attracts special hobbies and cultural abilities, as eco- tourism, rural tourism, cultural tourism, cross border tourism, adventure tourism. There are great opportunities to climb in the mountains combining some kind of outdoor sports with mountain tourism like hiking, trekking; for people who want to drive with bikes, horses etc. as horseback-riding, river rafting, paragliding, mountain biking, scuba diving, canoeing, etc in places where the physical infrastructure is not mandatory moreover it also do not require huge investments. Special interest tourists are the people who desire adventures, as living in the wild nature that is so beautiful, people with many hobbies in rare fields which are so opportune in a diversity geographic position of our country.

There are a lot of national parks or natural reservations protected by the law, which would show the opportunities for agro tourism in our country. Except these kind of adventure tours there are a lot of other kind of tours, which can be covered in the framework of this special tourism like: Historical interest , archaeological interest, cultural interest, rural interest, - study tours on culture and religion interest. - Mixed tours: Compilation of packages over several days highlighting special interest tourism activities. In the area of Special Intrest Tourism , the target market is very special and can also includes: young adventurers interested in outdoor sport activities, experienced senior travellers, with medium to high income, people with open-minded and people interested in education, history and civilization.

16.2 Special Interest tour package: Concepts and meaning

Special interest tourism are the result of the travelling market segmentation and they are the distinguishing factor of tourism supply. These products are distinguished in many ways and their major target is offering the best possible satisfaction to the visitors. Special interest tourism has been the subject of scientific study, since they set up the new trend in tourism development. This is necessary in order to define and enhance the specialized products and services that are produced and supplied in the tourism market but also for the appropriate training of all institutions involved in tourism industry. Special Interest Tourism involves exploring customised tourist experiences that satisfy specific individual interests. The special interest areas may include adventure tourism, ecotourism, sex tourism, sports tourism, the 'gay' market, the 'grey' market (senior tourism), backpacking, health tourism, rural tourism, dance music tourism, cultural tourism, and cruising amongst others.

In fact, Special Interest Tourists are nature-based yourists particularly challenging, but potentially with high spending. These often comprise socially and environmentally aware, highly educated and potentially demanding visitors who travel both to learn and to achieve personal and social goals. Most of these visitors are serviced and targeted by specialist tourism operators and suppliers who often provide highly expert guides as part of the service.

India is a subcontinent of surprises. A cauldron of cultures, of climes, of people. Desert and tropical rain forest. Remote villages and restless metropolis. Mysticism and mural paintings, Ayurveda healing and paragliding. A hundred cliches and then a hundred faces you never knew existed. India can offer almost anything you want, whether it is adventure, beaches, hill stations, wildlife, forts and palaces, amazing travel experiences, fantastic spectacles or even a search for oneself. India is popularly known to be the last unexplored destination in the world, where precious and rare secrets of nature and cultural heritage can still be discovered. Development Potential for Special Interest Tourism in India includes:

- rich biodiversity at lagoons, lakes and the mountain areas with unique flora and fauna;
- in some regions unspoiled nature and beautiful scenery;
- cultural and historical sites of many centuries; and
- still active traditional life-styles.

Types of Special Interest Tours in India

- Ayurveda and Health
- Adventure Tourism
- Culture and heritage Tourism
- Wild life tourism
- Beach Tourism
- Hill stations
- Pilgrimage
- Tribal tours
- Professional Tourism
- Medical Tourism
- Study and Research Tourism
- Eco Tourism
- Indigenous Tourism

Of the various types of above mentioned Special interest tourism, culture, adventure and wildlife tourism have been explained in other units, whereas others are discussed as under:

Ayurveda

Around 600 BC in India a new system of medicine evolved. A system that in addition to treating an ailment stressed on its prevention. A system that came to be called Ayurveda or the 'science of longevity'. This tradition of health care was followed by the Dravidans and Aryans alike and has been practiced ever since. Today it's a unique, indispensable branch of medicine - a complete naturalistic system that depends on the diagnosis of the body's humours - vatha (air), pitha (fire) and kapha (water) - to achieve the right balance. It believes in the treatment of not just the affected part, but the individual as a whole. Making it the natural way to refresh one's self and eliminate all toxic imbalances from the body and thus regain resistance and good health. It is known to promote positive health, natural beauty and long life. The State of Kerala is the only State in India, which practices this system of medicine with absolute dedication and offers a host of Ayurvedic Resorts

