

Regional Tourism: Present Situation and Future Development (The Republic of Tatarstan as an Example)

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Abstract: In the last decades, the questions of study of development of regional tourism in the world have become relevant. The special attention of experts in the field of regional tourism is paid to its current state and prospects of development. On the example of one of the subjects of the Russian Federation, the Republic of Tatarstan the main directions of development of regional tourism were discussed. As a subject of study Tatarstan was chosen because the region is of interest both for tourists and researchers of tourism. According to the latest statistics of Tatarstan is among the five most visited regions of Russia. The growth of tourist attractiveness of the republic is conditioned by the favorable geographical position of Tatarstan, a rich and unique historical and cultural heritage, competent policy in the sphere of tourism development on the part of management in the region.

Key words: Regional tourism, modernity, development prospects, the Republic of Tatarstan, heritage

INTRODUCTION

In the 90's of 20th century, a new concept "regional tourism" entered everyday life of Russian tourists and sightseers as a result of "sovereignty" of individual subjects of the Russian Federation, increasing of the role of boundaries of individual territories and self-determination of individual nations. In Foreign studies, the term "regional tourism" means visit of a foreign country within a certain geographic area (Carson and Macbeth, 2005). The local papers dealing with history and with current state and prospects of tourism development in Russia do not have a clear definition of "regional tourism". The notion of "regional tourism" is also absent in the main document regulating the tourism activity in the Russian Federation; the Federal Law "About the basics of tourist activity in the Russian Federation". The clearest definition of regional tourism was given by Zorin and Kvartalnov (2005) as tourist activity which is characteristic for a specific region, territory or a combination of areas with homogeneous conditions for the development of tourism and similar level of tourism development.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Regional tourism on the example of Republic Tatarstan:
The prerequisites for the formation and development of

tourism in Tatarstan are favorable geographical location and rich historical and cultural heritage of the region. The Republic of Tatarstan is located in the center of the European part of Russia on the East European Plain. The geographical position of Tatarstan determines its key role in transport links of European and Eastern parts of Russia, communication with other regions of the country and the world. The Republic of Tatarstan has an extensive transport network, including all types of land, air and water transport. Moderate continental climate of the Republic of Tatarstan with warm summers and moderately cold winter also makes the region attractive for tourism development. For the tourists the most favorable period for visiting the republic is from May to September.

Republic of Tatarstan differs from other regions of Russia due to its unique historical and cultural heritage. The uniqueness of the historical and cultural heritage of Tatarstan is confirmed by the inclusion of historical and architectural complex "Kazan Kremlin" in 2000 and the architectural and historical complex of the Bulgars in 2014 to the List of World Cultural and Natural Heritage. The architectural complex of the Kazan University is included to the list of the most valuable objects of cultural heritage of the peoples of the Russian Federation.

In total >7000 objects of historical and cultural heritage, including 1554 of them under state protection are registered in the Republic of Tatarstan (Valeev, 2014).

In addition to the favorable geographical location and rich historical and cultural heritage the strong points of the Republic of Tatarstan in the development of regional tourism are:

- A special touch of the region defined by a variety of cultures and traditions of the peoples living in the region. Tatarstan is one of multinational regions of Russia. The republic is home to over 100 nationalities
- Carrying out of a large number of events (conferences, congresses, sporting events, festivals, etc.) of Russian and international level that attract different categories of tourists
- Active position and open attitude of the Republic of Tatarstan leadership in the development of tourism. In order to develop and enhance the competitiveness of the tourism industry of the Republic of Tatarstan in the Russian and international tourist markets, the Cabinet of Ministers of Republic of Tatarstan in 2013, adopted a long-term target program “Development of tourism in the Republic of Tatarstan for 2013-2016” and in 2014 the State program “Development tourism and hospitality in the Republic of Tatarstan for 2014-2020”

Weaknesses of the Republic of Tatarstan in the development of regional tourism are:

- Short-stay travelers or individual tourist groups in the country. The most popular among tourists are the so-called weekend tours designed for a stay in Tatarstan for 1-2 days
- Not uniform distribution of the tourist flow depending on the season. The tourist season in the Republic of Tatarstan is in May, September and it is weakened sharply in the other months of the year

Until recently, the weak sides of the Republic of Tatarstan in the development of tourism activities also included the lack of tourist brand of Republic of Tatarstan in the Russian and world tourism markets and low informativeness about the region as a tourist destination both in tourist market and in the media. In order to increase tourist attractiveness of Tatarstan in 2014, the Center for Strategic Communications “The Apostle” developed tourist brand “Heritage of Tatarstan”. The notion of tourist brand is a system concept that characterizes the strategy of creating competitive advantages of the tourist product, the prospects of development of tourist activity and maximum receipt of social and economic effect (Nurtdinova, 2006). According to the viewpoint of the British scientist Simon Anholt

tourist brand consists of six elements: Tourism, export brands, politics, business, investment, culture, people (Anholt, 2009). All these components are available in the tourist brand of the Republic of Tatarstan. “Heritage of Tatarstan” is the first Russian brand created for the opening of “cultural code” of the region and defining the visual style for the brand of the Republic of Tatarstan in relation to its historical and cultural heritage.

Because of its strong points today Republic of Tatarstan has one of the leading positions in the tourist-excursion industry in Russia. Studies have shown that over the past 5 years, average annual growth in domestic tourist flow in Tatarstan has amounted to 12%. Even during the crisis period, domestic tourism grew by >5% (Bukhmina, 2013). According to the State Committee of Tourism of the Republic of Tatarstan in 2014, Tatarstan was visited by 2.5 million tourists (Anonymous, 2015).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The tourist industry of Tatarstan is a collection of objects of cultural and historical heritage, hotels, resorts and other places of accommodation, transport, catering, entertainment facilities, travel agencies, tour guides and many other participants of the tourism industry.

