

Careers In Tourism And Travel Industry

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Tourism is one of the important sectors contributing to the economy of the country for the future growth. In the changing social-political situation, international and national government is also considering travel and tourism as a tool of development. As per the data released by United Nation World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO), Asia has shown a commendable growth in tourism sector. This sector is creating immense opportunities of income, employment, preservation of culture and cross-culture understanding.

The total contribution by tourism and travel sector to India's GDP is expected to increase from \$136.3 billion in 2015 to \$275.2 billion in 2025. Travel and tourism is the third-largest foreign exchange earner for India. In 2014, the country managed foreign exchange earnings of \$19.7 billion from tourism. The Government has also been making serious efforts to boost investments in tourism sector. In the hotel and tourism sector, 100 percent FDI is allowed through the automatic route. A five-year tax holiday has been offered for 2, 3 and 4-star-category hotels located around UNESCO World Heritage Sites (except Delhi and Mumbai). The investment in tourism sector is expected to be \$12.4 billion in the 12th Five Year Plan, of these, private investments are likely to total \$9.2 billion (*source: www.ibef.org*).

In some of the countries, Indians are considered to be the highest spenders for the shopping. In the recent past, country has witnessed the substantial increase in the disposable income of average Indians. With the initiatives of the new government, the "Brand India" is emerging strongly. This can be witnessed easily after the recent visits of Prime Minister of India to USA, Japan, Australia and other countries.

Tourism industry is dominated by youngsters. Small and Medium Enterprises are playing an important role in tourism and travel business. This industry demands youth with pleasing personality, smiling face and good communication skills for employment. Tourism is one of the emerging academic discipline in the Social Science for employment and career prospects. Young interns as well as students can look forward to working or developing their career in some of the following important areas in tourism and travel industry:

Tour Operations: This segment includes product and package designing, itinerary preparation, file handling,



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marketing, ticketing and linkage with other service providers associated with the tourism trade. As an aspirant, the individual requires sound destination knowledge and networking with supplies, besides the basic job attributes like hard work, pleasing personality and communication skills.

Travel agencies: They are considered as the retailers. Travel agents are basically a link between tour operators and tourists. Person should be effective in the interpersonal communication and group handling beside IT exposure. He should also be well versed in the domestic and international tourist destinations and attractions. Costing and itinerary preparation would be an added advantage in this segment.

MICE/Event Management Companies: In the recent years, due to emergence of corporate clientele, this sector has come up with a lot of job opportunities. Meeting, incentive tours, conferences, exhibitions, business tours are the sub-areas where students can obtain job opportunities.

Accommodation: Hotels and Resorts are also offering job opportunities for the students with the exposure of tourism. Star hotels have their travel desks, which are handled by the tourism professionals known as concierge. Most of the hotels are now well equipped with the Spa and other recreation activities.

Transport/Logistic/Cargo: Air Transport, Road Transport, Cruise Transport, Luxurious Trains are the examples where tourism professionals can get the chances with the handsome pay-package. Indigo, Spicejet, Jet Airways are some of the examples where the ground

handling staff and crew members are from tourism background. Even the cruise companies are also recruiting professionals with fair knowledge of cross-cultural handling.

Adventure Tour Companies: Water-based, land-based and air-based adventure tour companies require tourism professionals with the sound knowledge of technical aspects blended with the client handling. Goa-based National Institute of Water Sports (NIWS) facilitate the students for the jobs by imparting short-term training programmes.

Wildlife, agri-tourism, rural tourism, safaris and bird watching: These are the niche areas where students can get jobs as per their preferences. Lots of domestic and international tourists visit especially for special-interest tourism.

Tour guiding: Delhi, Agra, Jaipur – route is considered as the Golden Triangle due to tourist attraction and shopping places like Aurangabad, Bengaluru, Chennai, and Goa are becoming a hub for tourists. There are different types of tour guides in India like local level tourist guide where the licensing authority is the local body or Municipal Corporation. For State-level tourist guide, the licensing authority is State tourism or State tourism development corporations. For Regional level Guides, Indian Institute of Tourism and Travel Management (IITTM) conducts six months, training for different regions in the country and the certifying authority is the Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India.

FOREX/Insurance/Banking: Some established tour operators have their special functional requirement where tourism professionals with a sound knowledge of accounting, insurance, FOREX get the jobs with a wonderful pay package.

Tourism Boards: State Tourism and Ministry of Tourism also require candidates with Tourism background for their various positions. State Corporations and Promotional Agencies also require candidates with tourism background.

Travel Writing /Photography: Travel journalism is another area where the candidates require sound knowledge about Travelogue and terminology required for travel writing. Professional photographers are always in demand in tourism industry.

IITTM functions under Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India and consistently amends its curriculum to meet the needs of the industry.