Beach Tourism

India's coast is decked with some of the most beautiful beaches in the world. From endless stretches of golden sand to palm-fringed coves, India offers the visitor the ideal beach holiday. On the West Coast, at the southern end of

Kerala there's Kovalam and Varkala; farther north, Goa has a whole collection of beautiful beaches complete with soft white sands, gentle lapping waves and swaying palms. If you find these a little over commercialized then head for the tiny ex-Portuguese island of Diu off the southern coast of Gujarat, or to southern Karnataka. Over on the East Coast there is a beach at Mamallapuram in Tamil Nadu. In Orissa the beach at Gopalpur-on-sea is clean and quiet. Some of the beaches in the Andamans Islands are straight out of a holiday brochure - white coral sands, beautiful corals, gin clear water and multi-coloured fishes and corals. Similarly the beaches of Lakshadweep, a series of coral atolls off the West Coast are pristine.

Hill Stations

Hill stations are popular as resorts among both Indians and foreigners, providing a relaxing and salubrious retreat from the heat of the plains. Bracing weather, verdant surroundings, spectacular views and - solitude - hill stations are perfect for quick getaways from the bustling cities as they are within easy reach by rail or road. They are also wonderful for longer holidays to really unwind and explore the joys of nature. Apart from the famous Himalayas and its foothills in the north, other parts of the country do have their share of hill stations like in the Western Ghats, the Satpura Ranges of the centre and the Nilgiri Hills in the South.

Pilgrimage

From the time of the Puranas, pilgrimage was regarded as a necessity for the regeneration of the spirit and the quickening of cultural exchange. Considered practically obligatory pilgrimage became a milestone in man's life. Every Hindu is expected to go on tirtha yatra (pilgrimages). Pilgrimages are undertaken for many reasons: to implore the gods to grant some wish, to take the ashes of a cremated relative to a holy river, to seek good health and fortune or to gain spiritual merit. Holy sites were established at the cardinal points of the country - to the north were the snow peaked highlands of Badrinath, Kedarnath and Amarnath. To the east is Puri, to the south is Rameswaram and Kanya Kumari, to the west is Dwarka and in the centre Kashi or Benares (Varanasi), Prayaga (Allahabad) and Mathura. Apart from these there are thousands and thousands of holy sites of almost all religious groups - Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Jews, and Christians.

Tribal Tours

Although there is some controversy regarding the advisability and morality of visiting Adivasi or tribal areas, tourism does bring much needed funds to these already developing regions and organized tours are becoming increasingly popular. Such tours provide an insight into the life of the tribal communities with a chance to attend interesting festivals and markets. Although

many of the areas are still virtually off limits to tourists some places are becoming less restricted. Areas where such tours are organized are - Orissa, Gujarat, Chattisgarh and Andhra Pradesh.

Medical Tourism in India

Indians, NRIs and tourists from around the world are beginning to realize the potential of modern and traditional Indian medicine. Indian hospitals and medical establishments have also realized the potential of this niche market and have begun to tailor their services for foreign visitors. Visitors, especially from the west and the middle-east find Indian hospitals a very affordable and viable option to grappling with insurance and National medical systems in their native lands. Many prefer to combine their treatments with a visit to the 'exotic east' with their families, killing two birds with one stone. Medical Tourism in India is going to result in a number of demands and changes in the areas of financing and regulations. There will be a greater push for encouraging private insurance tied to systems of accreditation of private hospitals. There is a huge concern in the developed countries about the quality of care and clinical expertise in developing countries.

