

The contemporary state of Ukrainian tourism

Introduction. Ukrainian tourism is now one of the fastest growing branches of the national economy. During the period of the Soviet Union, tourism was not even a branch of the State economy. It was just a neglected part of "the sphere of services". For a considerable length of time, foreign tourists were allowed to come to officially designated "open" cities only. Practically no soviet citizens were allowed to travel abroad.

Today the tourism in Ukraine has been recognized and is an important economic factor. There is a good reason for this change. Daily profit from one foreign tourist in Ukraine equals income from exporting nine tons of Ukrainian coal. The Cabinet of Ministers and the President, adopted several important decrees on tourism, "The Program of Development of Tourism up to the year 2010" has already been launched. In October 1997, Ukraine became a Full Member of the World Tourism Organization (WTO). A tourist sector of the economy serves as a major source of currency for 38% of countries in the world. It's all a matter of priorities and one that many countries in the world choose to emphasize. The worldwide amount of tourism spending increases significantly year by year. According to World Travel and Tourism Council 'The 2005 Travel and Tourism Economic Research'(nd), travel and tourism consumption grew by 37%, from US\$3.2 trillion in 2000 to estimated US\$4.4 trillion in 2005. Tourism industry is considered to be the most promising one in terms of future flows of revenues. High GDP growth can be achieved due to business boom in this sector: As Palatnikov (1997) describes, GDP growth acceleration was observed due to tourism sector expansion in Spain, Greece and Portugal, resulting in tourism being the first export sector in their economies.

Ukraine is a very lively country, rich in culture and history. There is much to offer tourists: many unforgettable lovely sights, traditional sounds, delicious flavors and unique smells. A wide variety of attractions in Ukraine capture the interest of tourists from all over the world. One of such Ukraine's attraction is St. Sophia Cathedral and Monastery, built during the 11th century. Also there are such attractions located in Kiev as Golden Gate, Cathedral of St. Vladimir, Museum of Ukrainian Art, Andreyevski Hill, Opera House and Historical Museum of Ukraine. In the historical city of Lviv visitors can explore great Ukrainian attractions including the National Museum, Antique Armory, Pharmaceutical Museum, Museum of Ethnography and Crafts, Museum of History and the Opera House of Ivan Franko. The city of Odessa is well-known for the Potemkin Stairway with its 192 steps. Odessa also boasts a beautifully decorated Opera House, a statue of the Duke of Richelieu, Archaeological Museum and Vorontsov Palace. This is just a small sampling of the many fascinating attractions in Ukraine.

The main preconditions for developing of tourism in Ukraine are:

• Location. Ukraine is situated in the East of the Europe, which makes travelling to Ukraine for citizens of this continent short.

• Climate. The Crimean peninsular and the Carpathian mountains make it possible to supply different tourism services, both in the summer and in the winter.

• Culture. Throughout centuries Ukrainian culture evolved in close relationship with the European one remaining, however, rather peculiar, especially in local traditions and mode of life. Current development of international economic relations caused popularization of foreign languages among the working force of the country. This ensured gradual decline of cultural barrier between the Ukrainians and Europeans. At the same time, Ukrainian tourism infrastructure, which includes hotels, restaurants, transportation facilities, entertaining establishments and insurance services is in poor condition now.

Inferiority of Ukrainian tourism sector is especially appreciable compared to infrastructure in world-wide acknowledged European tourism-oriented countries, such as France and Spain.

My own travel recommendation: if you have a month to see Ukraine, I would definitely add to this list of sights the scenic Carpathian Mountains in western Ukraine and, of course, Crimea with its Black Sea resorts and countless historical attractions. I would add a tour around the castles of western Ukraine and a visit to Kharkov or Donetsk in eastern Ukraine to round out one's impressions of the country.

Conclusions. Agencies are providing real cheap travel packages to their clients. That is why many more people are intended to visit the world. Ukraine is a captivating and exciting country with heaps to offer travellers, comprising the historical Ukrainian beautiful monuments, the renaissance beauty and fashion metropolis cities.

References

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