

**DELHI IS TOP DESTINATION FOR FOREIGN TOURISTS; MAHARASHTRA, TN, UP  
AND RAJASTHAN AMONG TOP FIVE: FICCI-EVALUESERVE STUDY**

*North-Eastern States Emerging as Leisure, Rural & Adventure Tourism Spots*

**NEW DELHI, April 10, 2010.** Delhi, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan are the top five destinations for foreign tourists, with the national capital attracting 23.4 lakh visitors in 2008. Maharashtra was a close second with 20.6 lakh visitors, followed by Tamil Nadu (20.3 lakh), and Uttar Pradesh (16.1 lakh) and Rajasthan (14.8 lakh), according to a FICCI-Evaluateserve study on India Inbound Tourism.

Delhi, the national capital of India, is a prominent tourist and business destination in India. The presence of a number of heritage sites, healthcare centres and business hubs in the city, along with the four satellite cities—Gurgaon, Noida, Faridabad and Ghaziabad—attract a large number of FTAs. However, limited land availability for tourism projects and inadequate number of hotel rooms are a major drawback for the city.

Maharashtra is the third largest state in India. Mumbai, the financial capital of the country, attracts a large number of tourists every year, and Pune has emerged as an education and IT services hub. Other major cities in the state include Nashik, Aurangabad and Nagpur. The 720-km long coastline, the Konkan hills, ancient cave temples and the Vidarbha forests are some of the major tourist attractions in the state.

The increasing land prices in Mumbai and Pune restricts the availability of suitable land for the establishment of more profitable businesses like hotels. The key reason for this is that both the cities have developed as business centres, which lead to limited availability of land for tourism purposes.

Tamil Nadu, with its beaches, hill stations, heritage sites, temples, wildlife and rural life, offers a wide range of tourist destinations. According to the HVS, India, the state topped the Hospitality Competitiveness Index 2009, which included 29 Indian states. Some of the major cities in the state include Chennai, Coimbatore, Madurai, Tiruchirapalli, Salem and. The state is increasingly gaining popularity for its medical services, thereby attracting a large number of medical tourists.

Uttar Pradesh is a popular tourist destination due to the presence of a large number of religious and historical sites. The state is home to Taj Mahal, which is one of the Seven Wonders of the World. Religious sites such as Kashi, Mathura and Ayodhya are other major tourist attractions in the state. Kanpur, Allahabad, Agra and Varanasi are some of the prominent cities in the state. Festivals such as Navaratri (a nine-day festival), Kumbha Mela are an added opportunity for promoting tourism in the state.

Rajasthan is famous for its historical facts, palaces, art and culture. One-third of all foreign tourist arrivals visiting India travel to Rajasthan. Tourism accounts for about 15

percent of Rajasthan's total economy. Jaipur, Udaipur, Jaisalmer, Jodhpur, Amber and Bikaner are some of the major cities in the state.

The FICCI-Evalueserve study notes that the north east region is emerging as a significant FTA destination. The region comprising seven states -- Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura -- offers tourists numerous leisure, rural and adventure destinations. While Sikkim and Assam hosted 19,154 and 14,426 foreign tourists in 2008, very few inbound tourists visited the other five states. However, the region is emerging as a tourist destination, and several initiatives are being taken to accelerate the growth of the tourism industry in these areas.

The seven states provide opportunities for angling, boating, rafting, trekking and hiking, besides having numerous wildlife sanctuaries and national parks.

A large number of festivals are celebrated in the region by the northeastern tribes. For instance, the three Bihus are the major festivals of Assam, and serve as a major tourist attraction on account of various festivities such as Bihu dances, performed by young boys and girls. Due to the presence of a large number of waterfalls and natural lakes, Northeast India is also growing as a destination for monsoon tourism in India.

Sikkim holds a lot of potential for adventure tourism and is an emerging destination, but foreign tourists are required to get permits to visit specific regions. This results in low inbound tourist arrivals in an area that is a potential adventure tourism destination. Allowing the free flow of foreign tourists can reap huge benefits for tourism in this region.

Some of the major tourist destinations in Northeast include Digboi, Lachung, Kaziranga National Park, Tawang, Guwahati, Nameri, Shillong, Yumthang, Gangtok, Mt. Kanchenjunga, Manas, and Majuli.

#### Foreign Tourist Arrivals by State/Union Territories (2008)

State/ UT	Foreign Arrivals	Tourist	State/ UT	Foreign Arrivals	Tourist
Delhi	2,339,287		Orissa	43,966	
Maharashtra	2,056,913		Chandigarh	34,762	
Tamil Nadu	2,029,410		Sikkim	19,154	
Uttar Pradesh	1,610,089		Assam	14,426	
Rajasthan	1,477,646		A&N islands	12,512	
West Bengal	1,133,671		Punjab	6,869	
Andhra Pradesh	789,180		Jharkhand	5,803	
Kerala	598,929		D&N Haveli	5,719	
Himachal Pradesh	376,736		Daman & Diu	5,266	
Goa	351,123		Meghalaya	4,919	

Bihar	345,572	Tripura	3,577
Madhya Pradesh	251,733	Arunachal Pradesh	3,020
Karnataka	174,040	Lakshadweep	1,699
Gujrat	110,702	Chattisgarh	1,314
Uttarakhand	99,910	Nagaland	1,209
Haryana	87,172	Mizoram	902
Punducherry	60,309	Manipur	354
Jammu and Kashmir	54,697		

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