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**Vikrant**  
Maters in Hotel Management,  
M.D.U, Rohtak, Haryana,  
India.

## Haryana: Green land of India and abode of god

### Vikrant

#### Abstract

Whether you are a believer in God or non-believer, 'The Abode of God', as Haryana is famously referred to, might make you think if there is a god, he might probably be here. The land is so ancient, which can be gauged by the fact that this was the place where Veda Vyasa, the saint, wrote the famous epic Mahabharata. The place gains more importance for those following religious faith as being the land where Lord Krishna is said to have uttered the famous saying, "Do your duty and be detached from results" to Arjuna, one of the Pandava brothers on the eve of Mahabharata war.

**Keywords:** Tourism, Revenue, Domestic Festivals, Industry.

#### Introduction

Haryana has more to offer. Also known as the Green Land of India, Haryana not only has a rich past but a great present and a promising future too. This 16th largest state in India ranks amongst the leading industrialized states in the country. It is a major producer and supplier of agricultural products in India. Haryana Tourism Corporation (HTC) was constituted as a Public Limited Company under the Companies Act, 1956 on May 1, 1974. As an agent of the Government of Haryana, Haryana Tourism Corporation runs and maintains 44 Tourist Complexes spread across the state of Haryana. These Tourist Complexes offer visitors lodging, dining, recreational activities, Restaurant, Bars, Liquor Vends, Tourist taxis, Petrol Pumps, Swimming Pool, Health Club, Golf Club, Lakes, boating, etc.

#### The Plan shortlists the following projects

1. Setting up a system of coordination between Departments through a "Mission approach" on the lines of Rajasthan's Rajiv Gandhi Mission on Tourism Development
  - a) Coordination between Haryana Tourism/ Haryana Hotels/ HSIDC/ HUDA/ PWD (B&R)/ PHD/ Police/ Trade Associations/ NHAI/ Indian Railways.
  - b) The Mission should have a mission statement, a manageable number of objectives and specific activity milestones for effective review.
2. Assessing the Economic Impact of Tourism in Haryana. Tourism will not get the attention it deserves unless it can demonstrate the economic and social benefits it generates.
  - a) We have suggested annual surveys and the use of multipliers to measure the impact of tourism investments and of tourist spending.
3. Tourism Police outposts. Safety and security are a major concern of travellers.
  - a) We have suggested Tourism Police out posts be set up in the proposed "Tourist Centres" in Chandigarh, Faridabad, Gurgaon and Kurukshetra. The list of locations can be expanded over the Plan period.
4. Accreditation of Shops and transporters. These are two areas where most tourists feel most insecure in terms of being cheated.
  - a) For shops, we have suggested accrediting shops that have price tagged items and a reasonable return/ refund policy. Shops will carry a Haryana Tourism plaque and be advertised in an official map.
  - b) For Taxis/ auto rickshaws. Must be metered and carry tariff cards. These will be identified with a plaque.

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5. Developing Kurukshetra as a mega project for the State

- a) This has already been identified by the State and ratified by the Centre. Apart from being at the center of the Mahabharat epic, the site is sacred to Sikhs – all ten Gurus are said to have visited Kurukshetra. Work has already begun.

6. Exploiting the popularity of the Surajkund Mela

- a) Recommended that 8-10 stalls are run on a permanent basis at Surajkund.
- b) Recommend that the highlighted State maintains a stall on a year round basis.

7. Publicising local fairs and festivals. Many local fairs and festivals are unique to the State.

- a) Recommended that local fairs are publicized through a poster/ calendar to be displayed at all Haryana Tourist Complexes

8. Promoting Dhabas. Dhabas are a signature of Haryana highways. There is already a tradition of persons visiting dhabas for good wholesome food.

- a) We do not recommend imposing formal strictures apart from hard surfaces for the dining areas (versus mud), but incentivising cleanliness and hygiene through a spirit of competition. Corporate houses can be approached to reward courtyards, kitchen gardens, hygiene etc. They can also sponsor a Dhaba cookbook.
- b) Promote Haryana cuisine through food festivals in other States

9. Developing Village Tourism. This helps spread tourism and its socio-economic benefits to rural and new geographic areas.

