

## MICE TOURSIM – DESTINATION INDIA



The significance of the MICE industry is that it adds an exciting layer to annual business meetings and conferences transforming them from boring, dull all-work-no-play get togethers to something pleasurable. Work is most definitely the priority but the icing on the cake is exhilarating new destinations, the exotica factor and enjoyment factor.

India is an attractive MICE destination. With its rich heritage, vibrant culture and its natural beauty it already attracts leisure tourists. But with world class hotels and the development of infrastructure, India is now one of the top MICE destinations in Asia too following closely on the heels of Dubai, Malaysia and Hong Kong.

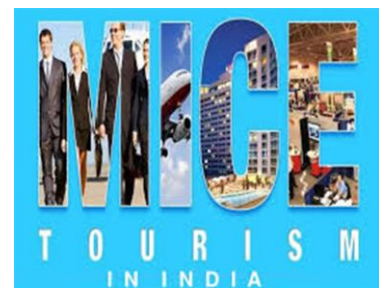
For travelers, India offers a rich cornucopia of choice – snowy mountain peaks, sunny beaches, rainforests, tiger and lion sanctuaries, deserts dotted with exotic palaces, historical destinations, pilgrim destinations...from bustling cosmopolitan cities to tiny hamlets that seem frozen in time, India offers a heady blend of culture, history, tradition, hospitality, beauty coupled with modern amenities like deluxe and super deluxe hotels and resorts that would appeal to the business traveler.



## MICE

It's the latest buzzword in the travel industry – MICE. An acronym for Meetings, Incentives, Conferences & Exhibitions, MICE is the fastest growing segment in the travel and tourism industry catering to the business traveller

Mark Twain said, "India is the cradle of the human race, the birthplace of human speech, the mother of history, the grandmother of legend and the great grandmother of tradition. Our most valuable and most instructive materials in the history of man are treasured up in India."



## Incredible India

The Incredible India website says, "What makes India different from any other destination is the myriad of experiences that it offers. This is one land where the ancient and the modern co-exist."

Enchanting India's image as a conference destination is also projected through the chains of Hotels, providing international standards in facilities and services. Exclusive business hotels and exotic resorts, with meeting rooms of distinction, spacious convention facilities, modern business centres and a wide range of conference facilities."

The inbound MICE segment is on the upward curve, growing at 15 to 20% annually. According to estimates, the entire national and international MICE meetings market all over the world is pegged at over \$270 billion. According to industry approximations, the Indian inbound MICE market in the first seven months in 2004 was \$20 million, which is 40% greater than the same period in 2003. In 2004, India ranked 27th in the Global Meetings market.



India has literally everything that a visitor wants to experience and offers people a complete holiday both physical and mental. This is perhaps the reason why we have so many repeat visitors."

It adds, "Amidst the countless ways that India can capture world attention as a tourist paradise, there also exists a dynamic business opportunity as a splendid venue for international conferences and conventions of no less than global standards. sites, the exotic and mystical, excellent facilities of beach and adventure holidays which can be combined as pre and post conference tours."

With a view to attract MICE travellers, India's tourism industry is in a constant process of upgrading its MICE (Meetings, Incentives, and Conferences & Exhibitions) facilities.



There are numerous plans on the anvil for additional top-notch convention centers, international standard airports as well as integrating traditional Indian hospitality into this modern milieu to add that extra touch which goes a long way in winning the hearts of travellers.

Says the Incredible India website, "You could also offer the credit to the world class incentive programs, her ability to heal spiritually, her unmatched offering as a health destination or continually improved infrastructure facilities."



As the MICE market expands, there are specialized travel divisions within tour companies and airlines that exclusively focus on the MICE segment. To grow the business tourism in India, the country has set up some first-rate convention centers and corporate hotels cater to the business traveler. There are business class hotels, with distinct business floor housing rooms, outfitted with all the accouterments for the savvy business traveler from conference and banquet halls, telephone, internet, wifi and fax facilities, and other additional services.

Apart from exciting travel destinations, India is well connected by road, rail and air to various destinations. The important cities in the country are connected with modern Shatabdi and Rajdhani Express trains which offer very good service.



Yes, India is poised positively on the MICE path! With the expansion in the network of airlines operating on the domestic routes, enhanced tourist surface transport systems including the Indian Railways, new centres of information technology, numerous new convention centres, hotels and resorts, India is now a preferred MICE destination.

From the snow-capped peaks of the Himalayas to the palm-fringed beaches of Kerala, from cities pulsating with life to lush jungles, sylvan hill stations and sand-swept deserts – there's so much to choose from.

India is a heady cocktail of old-world charm and vibrant modernism – and that makes it an uber attractive MICE destination.

## UNIQUE TRAINS

Unique trains like **Palace on Wheels and Royal Orient Express**, offer a luxurious experience with their air-conditioned saloons decorated extravagantly where guests get a first-hand experience of Indian culture, heritage and cuisine.



## Medical Tourism

India is a huge magnet for attracting foreign patients for medical treatments. With general tourism on the rise, it is estimated that the volume of medical tourists worldwide could reach up to 5 million by 2016, attracting additional visitors to the country



Medical tourism, more broadly health and wellness tourism, refers to the industry in which people from across the globe travel to other countries to get medical, dental and surgical care, and at the same time, visit the local attractions of that country. I want to share some of the key highlights of medical tourism in India—the next crown jewel—that could shape the future of India's economy and health care.

