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RECREATIONAL TRENDS IN INTERNATIONAL TOURISM: NEW FORMATS OF LEISURE

Modern international tourism is undergoing rapid transformations driven by globalization processes, technological advancements, changes in socio-economic conditions, and the growing environmental awareness of society. Travelers' tourism needs are evolving towards the search for new experiences, authenticity, personalized services, and sustainable development. This has led to the emergence of new leisure formats encompassing diverse recreational practices—from ecological and wellness tourism to digital detox and virtual travel.

Recreational trends have become a significant factor in shaping the competitiveness of tourist destinations and developing innovative products in the hospitality sector. They reflect tourists' desire for a harmonious combination of physical and psychological recovery, cultural exchange, and an active lifestyle. In this context, studying the latest recreational trends in international tourism is particularly relevant, as it allows for identifying promising directions for industry development, adapting tourism services to the needs of modern consumers, and enhancing the quality of the tourism experience.

The aim of this research is to analyze contemporary recreational trends in international tourism, determine their impact on the hospitality industry, and outline the prospects of new leisure formats in the context of global changes.

One of the most prominent trends is ecotourism, which is gaining popularity due to the growing environmental awareness among tourists and the desire to preserve the natural environment. People are seeking travel experiences that minimize negative environmental impact and promote sustainable development of local communities. Alongside this, there is a rising interest in wellness tourism, which includes health practices, meditation, spa treatments, and yoga. This form of leisure aligns with the pursuit of a balance between physical and mental health, a trend that has become especially relevant following the COVID-19 pandemic.

Another important direction is digital detox tourism, which involves refraining from the use of electronic devices during leisure time. This phenomenon has emerged as a response to the increasing digital overload and constant stress associated with living in the modern information environment. Adventure tourism, focused on active adventures, extreme sports, and exploring remote locations, remains popular among tourists seeking new experiences and challenges [1].

The factors contributing to the popularization of these trends are diverse. Technological innovations play a significant role, facilitating access to information about tourism services, enabling online booking of trips, and offering new ways of interacting with cultural heritage through augmented reality or virtual tours. Socio-economic changes, including the improvement of living standards in many countries

and the shift in values among younger generations, who value experiences more than material goods, also influence the choice of recreational formats.

Global challenges such as pandemics, economic crises, and climate change are prompting tourists to seek safer, more personalized, and sustainable forms of leisure. For instance, the COVID-19 pandemic led to an increased interest in domestic tourism, isolated natural locations, and small group travels. In turn, climate change is contributing to the growing popularity of destinations with milder climates and the development of green technologies in tourism infrastructure [2].

The factors determining the choice of tourist services are also undergoing changes. Not only cost and comfort are becoming important, but also adherence to ethical and environmental standards. More and more people are choosing services that support sustainable development, use local resources, or offer eco-friendly transportation options. In addition, technological innovations enable travelers to independently plan itineraries, book unique locations, and customize their trips to suit their needs, increasing their expectations for service quality and the flexibility of offerings.

Personalization and individualization are becoming key factors in meeting tourists' needs. Tourists expect services to be tailored to their personal preferences, from food choices to cultural events. This is reflected in the growing demand for specialized tours, such as gastronomic trips, yoga retreats, or safari expeditions. In turn, travel companies are striving to offer more personalization options by using data analytics and modern digital platforms to create individualized itineraries [3].

Overall, new leisure formats are contributing to the diversification of the tourism market, raising expectations for service quality, and developing new tourism niches. Travelers are no longer satisfied with standard package tours, seeking deeper, more meaningful experiences that align with their lifestyle, values, and personal interests. The tourism industry faces a wide range of opportunities and challenges in the context of implementing new recreational trends. On one hand, these trends open up new possibilities for diversifying tourism products, attracting new audience segments, and enhancing the competitiveness of tourist destinations. On the other hand, they require

the adaptation of business models, infrastructure, and management approaches, which presents several challenges for the industry.

The prospects for tourism development in the context of new recreational trends are closely linked to innovation and technological progress. The use of digital platforms for personalizing tourism services, the implementation of virtual and augmented realities to enrich the travel experience, and the development of «smart» destinations allow for the creation of unique products that meet modern traveler expectations. Furthermore, the role of sustainable tourism is growing, with a focus on preserving natural resources and cultural heritage. This opens up opportunities for the development of ecotourism, agritourism, and other formats oriented towards sustainable development [4].

However, the implementation of new recreational trends is accompanied by several challenges. One of the key challenges is the need to adapt infrastructure to new requirements. For example, the development of ecotourism necessitates creating environmentally safe conditions for tourists while preserving natural landscapes. This may require significant investments and changes in regulatory policies. Furthermore, there is a growing demand for trained personnel capable of working in environments that employ innovative approaches to customer service, which calls for changes in the system of professional education and training.

Another important challenge is ensuring a balance between mass tourism and the preservation of cultural and natural heritage. The popularization of new leisure formats may lead to the overcrowding of certain destinations, which threatens their ecosystems and authenticity. In particular, excessive tourist traffic in vulnerable regions can cause the degradation of the natural environment or the commercialization of local culture.

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