Eco Tourism

"Ecotourism is a segment of tourist activity which focuses on the sustainable use of the resources, encourages its conservation and seeks the formation of environmentalist awareness through the interrelation of the environment, promoting the well-being of the populations involved". In order to understand a little more what special interest travellers or ecotourists are, we should not stick to rigid definitions and concepts but focus especially on who these travellers are, their characteristics and interests. Special interest travellers are generally adults or third age persons, adolescents and children (members of family or school groups), with the following characteristics:

- they have a spirit of adventure, are curious and love sharing experiences;
- they travel in small groups, of eight to ten persons on average and not more than 15;
- their main characteristic is team work and comradeship;
- their destinations are environmentally and culturally rich, well conserved, seldom frequented and places where one can still enjoy the luxury of tranquillity;
- their trips are not necessarily difficult and travellers are seldom subjected to challenges and tests of special skills or previous experience.

This new class of travellers is on the increase and enjoys activities in contact with nature, beauty of a conserved natural area, the pleasure of watching the fauna in its natural habitat, of exploring, discovering and learning, overcoming obstacles and feeling the pleasure of overcoming them. Furthermore they like to discover how easy it is to read a map, navigate a river and learn climbing

techniques, diving, horse riding, orienteering, canoeing, driving cattle, packing and carrying a rucksack.

16.3 Special Interest Tourism: Ethnic and Eco-Tour Package and Medical and Health Package

Itineraries for Special Intrest Tourism with examples

Itinerary 1: Textiles and Handicrafts of Gujarat Tour. (A detailed itinerary with route map)

Duration: 23 Days / 22 Nights

Destinations Covered: Delhi - Ahmedabad - Sayla - Gondal - Jetpur - Junagadh - Jamnagar - Bhuj - Mandvi - Dasada - Patan - Mount Abu - Udaipur - Bundi - Kota - Ranthambore - Jaipur - Agra - Delhi

Day-1: Delhi

Arrive in Delhi and check in to the Hotel. Afternoon sightseeing in Old Delhi and New Delhi which includes the Chandani Chowk, Jama Masjid, India Gate, Red Fort, Qutub Minar, Presdentail House, Lotus Temple, AksharDham Temple etc.

Day-2: Delhi-Ahmedabad

Morning transfer to airport to connect flight to Ahmedabad. Arrive at Ahmedabad. Ahmedabad is a major centre of traditional and contemporary textiles, and many crafts thrive here like Mata-ni-pachedi narrative cloth paintings and block-printing. Stay at House of Mangaldas Girdhardas, a heritage hotel owned by a former textile industrialist family. Visit the Calico Museum of Textiles, one of India's leading specialized museums. The collections include textile swatches of Indian origin found at archaeological sites of Egypt, silk sarees from across India, double-ikat silk sarongs made in Patan for the Indonesian market, chintz and curtains made from Dutch, British and Portuguese colonial powers in Gujarat, floral embroidery from Punjab, shawls from Kashmir, 18th century tie-and-dye, richly embroidered Mughal tent of Shah Jahan whose palace is nearby, royal wardrobes of Rajasthan, cloth paintings and manuscripts, religious narrative cloth paintings like Pichwais and Kalamkaris, etc. Also visit the other museums of Ahmedabad strong on folk art collections.

Day-3: Ahmedabad - Sayla 136 km

Drive to Sayla, via Limbdi where mirrors are made for Gujarat's famous mirrorwork embroidery, and visit the Bharwad and Kathi villages where beadwork traditions thrive, the silk weavers who use the ikat technique, and the town of Wadhwan where women work on bandhani or tie-and-dye. Wadhwan's walled town has historic buildings and a living heritage of metalwork crafts. Stay at Old Bell Guest House, a heritage hotel.

Day-4: Sayla - Gondal 130km

Drive to Gondal, a princely town of considerable importance and affluence. Visit the 1748 AD Naulakha Palace which houses the erstwhile ruling family's private collection of bead work, textiles, brassware, hand-painted toys and silver crafts,

the centre promoting weaving at Gondal, and the historic buildings of Gondal. Stay at Riverside Palace/Orchard Palace, both of which are decorated with textiles from the former Maharanis' collections.

