



EUROPEAN TOURISM: ENDING SEASONALITY IN UZBEKISTAN TOURISM, ENTERING NEW MARKETS

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Annotation: The thriving tourism sector, which encompasses travel for business, professional, and educational purposes, contributes to employment opportunities and foreign currency earnings in Europe. This is particularly notable in Mediterranean countries, which offer a compelling blend of pleasant climate, beautiful beaches, picturesque landscapes, and historical landmarks. Furthermore, Europe's world-famous cities also attract a significant influx of tourists. It is worth mentioning that European countries consistently rank among the most popular destinations worldwide, attracting visitors from both within Europe and across other continents.

Key words: *Transportation-Roads, expressway, European port, tourism sector, world-famous city;*

IN EUROPE

Transportation-Roads

During the 1930s, Germany initiated the planning of expressways known as autobahns. Following suit, other European countries like the Netherlands and France also developed their own expressway networks during the mid-20th century. Presently, a widespread system of high-speed, limited-access highways exists throughout much of Europe, facilitating efficient transportation for both commerce and travel. Additionally, road tunnels have been constructed to complement railway tunnels beneath the Alpine passes.

Railways

Railways link European ports with their hinterlands and fan out from capitals and major cities to points on the international frontiers, where they meet the railway systems of their neighbours. In some cases—notably from France to Spain and from Belarus and Ukraine to Poland and Slovakia—this has involved a change of gauge. Countries, notably Spain, have responded to the problem of varying gauges by adopting the standard European gauge, building mixed-gauge tracks, and using systems that allow a train's wheels to be adjusted to fit different gauges. Railways permit passage between the western and eastern European extremities but not quite to the extreme north; they also have lost some of their passengers and freight to the automobile, coach, and truck, and many uneconomic local lines have been closed. Even so, rail services have notably improved with the use of electrified track or diesel locomotives, faster intercity passenger trains, and container freight trains. An integrated network of very fast passenger trains—notably the French TGV (trains à grande vitesse, “high-speed trains”)—has developed in western and central Europe, led by early developments in France, Italy, and Spain and integrated with the Channel Tunnel, the rail tunnel under the English Channel. Railways remain all-important in Russia and the other republics of the former Soviet Union. In addition, underground railways (subways), streetcar

systems, and suburban railways play an indispensable role for metropolitan commuters across Europe.

Geography, Travel, and Transportation

Tourism in Europe has experienced remarkable growth and serves as a vital industry contributing to employment and foreign currency earnings. This is particularly evident in Mediterranean countries, known for their combination of sunny weather, beaches, scenic beauty, and historical landmarks. The renowned cities of Europe also attract large numbers of tourists, consistently positioning European countries among the top destinations worldwide. Visitors come from within Europe as well as from other continents, making tourism a significant source of economic activity.

In terms of transportation, the development of expressways, such as Germany's autobahns, began in the 1930s. Other European nations, including the Netherlands and France, also constructed their own expressway networks during the mid-20th century. Today, Europe benefits from an extensive network of high-speed, limited-access highways that facilitate efficient movement of goods and people. Additionally, road tunnels have been constructed to complement railway tunnels beneath the Alpine passes, further enhancing transportation connectivity.

Railways play a crucial role in linking European ports to their hinterlands and connecting major cities to international frontiers. Occasionally, transitions between railway systems involve changes in gauge, which has been addressed through the adoption of standardized European gauges, construction of mixed-gauge tracks, and systems that adjust a train's wheels to fit different gauges. While railways have faced competition from automobiles and other modes of transportation, improvements in electrification, faster intercity trains, and container freight trains have enhanced rail services. Notably, an integrated network of high-speed passenger trains, exemplified by the French TGV (trains à grande vitesse), has been developed in western and central Europe, in coordination with the Channel Tunnel under the English Channel. Railways remains particularly important in Russia and other former Soviet Union republics. Furthermore, underground railways (subways), streetcar systems, and suburban railways play crucial roles in providing transportation options for metropolitan commuters throughout Europe.

