

INCREDIBLE INDIA: THE OFFICIAL TOURISM WEBSITE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA: WWW.INCREDIBLEINDIA.ORG

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For many countries, one of the major ways of generating national income is tourism. Recently, nations have begun to concentrate more on intrabound tourism to help contribute to the local economy. In order to improve this policy shift, countries have organized comprehensive campaigns to promote tourism. India is one such country that launched the “Incredible India” campaign in 2002. Apart from TV commercials, outdoor and print ads, India’s Ministry of Tourism maintains the *IncredibleIndia.org* website to promote tourism to India.

IncredibleIndia.org is available in languages like Japanese, Chinese, French, English and Hindi. It is a colorful website which instantly exposes the user to India’s vibrant culture. The site provides access to the current Incredible India newsletter, which is a vital tool that all tourism and economic developers from India and other nations can refer to in order to keep up with the latest events and happenings in India’s tourism sector. Another important aspect of this website is its emphasis on rural development through tourism and provides a direct link to www.exploreruralindia.org, another campaign by the Ministry of Tourism, which promotes tourism to rural India.

The site provides a user with information on all the types of tourism available in the country. For example, if the user is looking for adventure sports, he or she can easily browse the site for all possible outdoor activities such as water sports, trekking, mountain climbing or skiing. The ‘eco-tourism’ section of the website is very informative and gives a detailed description of what to expect as well as website links to eco-tour operators

in India. It even includes the do’s and don’ts for prospective travelers so that the flora and fauna of these ecosystems are preserved.

The Incredible India website is the Ministry of Tourism of India’s primary channel of exhibiting the magnificence of India world over. This is done innovatively through Google’s YouTube channel which the website recommends. The site helps all interested institutions and organizations to keep up-to-date with recent events and exhibitions that draw international presence. This website is thorough, simple and well-structured, which makes it an excellent example for a tourism website. With focus of being a user-friendly website, the trip planner tool helps tourist easily narrow down sites, specialized trips, agents, restaurants etc. It provides special insights on destinations, interesting locations, beaches, hot spots of wildlife, locations of wellness/health, spiritual and pilgrimage destinations. Some of the other useful links are the Holiday Ideas and Experience India, which help a tourist make his/her trip well planned and well researched with no hassles.

Economic developers and tourism and travel development agencies can benefit from this website’s report on the annual statistics (India tourism 2007-current) on the tourism in India. Various information on the share of India in international tourism receipts in world, number of outbound visits of Indian nationals, month-wise foreign tourist arrivals in India, and other well documented figures and graphs are present. With these statistics coming directly from the Ministry of Tourism’s network of 20 offices throughout India and 13 offices abroad, tourism based economic

developers stand to benefit greatly from this authoritative and valid source of information.

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