- a) We have provided detailed guidelines for implementation and sponsorship of costs.
- b) We recommend that villages in proximity to existing tourism circuits/ destinations be taken up first. Eg. Bhisma Kund/ Jyotisar near Kurukshetra.

10. Wildlife tourism. The draw of Haryana wildlife is not strong enough to warrant incremental investments. We suggest a continuation of current activity.

11. Adventure Tourism. Participative soft adventure is growing in attraction for the domestic tourist who has had ample opportunity for sightseeing. There is no center in India devoted to soft adventure and sports.

- a) We recommend development of Morni Hills area for soft adventure, natural attractions and selected non-field sports.
- b) We recommend basic infrastructure be developed by the State Govt and specific activities be tendered to the private sector.

12. City “Recreation & Leisure Centres”. Stand-alone leisure attractions are not generally viable. International experience shows that visitors prefer a range of leisure facilities concentrated in one area.

- a) We recommend that land be identified and developed in Gurgaon and Faridabad in the initial stages and in Panchkula at a later date.
- b) We recommend that this be done around some existing stand-alone facilities.
- c) We recommend attention be paid to activities that attract weekday and daytime visitors.

13. Creation of Tourism/ Cultural Centres. These should showcase the State and be a cross between the Dilli Haat and National Crafts Museum concepts. These centres should provide information and reservation capabilities for potential tourists. These will provide employment to artisans/ performing artists.

- a) We recommend arts/ crafts, State cuisine and performing arts be showcased
- b) We recommend some permanent stalls backed by open spaces for stall for celebrating State festivals.
- c) Initially incorporated into “Recreation & Leisure Centres” in Gurgaon and Faridabad as also in Kurukshetra and Chandigarh.

14. Developing an International standard convention centre. There is no suitable international standard convention center in Delhi or North India.

- a) Recommend developing this in Gurgaon, close to the “Recreation & Leisure Center”, to take advantage of the international airport. This should be a multi-use facility catering to meetings/ exhibitions/ social functions.

15. Developing an airstrip near Sohna for private aircraft. This can also be used by air taxi operators. Small plane charters for corporate and tourist travel will grow. So will airports.

### Top 11 Places to Visit in Haryana

Here are the leading attractions in the land you would never want to miss on your tour to Haryana.

#### 1. Chandigarh

Chandigarh earns the unique distinction of being the capital to two states – Punjab and Haryana. Considered the best planned city in India, Chandigarh has preserved its ancient beauty while keeping in line with the modern world. Here are the top attractions in Chandigarh.

- Leisure Valley
- The Rock Garden
- Le Corbusier Centre
- Morni Hills
- Government Museum and Art Gallery
- Shanti Kunj
- Butterfly Park
- Garden of Fragrance
- Sarkaria Cactus Garden
- Rose Garden
- Mahendra Chaudhary Zoological Park
- Chhatbir Zoo
- Terraced Garden
- Yadvinder Garden
- International Dolls Museum

## 2. Gurgaon

Gurgaon is the second largest city in the state of Haryana. The land has spiritual importance as it finds place in Mahabharata. It adds to Haryana's overall contribution in industrial sector with its amazing infrastructure. No wonder it has emerged as the state's corporate capital. The tourist attractions in Gurgaon include the following.

- Sultanpur National Park Bird Sanctuary
- Leisure Valley Park
- Damdama Lake
- Badshahpur Fort
- Begum Samru Palace
- Farrukh Nagar Fort
- Sohna
- Sheesh Mahal
- Tikli Bottom
- Kingdom of Dreams
- Wet 'n' Wild
- Urusvati Museum of Folklore
- Stellar Children's Museum
- Aapno Ghar Amusement Park
- Shikhar Adventure Park
- CRPF Shooting Range
- Ambience Mall

## 3. Kurukshetra

Kurukshetra is a popular pilgrim destination as this ancient land was the battleground of the famous Mahabharata war. Dating back to 2800 BC, the land is where Lord Krishna preached Bhagavad Gita to Arjuna on the eve of the epic war. Here are the leading tourist attractions in Kurukshetra.