Day-5: Gondal - Jetpur - Junagadh - Gondal 150 km total

Drive to Jetpur, known for its screen and block printing workshops, and a yam-dyeing centre, and then to Junagadh where you can see gem-encrusted carpets, wardrobes and tapestry of the Nawab at the museums. A historic city, Junagadh has 3rd century BC Buddhist relics, medieval fort, mausoleum complexes, palaces, etc. Return to Gondal.

Day-6: Gondal - Jamnagar 10km

Drive to Jamnagar. Visit the Vanzas who are known for their bandhani tie-and-dye sarees. Stay at Hotel President.

Day-7: Bhuj 259km

Drive to Bhuj, on the way stop at Rajkot to see the Watson Museum which has good examples of Gujarat's craftsmanship skills, and Rashtriya Shala working to revive hand-weaving. Stay at Hotel Prince/KBN.

Day-8: Villages around Bhuj

Visit villages around Bhuj known for their distinctive styles of embroidery and other handiwork like weaving, block-printing, rogan-painting, etc. O/N Stay at hotel.

Day-9: Bhuj - Mandvi 60km

Drive to Mandvi, which is a tie-and-dye centre, and stay in a tented royal resort by the private beach in the palace estate. Visit the dhow-building yard to see ocean-worthy vessels being hand-built. Stay at the palace estate.

Day-10: Around Mandvi

Visit villages near Mandvi known for their picturesque houses called bhungas and Rabari embroidery. O/N Stay at hotel.

Day-11: Mandvi-Dasada 320km

Drive from Mandvi to Dasada passing picturesque old towns and villages. At Dasada, watch Rabari women at work on their distinct embroideries. Stay at Rann Riders, an eco-resort designed using local materials and handicrafts to resemble a village.

Day-12: Dasada-Patan - Dasada

Day trip to Patan to watch the Salvis at work on the Patola, one of the richest silk textiles in the world, woven using the rare double-ikat technique. One can also see 11th century monuments at Modhera's Sun Temple complex and in Patan. Overnight at hotel.

Day-13: Dasda - Mount Abu

After Breakfast drive to Mount Abu. In the evening, sightseeing in Mt Abu. Overnight at hotel.

Day 14: Mount Abu – Udaipur

After Breakfast depart to Udaipur. After lunch leisure at Hotel. Overnight at Hotel.

Day 15: Udaipur

Sightseeing of the city of Udaipur. Udaipur is a lovely land around the Azure water lakes hemmed in by the lush hills of the Aravails. A vision in white drenched in romance and beauty, Udaipur is a fascinating blend of sights sounds and experience-an inspiration for the imagination of poets, painters and written. Overnight at Hotel.

Day 16: Udaipur - Bundi - Kota

After hearty breakfast depart to Kota, enroute Bundi. Afternoon sightseeing in Kota. Overnight at Hotel at Kota.

Day 17: Kota – Ranthambore

After Breakfast drive to Ranthambore. After lunch rest at hotel. Evening excursions in Ranthambore National park. Overnight at Hotel.

Day 18: Ranthambore

Ranthambhore Tiger Reserve, at the junction of the Aravalis and the Vindhya, is a unique example of natural and historical richness. Ranthambhore - perhaps the best place in the world to sight a tiger in the wild. The Ranthambhore National Park has had more Tiger sightings than any other National Park in the country. It has come to be known as "The land of the Tiger", where most of the documented footage of this majestic beast has been recorded. Evening excursions in Ranthambore National park. Overnight at Hotel.

Day 19: Ranthambore – Jaipur

After Breakfast depart to Jaipur. After lunch leisure at hotel. Evening excursion in local market.

Day 20: Jaipur

Jaipur is 260 km from Delhi and 240 km from Agra and forms the most chosen tourism golden triangle of Delhi, Agra and Jaipur. After, breakfast, proceed for sight-seeing of the city. Places covered: Amber Fort Palace, City Palace, Jantar Mantar, Hawa Mahal.

Day 21: Jaipur – Agra

Morning drive to Agra. After arrival transfer to Hotel.

Day 22: Agra

Visit to Taj Mahal. Enjoy battery van ride to the Taj. After lunch of of Mughlai cuisine. Proceed for sight-seeing to the AGRA FORT.