To date, the main tour route covers a large part of the Republic of Tatarstan, it is the route “Pearl necklace of Tatarstan”, presented at the International Specialized Exhibition “Tourism Industry 2007” held in Kazan in April 2007. The route is made up of small and large rings. Small Ring “Pearl necklace of Tatarstan” surrounds the republic’s capital city of Kazan with a radius of 60-80 km and passes through five districts of the Republic of Tatarstan: Arskiy, Verkhneuslonskiy, Zelenodolskiy, Laishevskiy, Pestrechinskiy. Each of the districts of Tatarstan that belong to the small ring has its own, different set of elements that are crucial for the development of regional tourism: climatic conditions, distinctive historical, cultural and architectural heritage, infrastructure, ethnic composition.

For Arskiy district, the one where almost 93% of the population, the Tatars. The district almost in its original form keeps everyday life, customs and traditions of the Tatar people. Also, Arskiy region is the birthplace of many of the Tatar culture and art figures: G. Tukay, S. Hakim, G. Bashirov. Unlike Arskiy, Laishevskiy district is the region of Russian culture. The area is known as the birthplace of G.R. Derzhavin and is the venue for the annual folklore festival “Karavon” in the village of Russkoe Nikolskoye. In Pestrechinskiy district, there are numerous villages of baptized Tatars. There is the place of the first deportation of V.I. Lenin, the village Lenino-Kokushkino. Stretching along the banks of the

River Volga, Verkhneuslonskiy district, has long been a favorite vacation spot of inhabitants of Tatarstan. On the territory of the district a modern ski complex “Kazan”, Golf Club “Kazan” are built. Raif monastery and island-city Sviyazhsk are located in Zelenodolskiy district. They are tourist sites of regional, federal and international importance as centers of cultural, educational and pilgrim tourism in Tatarstan.

In comparison with small, big ring “Pearl necklace of Tatarstan” is a journey across the territory of the Republic of Tatarstan. Big ring combines tourist centers such as Kazan, Bolgar, Bilyarsk, Chistopol, Yelabuga. The main potential of these tourist destinations is a rich cultural and historical heritage, represented in the State Historical and Architectural Museum reserves (Kazan Kremlin, Bulgaria, Bilyarsk, Yelabuga), excavations of ancient settlements (Djuketau, Bilyar, Suvar) or in the historic nucleus of urban development (Kazan, Yelabuga, Chistopol) as well as unique natural areas of the Volga-Kama reserve, Spasskiy reserve, Chistye luga.

The third ring route “Pearl necklace of Tatarstan” is in the development. The third ring will cover the South-Eastern regions of the Republic of Tatarstan: Almetyevsk, Bavly, Bugulma, Leninogorsk, which now the base of medical health recreation and ski tourism of the republic is being formed.

A characteristic feature of the route “Pearl necklace of Tatarstan” is that around each of the tourist centers on the route, his “Ring” is formed, which with the development of infrastructure will create a kind of panoramic route for whatever tourist area and form multi-day tours of different directions that contributes to the effectiveness of tourist-excursion industry of the Republic of Tatarstan.

In addition to the historical and cultural tourism in the Republic of Tatarstan other types of tourism have been actively developing. After a successful 2013, XXVII World Summer Universiade in the republic event tourism has evolved; the tourism, dedicated to some event (Babkin, 2008). Being at the crossroads of East and West, the territory of Tatarstan for many centuries have been a center of shrines of many religions, so in the republic pilgrim tourism developed; a set of travels of representatives of various confessions to the objectives of the pilgrimage. In Alkeyevskiy, Laishevskiy, Muslyumovskiy, Pestrechinskiy and some other districts of Tatarstan, with the support of the government of the republic rural and agro tourism is developed; tourism that focuses on the use of natural, cultural, historical and other resources of the countryside and its features to create an integrated tourist product (Shilova, 2010).

Summary: Introduced in the 90’s of the 22 century and gained a foothold in the minds of Russians the concept of

“regional tourism” is now has gone beyond the concept of another notion “entry, exit recreation” and began to develop as an independent branch of tourism.

The Republic of Tatarstan can serve as a good example of regional tourism development. Located in the center of the Russian Federation the Republic with its unique national and cultural flavor, as well as a competent policy on the part of the leadership of Tatarstan in the field of tourism development attracts thousands of tourists.

On the Republic Tatarstan example, we can see that the development of regional tourism contributes to the development of tourism infrastructure, establishment of socio-economic relations between the regions.

CONCLUSION

Currently, regional tourism on the scale of its spread in the world and the demand among the tourists is not much inferior to the international tourism. The development of tourism in the Republic of Tatarstan at the present stage is directed to the use of existing and creation of new tourist and recreational potential. Thus, existing tourism products of Tatarstan, as well as additional attractions and tourist sites further developed. Tatarstan has large prospects of development of new, not typical for the region kinds of tourism: business, health, beach. Thus, on the basis of prevailing recreational functions with several promising tourist destinations, the Republic of Tatarstan is a multifunctional tourist region.

Today, tourism in Tatarstan is one of the most promising areas of the republic development. Tatarstan has natural and recreational resources, rich historical and cultural values that contribute to the comprehensive development of regional tourism.

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