

TOURISM INDUSTRY IN SIBERIA

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Nowadays tourism is a perspective and rapidly developing branch. A lot of countries understand quite well the huge profit it adds to the budget. Some of them live only on tourism. This branch is well developed there, and the competition between travel agencies, hotels and restaurants is very high. It allows them to combine good service with low prices. For example we all associate Turkey, Egypt and Thailand with an excellent and at the same time cheap recreation.

As for Russia, it has good opportunities for developing the infrastructure of tourism and attracting foreign tourists who will spend money in Russia. Rich cultural heritage and great natural variety of places in Russia are among the most popular tourist destinations in the world. The country contains 24 UNESCO World Heritage Sites (15 properties are cultural and 9 are natural), while many more are on UNESCO's tentative list. Major tourist routes in Russia include a travel around the Golden Ring of ancient cities, cruises on the big rivers like Volga, and long journeys on the famous Trans-Siberian Railway. Diverse regions and ethnic cultures of Russia offer many different cuisines and souvenirs, and show a great variety of traditions.

Let us focus on Siberia. Every year more and more people choose Siberia as a place to spend their vacation.

The Siberian tourism has recently gained popularity not only with the Russians, but also with the citizens of other countries. According to the statistics of web-site www.russiatourism.ru most foreigners travelling in Russia with touristic purpose are from Germany. The second place is occupied by tourists from the United States of America. The third belongs to tourists from Finland. So, Siberia is visited both by Europeans and Americans.

The active and extreme kinds of sport are the most attractive ones. The Siberian Rivers are a perfect place for different levels hiking on all kinds of boats, ranging from kayaks and catamarans to rafts. Windsurfers and kitesurfers train and compete on Siberian lakes. Lake Baikal, the deepest lake in the world, was chosen by divers from all over the world for its unique beauty and peculiarity.

Mountain chains and ranges are of particular interest for tourists in any season. Those who are fond of rock climbing, mountaineering and speleological tourism come here. In winter mountain slopes become the place of pilgrimage for snowboarders and downhill skiers.

Moreover, cycling tourism becomes more and more widely spread. The competitions are regularly arranged and people from other regions of the country eagerly participate in them.

Developing of the region makes it possible to raise the level of tourist comfort and security. Wide coverage of cellular communications, historical places, museums, exhibitions, theatres, art galleries, numerous restaurants and snack-bars make a visit to Siberia unforgettable for everybody and more people prefer to come to Siberia again and again.

The construction of hotels and restaurants is one of the most dynamically developing branches in nonmaterial sphere. The influence of tourism on the economy of Siberia grows from year to year. Tourism has an important multiplicative effect on the region development.

However in spite of favorable opportunities the influence of tourism on the developing infrastructure in Siberia is still insignificant. There are some factors, which prevent the

development of tourism in the region and attraction of tourists from other regions and countries.

The following reasons can be indicated:

1. The absence of real investments in the region. There are too few travel agencies, which are constant market players. Most of travel agencies appear only in summer and in the periods of decreased demand they disappear from the market.

2. The absence of integrated strategy and business plan for expansion of tourist industry in Siberia. It causes serious problems in implementation of megaprojects; it leads to unpractical backup of investment projects and to a general decrease of investment efficiency in the region.

3. Undeveloped infrastructure. Siberia needs high-quality hotels, restaurants and good maintenance staff, such as hotel personnel and guides. Moreover, there is a great need in modern comfortable buses, high-quality roads and a well-developed public catering system in Siberia.

4. The reputation of tourism in Siberia is not quite favorable. Stability, comfort and environmental conditions play an important role in the development of tourism industry in the region, which unconsciously form a negative image of Siberia.

5. The absence of good promotion of tourism across Siberia in the world market. Unfortunately at present there is no information about Siberia in the world market. Except Lake Baikal and Trans-Siberian Railway the foreign tourist doesn't know anything about travelling in our region. Travel agencies, which offer unique tours, have to supply the foreign travelers with such information. So their task is purposefully and effectively study and inform the potential client about the advantages of travelling in Siberia, favoring the formation of positive reputation of the region. Such activity will stimulate the increase of foreign and Russian tourists.

And at the same time it is necessary to use the extant tourism potential, renew its infrastructure, and update it in such a way that it will be able to meet the needs of modern tourists. We should also find new forms of travelling in Siberia to attract more different segments of tourists.

To summarize it is safe to say that:

1. Siberia has a great potential for developing the tourist industry.
2. Developing of the tourism branch in the region will favor general development of the Siberian economic infrastructure.

3. Travel services and hotel and restaurant complexes are integral elements of the maintenance infrastructure.

Siberia has amazing opportunities to develop tourism, to build new recreation areas, to reconstruct sanitation facilities and health resorts, thus creating new jobs. The implementation of the competent and stable policy in this branch will permit to create modern and competitive tourist complex providing an economic growth of the region.

The advantages of such policy will be:

1. Extra taxes to the region treasury;
2. New jobs due to development of the hotel and restaurant industry;
3. Better service for tourists and natives;
4. Low prices as a result of high competition;
5. Well-developed infrastructure in the region;
6. Favorable investment climate in the region.

In conclusion it is possible to say that tourism is a promising area for the region development. It will bring benefits to Siberia economic status. It is real to make Siberia attractive both for tourists and investors, but it can't be done without government support and travel agencies' initiative.