

A Study on Gandhian Tourism in India – An Overview

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ABSTRACT

Tourism is a complex phenomenon that can be conceptualized on over all levels. It can be considered demographically as the flow of temporary leisure migration across international boundaries or within the boundaries of a given country. It can be thought of institutionally, as the system enterprise and organisations that process and serve the flow. Finally travelling for leisure was common in many historical and pre-modern societies. In this article, I am going explain about the Gandhian Tourism in India. Besides, the tourism places of Gandhi's life visited by people and clearing their doubts. People meets, associates with their relatives of Gandhi and visits grass-roots projects and ashrams that have been founded on Gandhian principles.

INTRODUCTION

Tourism in India is economically an important and is growing rapidly. The world Travels and Tourism Council calculated that tourism penetrated at 6.4 million in 2012. They are different kinds of tourism like - Business tourism, Archaeological tourism and Heritage tourism, Cultural tourism, Religious tourism, Health tourism, Festivals tourism, Wildlife tourism, Medical tourism etc., but I am going to exhibit a particular person of tourism i.e Gandhian tourism. "The fool wanders, a wise man travels" said by Thomas Fuller. The tour provides a rare insight and work of Mahatma Gandhi who cultivated the ethnics of non-violence, and promoted freedom for India. A Traveler who came from Europe to India about Thirty – Five years ago was asked a question: What do you wish to see in India? His reply was "The Himalayas, The Taj Mahal and Mahatma Gandhi."

PORBANDHAR – BIRTH PLACE OF MAHATMA GANDHI

Porbandhar, the birth place of Mahatma Gandhi, situated at end of Saurashtra Gujarat state and picturesque seaport on the Arabian Sea. To commemorate the birth place of Gandhi 79 ft high imposing building has been built the lane where Gandhi was born in 1869. The prime attraction is the Kirti Mandir, houses Gandhian Library, prayer hall, Putlibai Gandhi's mother and his wife birth place, then his birth place have been marked with "Swastika" all these are pronouncing the episode of Gandhi's life.¹

GANDHI TEERTH IN JALGAON

Gandhi Teerth is an international centre for Gandhian study, research and dialogue, initiated and promoted by Gandhian Research Foundation. Its core objective is to preserve and promote posterity the Gandhian ideology and legacy. Gandhi Teerth is a magnificent 65,000 sq. ft sustainable structure located at Jain Hills Jalgon in Maharashtra. The premise is beautifully landscaped with sprawling lawns and is joined by mango orchards with mounded sit-outs and serene walk-ways. The entire green complex nestles between 300 acres of lush, afforested hilly terrain and is noise-

free. Residential facilities for researches and guests are housed within the complete. The edifice is build under green norms to last for many centuries.²

GRF Think Tank (It can independently study and opine on public policy matters such as peace, ahimsa etc.)

SALIENT FEATURES:

- Winner of the GRIHA Adarsh Award and Artists in Concrete Awards Asia Fest 2013-14.
- The largest audio guided air-conditioned museum in the world based on the life and works of Mahatma Gandhi.
- Audio available in three languages-Marathi, Hindi and English.
- Museum has more than 30 sections equipped with Touch screen, Bioscope, Digital Books, 3-D Mapping and Animation, amalgamating different modern technologies.
- It takes 2 hours 30 minutes to visit the Museum. Guides are available with each group.
- A hyper realistic statue of Gandhiji, spinning in real time, can be seen by the visitors.

SABRAMATI ASHRAM IN WARDHA

Sabarmati Ashram formally known as Satyagraha Ashram was witness to many Historical events that shook up the British Empire. Set up in 1915 the Ashram was also a perfect example of a model community based on rules and values. It situated about 5 km from the centre of Ahmadabad in Gujarat state on the west bank of SabarmatiRiver.³

THE MAIN ATTRACTION

- The Sabaramati Ashram premises houses a museum which have five units – office, library, two photo galleries and an auditorium.
- It is perhaps having the largest manuscripts of Gandhis letters and articles.
- The museum has eight life-size colour oil paintings and an exhibition on Gandhi's life "My life is my message" and "Gandhi in Ahmadabad".
- An archive is also set up, which stores 34,066 letters written by Gandhi, manuscripts of his 8, 633 articles, negatives of 6,367 photographs, 134 reels of microfilms of his writings and 210 films on Gandhi and the freedom struggle.⁴
- The library has over 30, 000 books, 155 letters of felicitation received by Gandhi then having coins and postal stamps etc.,
The Ashram is open from 8.30 am to 6.30 pm throughout the year and admission is free.⁵

SEVAGRAM ASHRAM

Seagram Ashram located near Nagpur in Maharashtra, was Gandhi's headquarters and place for experiments from 1934 to 1940. He lived as the villagers lived i.e without electricity and telephone and built the Ashram house himself with materials available locally. One can see Gandhi kitchen in this house. The first built in the Ashram was Adi Nivas around which was a prayer ground. Akhiri Nivas was last residence; the weighing machine he used is preserved here. Parchure Kutu was a Sankirt scholar who afflicted with leprosy and taken care by Gandhi. **Kishor Nivas:** The only house to be built with bricks and cement it was the residence of Kishorlal Mashruwala, a close associate of Gandhi's and part-time editor of the Harijan Weekly.⁶

