

Travel and tourism sector in India will continue to witness impressive growth

It is important to have strategic redistribution of tourism across diverse geographies, fostering inclusivity and exploration beyond traditional hotspots.



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The travel and tourism sector has been robust and vivacious in a world of constant change and uncertainty. The rising demand for hospitality services, busy airports, and well-known travel destinations make it clear that tourism is more than just a recreational activity - it is a vital component of global economic expansion. Notwithstanding obstacles, the industry grew at a never-before-seen rate in 2023, paving the way for a comeback driven by unmet demand in 2024 and beyond. As per recent reports, the industry is expected to contribute significantly to the global GDP and employment creation by 2030, indicating that it is on a solid trajectory. As we move ahead, Amit Jain – Founder, Bookntravel, believes that the robust travel sentiment will continue, and anticipates a sustained surge in demand from the travellers. Here are a few compelling factors that will drive the exponential growth of the travel and tourism sector.

Constant rise of spiritual tourism

Travel is at an all-time high. And spiritual tourism is the new trend among travellers which also includes meditation, mindfulness getaways along with silent retreats. India has always been known as the land of spirituality and the vibrant spiritual destinations hold a special charm in the hearts of Westerners too. A big spike in spiritual tourism can also be attributed to the Government's plan of reviving religious destinations across the length and breadth of the country. From showing their gratitude for good health to wanting to rejuvenate and break away from their stressful lives, people are visiting several spiritual places across India. The concept of spiritual tourism is also gaining momentum among India's Gen Z and millennials. We are witnessing an uptick in demand emerging from India's metros and mini metros, in addition to tier 2 and 3 cities.

Unexplored destinations and adventurous trails on tourists' minds

The travellers are now showing increased interest in travelling to previously unexplored destinations. The millennials are more open to exploring new locations as they feel confident, connected and are more open to change. Every state in India has very unique and different flavours to offer to each tourist depending on the traveller's interests, be it leisure, spiritual, adventurous, cultural etc. Much like the US, India has a staggering array of travel experiences - from deserts, forests, and mountains to beaches, cities, and heritage. With a target to attract foreign tourists to India and also improve the country's ranking in the World Tourism Index, several steps are being undertaken to explore the untapped tourism potential of the country, especially of the lesser-known destinations.

Continued pent-up wanderlust

Wanderlust is a latent, often forgotten travel motivation that is a part of a person's personality. It's a part of human nature to explore new places and discover new things. Travelling is a form of art that can broaden one's horizons, expose them to different cultures, and help them gain a new perspective on life. The longing to immerse in diverse cultures remains unwavering. Resilience and insatiable curiosity fuel our wanderlust, undeterred by adversity. Modern travellers are increasingly seeking adventure to satisfy their pent-up wanderlust. The joy of travel is multifaceted and it's an experience that can enrich your life and broaden your perspective. We believe that as we move ahead this year, the pent-up desire to travel will keep demand strong.

Stronger infrastructure boost

The government's continued focus on infrastructure with the setting up of new airports, expansion in rail, road and waterways, as well as development of high-growth areas such as religious circuits and underleveraged hidden gems will not only contribute to the nation's growth but will also fuel the future growth of the travel and tourism sector across the country. These infrastructure improvements showcase India's independence and make it simpler to visit well-known historical locations, contributing to the country's boom in tourism. Overall, we need a cohesive approach that would encompass the public and private sector on one hand, and the government (state and central governments, and local authorities) on the other hand, in order to continue developing world class tourism infrastructure.

Technology to the advantage

India's travel and tourism industry has undergone a drastic technological transformation, making it easier for people to plan and book trips. The availability of wide options related to mobile apps, online booking platforms, and travel-related websites provide convenience and accessibility, driving more people to travel. Overall, technological advances have changed the way we travel, and these new developments promise an even more interactive and exciting experience. The travel and tourism enterprises that will flourish in the coming years are those who can provide both spontaneity and ease of use via a mobile-first strategy. Technology has truly given wings of convenience to the travel and tourism industry as it soars towards success.

The rise of disposable income and the growing number of millennials

With more than 400 million of the country's total population, India has one of the largest millennial populations. Together with GenZ, they are estimated to comprise 50 percent of India's population by 2030. They're a powerful demographic with potent purchasing power, driving a wave of change and reshaping the future of travel. They are explorers at heart, and uninhibited in trying out novel experiences. Also, with the buoyant growth in the Indian economy, the Indian middle class has higher disposable income. This often results in more people having the financial means to travel for leisure, which is driving domestic tourism. The segment is likely to grow further with growing disposable income, increasing inclination towards travelling across age groups and emergence of new destinations as well as new themes of tourism.

Going forward, it is also important to have strategic redistribution of tourism across diverse geographies, fostering inclusivity and exploration beyond traditional hotspots. The resilience of the travel and tourism industry is a beacon of hope and a benchmark for other sectors. This growth trajectory speaks volumes about the sector's untapped potential as a key driver for economic growth, employment generation, and infrastructural development.