Regarding water transportation, seaports across Europe have been modernized and expanded to accommodate larger ships and increased trade volume. Notably, even landlocked Switzerland has access to seagoing ships utilizing Dutch port facilities. The United Kingdom, Norway, and Greece also possess significant freighter tonnages available for hire, demonstrating the importance of maritime trade.

In Uzbekistan

Uzbekistan has great potential for an expanded tourism industry. As one of the focus areas for reform and economic expansion, tourism in the country has increase fivefold in over the last three years. While about 1 million tourists visited Uzbekistan in 2016, the figure rose to 2.7 million in 2017, and more than 5.3 million in 2018. The number of foreign tourists is expected to rise to 7 million by 2025, and the annual foreign currency earnings from foreign visitors will reach as much as \$2 billion.

However, Uzbekistan's tourism sector still faces challenges. These include poor transportation and payment systems, the shortage of appropriate hotels, medical services, language assistance, and information for tourists. Uzbekistan can enhance its tourism

potential by strengthening its cooperation with other countries and international organizations. Additionally, Uzbekistan should explore its cultural and natural attractions, and invest in advertising to raise awareness about these sites. To properly utilize its tourism resources, Uzbekistan also needs to improve infrastructure construction, as well as foster entrepreneurship and other private-sector engagement to realize the country's tourism potential. With its great historical, archeological, architectural, and natural treasures, Uzbekistan has exceptional potential for tourism. The country's diverse ecology, ranging from deserts to glaciers, mountains to steppes, gives the country great eco-tourism potential. The eco-tourism opportunities in Uzbekistan are plentiful and distinct. These include its eight state reserves (201.7 thousand hectares), three national parks (598.7 thousand hectares), biosphere reserve (68.7 thousand hectares), natural wildlife breeding center (158.9 thousand hectares), and ten natural monuments (3.7 thousand hectares).

Located on the ancient **Silk Road**, Uzbekistan has more than 4,000 historical and architectural sites, a carefully saved and precious spiritual heritage, and over 7,000 historical monuments. These include famous ancient cities on the UNESCO World Heritage list, such as Samarkand, Bukhara, Khiva, and Shakhrisabz. Moreover, Uzbekistan is a country with strong Islamic roots.

There are more than 160 historically important Muslim sites located in the country, and dozens of historical sites related to Sufism. Among these are the Mausoleum of Sheikh Zaynudin Bobo, Sheihantaur, the Mausoleum of Zangiata in Tashkent, the Bakhaudhin Ensemble in Bukhara, the Bayan-Quli Khan Mausoleum, the Saif ed-Din Bokharzi Mausoleum, and many others.

Uzbek cuisine and wine can attract gastronomic-related tourism.

Tourism in Uzbekistan has always drawn people from far and wide. For anyone who knows about the country, this is easy to understand - bright colours, intricate patterns, rich flavours, and friendly people await every visitor. Traces remain of great empires that have long since been blown away by the sands of time, while modern life evolves in new directions.

This landlocked Central Asian nation offers more than a single person can explore in a lifetime. Whether you crave a night in the soothing serenity of a remote mountain village or a walk through the streets of history, Uzbekistan will not disappoint. Uzbekistan tourism is all about exploring what you're interested in, and you'll be sure to find it here!

While a strong focus is placed on Uzbekistan's capital city and UNESCO World Heritage sites in Samarkand, Bukhara, and Khiva, there's so much more to this country. Try a new dish, like the exotic green noodles of Khiva known as shivit oshi, or learn how the masters of Margilan make the intricate silk patterns for ikat textiles. Maybe you want to go completely off the grid with a night in a traditional desert yurt to experience how nomads have lived for centuries, or into half-forgotten oasis cities that fed the caravans of the Silk Road as they crossed the continent.

There's just no substitute for experiencing Uzbekistan for yourself. No photo can capture the scale of the vast Kyzylkum Desert or the warmth of a traditional meal cooked by a local family, tasting of spices and the comfort of home. Uzbekistan is so unlike anything you've experienced before that it's guaranteed to leave you with amazing lifetime memories.