Day 23: Agra - Delhi

After hearty breakfast drive to Delhi and after welcome dinner transfer to International Airport for onward destination.

Itinerary: 2 Tribal Tours of Orissa

Places to Visit: Delhi - Bhubaneshwar - Baliguda - Rayadaga - Chatikona - Jeypore Onukudelli - Gupteswar - Taptapani - Puri – Konark

Duration: 13 Nights / 14 Days

Day 01: Europe - Delhi

Arrive in Delhi, meet and greet at the airport and transfer to Hotel. Overnight

Day 02: Delhi – Bhubaneshwar

Morning transfer to airport to connect flight to Bhubaneshwar, on arrival transfer to hotel. Afternoon city sightseeing in Bhubaneshwar temples. Overnight at Hotel.

Day 03: Bhubaneshwar

Morning full day excursion to Lalitgiri, Ratnagiri and Udayagiri Buddhist monastries. Overnight at Hotel

Day 04: Bhubaneshwar – Baliguda

Morning after breakfast drive to Baliguda (310 kms/ 7 hours) enroute visit the road side common village, semi tribal villages and tribal villages . Overnight at Hotel

Day 05: Baliguda – Rayadaga

Morning drive to Belghar area (220 kms / 5 hours) to visit Kuttiya Kondh village and Rasul Kondh villages. Weekly markret is on Tuesday at Kothgarh. Later drive to Rayagada. Overnight at Hotel.

Day 06: Rayagada - Chatikona - Jeypore

Morning drive to Chanikona (260 kms / 6 hours) to visit few villages of Dongariya Kondh and weekly market (Weekly market is on Wednesday). Overnight at Hotel

Day 07: Jeyopre - Onukudelli - Jeypore

Morning full day excursion to Onukudelli visiting Bonda and Gadhaba tribal market (weekly market is on Thursday) and few Gadhaba tribal villages, evening back to Jeypore. O/N at Hotel

Day 08: Jeypore - Gupteswar – Jeypore

Morning full day excursion to Gupteswar to visit the caves and few Dhuraba Tribal village. Overnight at Hotel.

Day 09: Jeypore – Taptapani

Morning drive to Taptapani (300 kms /7 hours) enroute visiting Jagannath Temple and Tribal Museum at Koraput. Overnight at Hotel.

Day 10: Tatapani – Puri

Morning visit the Tibetan village at Chandragiri, later drive to Purl enroute boatride in Chilka Lake, Asia's largest salt water lake (350kms / 8 hours). Over night at Hotel.

Day 11: Puri - Konark – Puri

Morning drive to Konark (100 kms /2 hours) to visit the Sun temple and fisher man's village. Afternoon sightseeing in Puri including Jagannath temple local market, Gundicha mandir and artisan's village in Raghurajpur (patta painting, palm leaf writting etc).
Overnight at hotel.

Day 12: Puri

Day at leisure at beach. Overnight

Day 13: Pun - Bhubaneshwar – Delhi

Morning drive to Bhubaneshwar to connect flight to Delhi, on arrival transfer to hotel. Overnight

Day 14: Delhi – Abroad

Early morning transfer to airport for your onward flight.

ITINERARY 3: SPICES AND SANDALWOOD TOUR**Duration :** 12 Nights / 13 Days**Places Covered:** Mumbai - Bangalore - Mysore - Nagarhole - Ooty - Coonoor - Cochin - Kerala Backwaters - Periyar - Kodaikanal - Madurai - Chennai

A classic journey through the warm scented hinterland of South India. The excitement of Mysore and Nagarhole gives way to the fading glory of 'snooty' Ooty. The South is a cross roads for the varied cultures that have left their many churches, palaces, forts and temples to enrich this cosmopolitan community. From Cochin it is possible to extend to the nearby beach resorts of Kovalam or Varkala or further to the Andman & Lakshadweep Islands, Goa or Sri Lanka.

Day 01: Arrive Mumbai

Meet and greet by representative and transfer to hotel for overnight stay.