**1) Medical tourism market is estimated to be valued at \$ 4 billion.** Health care tourism has been a key growth sector for more than a decade. Growing insurance market, strong pharmaceutical industry, cheap international travel, and quality health care are increasingly making India a preferred tourist destination. **India hosts about 1.27 million tourists** from countries such as the US, UK, and Canada in addition to visitors from neighbouring countries like Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and China.

This market includes secondary players from the tourism industry who greatly benefit from visitors to India. The government estimates that the growth of health-related services will be more than 5 percent for the next 10 years and that should further attract more such visitors. **Major corporations** such as Tata, Fortis, Max, Wockhardt, and Apollo Hospitals have made significant investments in setting up modern hospitals and tourism-related services to cater to the new brand of visitors from abroad.



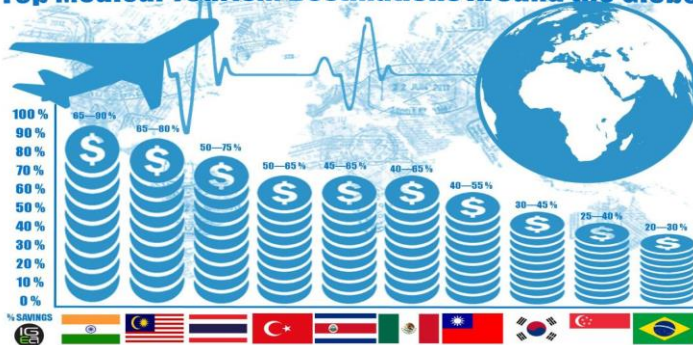
**2) Tourists come to India for economic reasons and market attractiveness.** Clearly, there are economic advantages for choosing English-speaking India for certain procedures. For example, a heart bypass procedure costs roughly \$140,000 without any insurance in the US. The same procedure, however, costs only around \$7,000 or Rs 3 lakh at one of India's leading surgery centres. Procedures such as hip and knee replacement, face lift, and gastric bypass are **far more affordable in India**, including the cost of travel and accommodation, compared to the US. Moreover, these cosmetic procedures are not covered by most insurance providers in Western countries. India has many top-notch centres for open-heart surgery and pediatric heart surgeries which are equipped with the latest equipment that are on par with these Western countries. India is also acutely aware of the quality perceptions of its visitors; many Indian hospitals that cater to foreign tourists meet the requirements of US health standards like Food and Drug Administration and Joint Commission Accreditation for hospitals, hoping to fight this notion.

India is also home to a number of alternative medicine techniques such as Ayurveda, Sidha, Unani, Yoga, Acupuncture and Homeopathy which are very popular among foreigners. **Such treatment opportunities give India the edge** over its competitors like Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, South Korea, and UAE.

## DESTINATION – INDIA



### Top Medical Tourism Destinations Around the Globe



**3) Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, and Delhi are top destinations for foreign visitors.** Based on the government's statistics of foreign tourists for 2010, **more than 55 percent** of visitors went to medical centres in these three states alone. Quality hotels, added tourism opportunities, and high-quality hospital care are the biggest reasons for this trend.



- ACCREDITED BUSINESS
- A+ RANKING
- MASSIVE SAVINGS
- ENGLISH SPEAKING DESTINATION MANAGER
- LOAN OPTIONS
- PASSPORT-VISA ASSISTANCE
- SUCCESSFUL TRACK RECORD OF 7 YEARS
- GLOBAL NETWORK
- SUITABLE PACKAGES
- DIRECT CONSULTATION WITH DOCTORS

## Medical Tour

### References:

*Government of India (2002), National Tourism Policy 2002, Ministry of Tourism, New Delhi.*

*Mckinsey – CII (2002), Healthcare in India – The Road Ahead, Mckinsey & Company, 2002*

*Government of India (2012), Economic Survey 2010-11, Ministry of Finance.*

*“Health Tourism – Destination India”, India Brand Equity Foundation (2011)*

**4) Infrastructure and better health-related investments will decide the future.** While all trends point towards an increasing demand for medical services in India, some key factors will determine whether medical tourism becomes India’s next crown jewel, like our Information Technology industry.

Here’s a list of some factors:

- ✓ Infrastructure investment by the government: The health industry as a whole has seen meagre growth as far as infrastructure is concerned. This has been primarily due to investments coming from the private players in the market. The government needs to step in and provide basic infrastructure services which will improve basic access to high quality centres.
- ✓ Reducing barriers for visiting India for medical purposes: Currently, foreigners need the “M-Visa” to come to India for medical purposes. Obtaining the visa is a huge barrier for medical tourists wanting to come here. India should consider offering visa-on-arrival type of services and partner with medical and tourism providers to streamline administrative processes.
- ✓ Raise quality standards to meet Western providers: Such partnerships will give confidence to foreign tourists to choose India over competitors like Malaysia and Singapore.
- ✓ Market health tourism in Western countries: With the ever-growing need for cheaper health care and complex health insurance offerings in the US and UK, Indian hospitals could target the neglected populations of those countries and draw them here to provide a cheaper alternative. This could be a boon for both the Western economies and India’s.



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