If you're unsure of where to begin, embarking on a tour of Uzbekistan's renowned historical sites is a surefire way to immerse yourself in the country's rich heritage. Notably, Khiva, Bukhara, and Samarkand hold the distinction of being UNESCO World Heritage Sites, a

testament to their exceptional significance. Beginning with Samarkand is a wise choice, as it was once home to renowned architects who crafted the awe-inspiring structures found in Registan Square and the Gur-Emir Mausoleum. Bukhara offers a more intimate experience, with sacred sites and historical landmarks found at every turn. Khiva, on the other hand, resembles an open-air museum that encapsulates the enchanting ambiance of the Silk Road through its labyrinthine alleys and vibrant bazaars. However, it is essential not to overlook lesser-known yet equally remarkable destinations such as Termez, located along the southern border, known as a Buddhist center, or Shahrisabz, the birthplace of the revered warrior Tamerlane. These hidden gems promise captivating experiences and contribute to Uzbekistan's diverse cultural tapestry.

For those who love textiles, ceramics, patterns and festive colours, Uzbekistan is as good as it gets. The Fergana Valley is famous for its artisans – potters at the Rishtan ceramics school and silk weavers in Margilan, among countless others. Samarkand has its own ceramics school, carpet weaving center and the famous Meros Paper Mill, which makes paper from mulberry bark using techniques passed down through the centuries. Bukhara is perhaps the best place to buy souvenirs, with a wide variety of top-quality crafts and gifts, while nimble woodcarvers can be seen hard at work in Tashkent and Khiva. Tours of these places are a great way to meet the artisans themselves and learn about the production of their famous creations using ancient techniques. In addition to arts and crafts, Uzbekistan preserves its rich cultural heritage in regular festivals, sporting events and everyday life. Cultural tourism offers tangible opportunities to participate in distinctive, time-honored Central Asian traditions.

Culinary Tourism

Words can't do justice to the rich simplicity of Uzbekistan's national dish, plov (pilaf), rice and carrots cooked to perfection with raisins, chickpeas and beef, or to the first juicy bites of shashlik (kebab) roasted over smoky coals. And it's not enough just to try the local foods in one city, for each region has its own signature dishes. Shivit oshi (noodles infused with dill and served with vegetables) and tuhum barak (boiled square dumplings filled with egg) are found only in Khiva, while Bukhara is home to a particular type of plov that's cooked in layers, with meat, carrots, raisins, and rice all simmered together. Make sure to try the bread in Samarkand, where large, shiny loaves are sold on the streets, and the norin (finely sliced meat and dough, freshly chopped in cafés and bazaars) in Tashkent. If you love quality food, don't miss the chance to take a cooking class to learn how to make the most famous dishes for yourself.

In conclusion, Although Uzbekistan has made substantial efforts and launched numerous reforms to expand and improve its tourism industry as part of its program of economic growth, further actions are needed. The Uzbek government has addressed shortcomings inconveniences still connected with border procedures, transportation, and guest accommodations. Still, some support facilities and services require action by the government or private sector, especially given the role they play in attracting tourists or encouraging them to become repeat visitors.

The Uzbekistan International Visitor Economy Survey 2014 by the World Tourism Organization, showed respondents frequently noted inconveniences. These included problems with the pay-ments system (especially lack of access to cash via ATM), Internet problems (little access to Wi-Fi and slow speed), limited English translation of signage and tourist information at tourist attrac-tions, and electricity outages.xxvi Furthermore, as noted

in an interview with a local tour guide conducted by Silk Road New Observation News Agency, concerns about the wholesomeness of food products, the availability and quality of medical services, and the lack of clean, modern public restrooms are frequently cited.xxvii Because of the often poor medical services in outlying areas, tourists who fall ill in these locales need to be moved swiftly to Tashkent's international hospital. At the same time, the practice whereby a tour group will wait for the patient to recover and then depart the country all together can produce large costs and additional concerns for fellow tourists and their travel agency as they wait for the patient's treatment to end.

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