Article Side

The Avenues of Sports Tourism

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The idea of using sports as a medium to promote tourism is something that is being practiced over centuries since the inception of the ancient Olympic Games. More recently, a more systematic and elaborate form of sport tourism has happened to come into the limelight of the world, purely because of the potential that it exhibits.

Sports has come to become one of the larger reasons behind travel for many individuals around the world. The increasing awareness levels and the availability of high quality sporting infrastructure has resulted in large populations of travellers choosing to plan vacations that include golfing, skiing and even running marathons.

While sport tourism by definition may vary from people to people, in simple terms it refers to a segment of people who travel away from their homes for the purpose of either playing a sport, watching a sporting event or simply to visit a sporting attraction which may or may not include competitive activities.

The Influence of Sporting Events on Tourism

This fast growing segment in the travel and tourism industry is now worth over 4 billion dollars and revolves around the hosting of a range of local, regional, national as well as international sporting events. These events have in turn positively impacted society, communities and even economies at a great extent. Not only do they help create awareness with respect to the importance of physical activities and sports; but they also encourage enhancements in local infrastructure to accommodate the inflow of tourists from all parts of the country and even the world.

Sporting tourism has also had tremendous influence on economical growth due to the spending of the visitors. For example, Vancouver and Whistler saw a rise of 48% in consumer spends during the Olympics held in 2010.

Domestic and International Sporting Travellers

Erratic economic environments have also given rise to a number of domestic travellers choosing to opt for interesting and novel vacationing ideas in the form of sports. While international leisure travel expenditures among westerners is on a low, an increasing number of Americans and Canadians have been investing in sporting hot spots across the region.

Sporting Tourism around the World

Just like Canada, countries around the world are also gearing up to cater to an array of sport enthusiasts by offering to the world high quality sporting infrastructure which facilitates tourists. For example, a number of countries in Europe, the Middle East and Africa are believed to the next hot spots for Golf enthusiasts. Turkey and Dubai rank among the top 5 Golfing destinations in the world.

With countries around the world getting more and more aggressive about marketing their country as an ideal sporting destination, sports tourism careers are definitely at their peak. This segment offers a lot of opportunities for individuals, organizations and governments to leverage the market, optimize the economic influence and jointly work towards enhancing the profile of your locality or nation to encourage sport enthusiasts to visit your country.

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