

Dwarkapuri in West and Jagannath Puri in East. To add to this Sringerimutt in Karnataka state is also claimed to be the sacred peeth.

The Indian pilgrims travel to the holy temples, the Indian holy space called “Teerth” which contain the meaning of “to cross”. It is a clear indication that in Indian holy space something is being crossed over. Within the holy space human beings are given the chance to transcend themselves when they come face to face, in contemplation, with the divinity.

The pilgrimage, instead of diminishing in our apparently ever more secular, scientific and technologically oriented world, is experiencing considerable growth. This is primarily because in religious life of an average Indian, even rivers have played a decisive role. The rivers from time immemorial have been the symbol of purity to humans. Among these rivers the Ganga is believed to be the most sacred for all Hindus. Innumerable holy shrines like Gaumukh, Gangotri, Devprayag, Rishikesh, Hardwar, Garmukteshwar, Kannauj, Allahabad, Varanasi, Patna and Gangasagar have come up on her banks through ages. These holy shrines attract millions of domestic pilgrims every year. On the other hand, river Yamuna is considered to be most meritorious to perform Gayatri Jap, worship of Keshav, Shiv or the Sun. The month of “Kartik” is pious for taking bath in Yamuna at Mathura. Traditions believe that Godavari before dividing itself into seven branches and meeting the sea, is most sacred for bath referred to as “Sapta Sagar Yatra”.

Besides rivers, sacred shrines have been visited extensively by domestic tourists all along the periods. The twelve Jyotirlingas, five Bhutalingas and many other temples enshrining ‘Lingas’ in their sanctorum are the ideal terminal destinations of domestic tourists since the time of great epics. The Jyotirlingas are at Kedarmath (Uttaranchal), Kashi Vishwanath (Uttar Pradesh), Somnath (Gujarat), Baijnath (Karnataka), Rameshwaram (Tamil Nadu), Ghushneshwar (Maharashtra), Bhimashankar (Maharashtra), Mahakaleshwar (Madhya Pradesh), Mallikarjuna (Andhra Pradesh), Omkareshwar (Madhya Pradesh), Nageshwar (Gujarat) and Tryambakeshwar (Maharashtra). The Bhutalingas are at Kalahastishwar (Vayulinga) at Kalahasti; Jambukeshwar (Appulinga) at Trichy; Arunamuleswar (Bhatalinga) at Thriuvannamalai; Ekambareshwar (Prithvilinga) at Kanchipuram and Chidambareshwar (Akaslinga) at Chidambaram.

In addition to also holy rivers and sacred shrines situated on the banks of these rivers, “Shakti” is also worshipped as the Divine mother, a creative power both as an enforcing discipline and for securing righteousness. There are nearly fifty-one shakti peethas all over the country. These peethas are visited by tourists throughout the year.

Thus, the religious tourism is a mixture of both ancient and modern cultures, i.e., from the exodus of the past to the present day where religious tourism has become a mainstay of tourism. India is a country abounding in not only Hindu shrines but she also represents manifestations of elevating and inspiring works of Jain Tirthankars at Sravasti, Kaushambi, Hastinapur, Parasnath hills, Rajgir, Khandgiri, Udaigiri, Khajuraho and Dilwara Temples at Mount Abu. Islami (Sufis) shrines as centres of religious influence at Ajmer (Khwaja Moinuddin Chisti), Gulbarga (Khwaja Bande Nawaj); Faridkot; Delhi (Sheikh Nizamuddin Aulia); and Panipat (Shah Sharaf Bin Ali). Sikh religion though believed that real pilgrimage is inward yet their sacred shrines are located at Garhwal (Hemkund Sahib); Amritsar (Golden Temple); Taran Taaran (Anandpur Sahib), Kartarpur and Patna Sahib; Churches in Goa. At many of these centres festivals and fairs are also held.

6.3 DESIGNING OF RELIGIOUS TOURISM PRODUCT

Designing tourism products is similar to that of consumer products. You have already studied in TS-6, various concepts and product designing model of **Philip Kotler** for developing any product. Just to recapitulate what you have already learnt we would like to emphasise the relevance of **Philip Kotler's** model in his book “**Marketing for Hospitality and Tourism**”. He has highlighted the following issues of product development at core level:

- Core Product,
- Facilitating Products, and
- Supporting Products.