Day 02: Mumbai – Bagalore

Morning city sightseeing visiting, Gate Way of India, Princes of Wales Museum, Hanging Garden, Tower of Silence, Dhobi Garh & Mani Bhawan. Evening transfer to airport to connect flight for Bangalore. On arrival, transferred to the hotel for overnight stay.

Day 03: Bangalore – Mysore

Full day city tour of Bangalore visiting the Bull Temple, and Tipu's Summer Palace, drive past numerous parks, the Vidhan Soudha and down town commercial centre. Later in the evening, drive to Mysore, which is 140 kms / 3 hrs. On arrival, transferred to the hotel for overnight stay.

Day 04: Mysore

Palaces of interest include the Maharaja's Palace, the colourful vegetable and flower markets and Chamundi Hill noted for its Nandi temple. Outside of Mysore visit Srirangapatnam to see the ruins of Tipu Sultan's capital and Somnathpur, where the small Kesava temple is considered to be one of the finest examples of Hoysala architecture. For bird watchers the Ranganathitoo Bird Sanctuary is well worth a visit.

Day 05: Mysore - Nagarhole National Park

Just 90 kms south-west of Mysore lies Nagarhole National Park an excellent sanctuary for viewing elephants and a rich variety of bird life. View by jeep and on elephant back. Stay at hotel.

Day 06: Nagarhole - Ooty – Coonoor

Morning drive to Ooty (90 kms/3hrs) the famous hill station in the Nilgiri hills. Coonoor is just 13 kms from Ooty and offers a relaxing alternative. Afternoon free

Day 07: Coonoor

Today leave for a visit to the tea plantations, The Botanical Gardens, and Sima Park in Coonoor. In Coonoor also see the views from Lady Canning's Seat and Dolphins

Nose.

Day 08: Coonoor to Cochin

Drive south to the Malabar Coast to Cochin (280 kms/7 hrs). Over the centuries the Portuguese, Dutch and British have all influenced this fascinating city.

Day 09: Cochin

This morning visit the synagogue, Dutch Palace, St Francis Church and the spice market. In the afternoon take a harbour cruise to see some of the nearby island and Chinese fishing nets.

Day 10: Cochin to Periyar

After breakfast drive along the coast to Alleppey (70 kms) and take a backwater cruise for 2½ hours through some of the most picturesque backwaters in Kerala to Changancherry. Continue on by car to Lake Periyar wildlife sanctuary in the heart of the Cardamon hills. Evening viewing by an exclusive boat ride on Lake Periyar. Stay overnight at the hotel.

Day 11: Periyar to Kodaikanal

Drive this morning upto the Palani hills to Kodaikanal (160 kms/4 hrs) a peaceful backwater hill station noted for its beautiful scenery and lake. Stay at the hotel.

Day 12: Kodaikanal to Madurai

This morning drive down to Madurai (90 kms/4 hrs) where life in the bustling pilgrimage city is centred on the great Meenakshi temple. In the afternoon visit this living temple returning in the evening to witness the temple music. Stay overnight at the hotel.

Day 13: Madurai to Chennai

Return by air or train to Chennai. Alternatively, continue by car to Chennai.

ITINERARY 4: SPA HOLIDAYS TOUR

Duration: 04 Nights / 05 Days

Places Covered: Delhi - Ananda - Delhi

Rediscover tranquility and attain sanctuary the mind & body in the mystical embrace of the Himalayan Mountains. Presenting an experience unlike any other at Ananda - In the Himalayas, a luxury destination spa. At Ananda the programs are designed to meet individual needs and give guidance in areas of stress management, antiageing, beauty and to create health, balance, joy and Ananda. - Bliss and contentment.

Day 01: Arrive Delhi

On arrive in Delhi transfer to your hotel. Afternoon city tour of Old and New Delhi. In Old Delhi visit the Red Fort, Chandni Chowk, Raj Ghat and Shanti Vana. In New Delhi visit the Rashtrapati Bhawan, the India Gate, The Laxminarayan Temple, Qutab Minar, and the lotus-shaped Bahai Temple. Overnight at the hotel.