MANI BHAVAN GANDHI SANGRAHALAYA IN BOMBAY

Mani Bhavan located in Mumbai Maharastra state is one of the most important Gandhi Memorial Museum's in the country. Being at one time the residence of the Father of the Nation, it is now a source of inspiration for freedom and peace loving men and women from all over the world.⁷

THE MAIN ATTRACTIONS

- It considered as a Research Institute.
- The First floor used for Gandhi's film played and seminars, discussions and various competitions for college students arranged by the Gandhi a Study Circle.
- The Second floor, which used to be Gandhi's living room and working space, has been preserved as far as possible in its original setting.
- The Mani Bhavan was very important in his life.⁸

AGAKHAN PALACE IN PUNE

This palace was built in 1892 by Imam Sultan Muhammad Shah Agakhan III. He was elected as the president of the League of Nations in 1938 and was well renowned in the field of politics and sports. The palace was later donated to India by Agakhan IV in 1969 as a mark of respect to Gandhi and his philosophy.⁹

HISTORICAL IMPORTANCE

- The Agakhan Palace in Pune is a National monument of India's freedom movement.
- Following the launch of Quit India Movement in 1942, Gandhi and his wife Kasturba, his Secretary Mahadevabai Desai were interned at the palace and Kasturba passed away while captivity at the Agakhan palace and their Samadhis are located in the campus situated near the river Mula, the palace is a simple memorial to Gandhi and his life.¹⁰

TOURIST ATTRACTION

- The palace has developed into a national and international place of pilgrimage with over a lakh of visitors every year that came to pay homage to the Samadhi here.
- The palace is surrounded by a sprawling garden.
- The famous movie Gandhi was shot here.¹¹

GANDHI MEMORIAL MUSEUM IN MADURAI

The Gandhi Memorial Museum at Madurai has been built and organised by the Gandhi Samark Nidhi in Madurai in the year 1921 that loin cloth as his mode of dress which made him known thought out the world as the "Half Naked Fair". It was in Madurai again that the grate Meenatchi Temple was thrown open to the Harijans, thus winning a historic battle against "Untouchability".¹² Gandhi visited this temple in 1946 along with Harijans as a triumph for the cause of Harijan Temple Entry. The building that houses the Gandhi Memorial Museum Madurai is the historic Tamukkam Palace built about 1670 A.D. the picture gallery presents a visual biography of Gandhi.¹³

GANDHI MEMORIAL SOCIETY

The management of the museum, samadhis and the palace campus was transferred to the Gandhi Memorial society in 1980. The society has been trying to make this place a living memorial to Ba (Kasturba Gandhi) and Bapu (Mahatma Gandhi) by organizing a number of activities throughout the year. Following public functions are held here:

- Martyr's day – 30th January
- Mahashivratri - Kasturba's death anniversary celebrated as Mother's day
- Independence day – 15th August

- Republic day – 26th January
- Babu's birth anniversary and Ba and Babu awards ceremony – 2nd October

PRESENT ACTIVITIES

- Picture gallery and museum- Pictures depicting important events in the freedomstruggle and things used by Mahatma Gandhi ICDS training of Aganwadi workers, supervisors and CDPQ. A special cenotaph honours Kasturba who died here. A shop attached sells khadi or cotton and Hand loomed textiles and garments.

GANDHI SMRITI

Located at Raighat (Delhi) , Gandhi Smriti and Darshan Samiti was formed in September 1984 by the merger of Gandhi Dharshan at Rajghat and Gandhi Smriti.

THE MAIN ATTRACTION

- Gandhi Smriti is the one of the biggest Museums of Gandhi.
- 6000 original photos of Gandhi preserved here.
- The exhibition on the Mahatma, the room he lived in and the prayer ground where he fell a martyr with God's name on his lips attract a large number of vistors¹⁴.

GANDHI MUSEUMS AND MEMORIAL IN DELHI

National Gandhi Museum after the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi a need for a Museum which could be a glance into his eventful life and work was felt.¹⁵ The National Gandhi Museum is the result of his urgent need for a place which could be home to the manuscripts, photographs, journals, manuals, books and all that which could be perfect memorial for the Mahatma. The two storey Museum was formally inaugurated by Dr. RAJENDRA PRASAD, THE First President of India, ON January 30, 1961. The Museum was named "Gandhi Memorial Museum" now known as the National Gandhi Museum is one of the biggest Gandhi Museum in India.¹⁶

RAJGHAT

The mortal remains of Mahatma Gandhi were cremated on this spot on the west bank of river Yamuna on the evening of January 31, 1948. A simple open platform inscribed with the Mahatma's last words, "Hey Rama" is set in a garden with fountains and a variety of exotic tress. Travel like Gandhi with simple clothes, open eyes and an uncluttered mind unknown author.¹⁷

CONCLUSION

Gandhi wrote a book "My life is my message." The headline of a book made him to travel with purpose of his life and inviting each Indian citizen to establish unforgettable historical monuments for the future young Indian citizens. Through this article I will propagate the Gandhian tourism for the younger generation.

All the places were best time to visit is October to March. The government had provided many facilities like transfort, accomandation .. etc to visit the Gandhian Tourism.

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