Day 02: Delhi-Ananda

In the morning proceed for Ananda (260 km / 5 hrs), or board Dehradun Shatabdi Express up to Haridwar. On arrival check in at the Ananda. Later in the day meet

lifestyle assistant who will offer professional guidance as per individual needs and requirements.

Day 03: Ananda

Today enjoy Hydrotherapy Aromatic Bath and other therapies as per your package. Dinner and overnight at the hotel.

Day 04: Ananda

Customized Massage Therapy is part of the Ananda Bliss Package and one can avail this therapy once during one's stay. Customized Body Exfoliation Therapy is another program one can avail of.

Day 05: Ananda - Delhi Onward Destination

After breakfast proceed for Delhi. On arrive transfer to International airport for flight to onward destination.

ITINERARY 5: YOGA & MEDITATION TOUR

Duration: 9 Nights / 10 Days

Places Covered: Delhi - Rishikesh - Haridwar

Described by the ancient Indian scriptures as the communion of individual soul with the universal soul or God, "Yoga" the ancient Indian discipline is highly relevant in the modern day context. There are different forms of Yoga, i.e Hatha Yoga, Raja Yoga, Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Jnana Yoga, Mantra Yoga and Laya Yoga, provides the finest system of education and brings out the best in a person. Since the ages, Rishikesh ("The Land of Yoga") has been a spiritual centre for learning Yoga and also offers a major platform for exchanging and sharing of ideas, Knowledge of Indian Mythology, understanding different cultural modes and promoting universal spirit of brotherhood.

Day 01: Arrive Delhi

Upon arrival meet and greet and transfer to Hotel. Check in at Hotel. Overnight at Hotel.

Day 02: Delhi

Morning after breakfast, proceed for full day sightseeing of Old & New Delhi. Visit, Red fort, Jama Masjid, Chandni Chowk, Raj Ghat, Humayun's Tomb, India Gate, Round around President House and Parliament House, Qutab Minar and Lotus temple. Overnight at Hotel.

Day 03: Delhi -Rishikesh (260 Kms / 6 hrs)

Morning after breakfast, drive towards Rishikesh (The capital of Yoga & Meditation). Upon arrival check in at Hotel. Relax, sightseeing, Bhajan Sandhya, Ganga Aarti Devotional song of holiest river Ganga) & Bhojan distribution of Yoga kits. Overnight at Hotel.

Day 04: Rishikesh

Morning breakfast, after breakfast, Inaugural ceremony. Lunch. Initiation and Introduction of Yoga Tea break Meditation & Pranayam etc. Overnight at Hotel.

Day 05: Rishkesh

Morning universal prayer and Yoga Demonstration and practice of Asanas Tea / Coffee break. Practice of Asanas and Consultation for specific problems & remedies through Yoga. Lunch Break. Visit to Kunjapuri temple / Vashishatha Gufa (Cave) -spiritual activities centre. Meditation. Dinner Overnight at Hotel.

Day 06: Rishikesh

Yoga practice / Prayer & Demonstration. Lunch Break. Pranayam & Meditation. Dinner overnight at Hotel.

Day 07: Rishikesh

Yoga practice / Prayer & Demonstration. Local sightseeing & souvenir Ayurvedic Herbal Massage. Lunch Break. Pranayam and Meditation. Dinner Overnight at Hotel.

Day 08: Rishikesh

Yoga practice / Prayer & Demonstration. Lunch Break Question answer session. Closing ceremony. Dinner Overnight at Hotel.

Day 09: Rishikesh - Haridwar (24 Kms. / ½ hrs.)

Breakfast. After breakfast, drive towards Haridwar called, (Gate way to Heaven). Upon arrival at Haridwar, (checkin) at Hotel. Afternoon visit Haridwar "The Place of Kumbha" takes places once in 12 years and Enjoy rope way at Har-ki- poti etc. Overnight at Haridwar.

Day 10: Haridwar - Delhi (220 Kms/ 6 hrs) - Onward Destination

Morning after breakfast, drive towards Delhi. Over night at Hotel OR you may depart to onward destination as per your flight schedule.

16.4 Significance and future trends of Special Interest tour package

For the past years, a majority of tourism development plans have been targeted primarily at luxury tourism and beach holiday attractions. Some areas in the coastal regions have already exceeded their social and physical carrying capacity. Increasingly, special interest tourism in India are considered as niche travel products yet to reach their growth potential. Promotion of SIT the interior is perceived as a sustainable alternative for economic development, especially in poor rural communities. Meanwhile, SIT, the fastest growing segment in the tourism sector, has been promoted as a means to divert tourists from the sun and beach holiday attractions to other natural/cultural attractions.

A number of small tourism operators have been established to promote SIT such as Nature tourism "off-the-beaten-track" in. The industry Network aims at promoting socially responsible tourism that is based on the local traditional forest culture, and hence minimises the negative social and cultural effects of tourism development. Another example of SIT is Woodlands' tours that offer a variety of activities, including nature walks, excursions to tea estates and culture/religious sites, train rides through the mountains, and culinary lessons using indigenous food and gastronomy (i.e. vegetables, spices and tea). Industry

has attracted an increasing number of foreign independent tourists (mostly from Germany) who prefer SIT such as learning about the customs, food habits, culture, environment and history of the countries they visit. The professionally developed itineraries of "SIT" can explain the following benefits

- Can help in satisfying individual interests and purposes appearing with post-modern social change
- avoid the environmental destruction and ensure experiencing the untouched nature
- manages various matters such as gathering information and making reservation through Internet

The term "SIT" can be used from the suppliers' point of view as well as the customers' in the following concepts.

- Creating a new type of tourism product by connecting tourism industry with other industries. (ex. Medical Tourism,)
- Developing environmentally and socially sustainable tourist attractions
- Utilizing IT technology such as internet and ubiquitous systems to promote and sale the tourism products

Check your progress - 1

Answer the following questions.

1. Define Special Interest tour package.
2. What is Ethnic and eco-tour package?
3. Describe Medical and Health tour ?
4. Discuss the significance of special interest tour?

Check your answer with the one given at the end of the unit.

16.5 Summary

Specific markets and specialized market segments like special interest tourism and Conference and Incentive tourism that are not adequately serviced under the present conditions, are expected to acquire a new momentum, and present renewed potential and opportunities that will contribute to the increase of tourist arrivals and alleviate the problem of seasonality. In addition, special interest tourism, such as Ayurveda health packages (i.e. courses of traditional herbal massage therapy designed to rejuvenate and detoxify bodies), exotic weddings, and adventure activities (e.g. trekking, para-gliding, bird watching and archaeological tours).

Answer to Check Your Progress

- 1) See sec. 16.2
- 2) See sec. 16.2
- 3) See sec. 16.3

4) See sec. 16.4

16.6 Glossary

- **Cultural tourism** - type of international tourist travel, where tourists get familiar with national cultures, customs and traditions in the host country.
- **Medical and health tourism** - type of tourism, carried out with health or medical purposes. Resorts often offer their tourists the therapeutic procedures, and services of massage rooms, etc.
- **Ski tourism** – a type of sports tourism, providing ascent on skis across the plains and foothills. Ski tourism requires special training of participants and special attention of organizers
- **Museum tourism** - type of tourism, the specificity of which consists in the use of the tourist potential of museums and the surrounding areas. The cooperation of museums and tourism is based on the formation of the system of historical and cultural and natural areas.
- **Ecotourism** - visiting of places with relatively unspoiled nature and well-preserved cultural and historical heritage.

16.7 Review Questions

1. Explain the meaning and definition of Special Interest Tourism.
2. Explain the role and significance of Special Interest Tourism towards development of tourism industry in India.
3. Explain the scope and potential of Special Interest Tourism in India.
4. Explain various Special Interest Tourism activities possible in India along with the favourable destinations foe each sports activity
5. Develop an itinerary (with route map) for a group of senior citizen interested for Char Dham yatra of India.
6. Develop an itinerary for a group of a hotel management students from UK interested to understand and experience Indian cuisine.
7. Explain the role and significance of itineraries towards Special Interest Tourism.

16.8 Suggested Readings

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