- Brahma Sarovar
- Sannihit Sarovar
- Sheikh Chelli Tomb
- Kurukshetra Panorama & Science Centre
- Dharohar Haryana Museum
- Kalpana Chawla Planetarium
- Bhadrakali Temple
- Birla Mandir
- Sri Krishna Museum
- Jyotisar Birthplace of Bhagavad Gita
- O. P. Jindal Park and Musical Fountain

## 4. Panipat

Situated on River Yamuna banks, Panipat finds mention in Mahabharata as one of the five cities founded by the five Pandava brothers. Its historical importance extends beyond Mahabharata as the place witnessed three crucial battles in the history of India. The tourist attractions in Panipat are given below.

- Panipat Museum
- Kabuli Bagh
- Old Fort
- Salar Gunj Gate
- Kabuli Shah Mosque
- Devi Temple
- Grave Of Ibrahim Lodhi
- Bu Ali Shah Kalandar
- Kala Amb Tree Site

## 5. Ambala

Ambala is one of the ancient cities in Haryana. Archaeological evidences found here prove that the land was inhabited as back as the Paleolithic age. During the British rule, the district of Ambala played its part by rising against the British army on many an occasion. Here are some of the important tourist destinations in Ambala.

- Ropar
- Nalagarh
- Sis Ganj Gurudwara
- Badshahi Bag Gurudwara
- Gurudwara Manji Sahib
- Rani Ka Talab
- Anandpur Sahib
- Planetarium
- Kharga Golf Club
- Holy Redeemer Church
- Paget Park

## 6. Hisar

Hisar is yet another part of Haryana that boasts of rich historic association. The land has evidences of being home to pre-historic man. The monuments here are feast to those who love to have a feel of the bygone era. Here are the top tourist destinations in Hisar.

- Agroha
- Banavali
- Kunal
- Gumbad
- Jahaj Kothi
- Barsi Gate
- Fort Of Prithviraj
- Feroze Shah Palace
- Gujri Mahal
- Lat Ki Masjid
- Durgah Char Qutab
- Town Park
- Devi Bhawan Mandir

## 7. Faridabad

Faridabad is the biggest city in the state of Haryana. It is ranks amongst the leading industrial hubs making a fat contribution to the state's revenue. Though the city is not as ancient as some of the major cities in Haryana, it has its share in history. Given below are some of the tourist spots in Faridabad.

- Surajkund
- Badkhal Lake
- Peacock Lake
- Dhauj Lake
- Raja Nahar Singh Palace
- Camp Wild
- Nepal Photography Day Tours
- The Aravalli Golf Course

## 8. Karnal

The significance of Karnal's place in history will be appreciated by those who have read Mahabharata. The city is said to have been established by Kauravas for King Karna, who was famous for his generosity and the attitude to give

away anything anyone requested of him. Here are the leading attractions of 'The City of Daanvir Karna', as Karnal is also called.

- Karnal Fort
- Karnal Lake
- Naraina
- Miran Sahib's Tomb
- Kalander Shah's Tomb
- Cantonment Church Tower
- Pukka Pul

### 9. Pinjore

Pinjore, a town situated at 1800 feet above sea level, is one of the beautiful tourist destinations in Haryana. It is home to Asia's best garden of the 17th century. Apart from being beautiful, the garden attracts historians and archaeologists alike. Given below are some of the tourist attractions in Pinjore.

- Pinjore Gardens
- Mughal Gardens
- Bhima Devi Temple

### 10. Punchkula

Panchkula is a satellite city of Chandigarh. The land was named thus as it is home to five irrigation canals.

- Kalka
- Pinjore
- Raipur Rani
- Cactus Garden
- Chhatbir Zoo
- Mohali Stadium
- Gurudwara Nada Sahib
- Mata Mansa Devi Mandir

### 11. Morni Hills

The only hill station in Haryana, Morni is a scenic delight. The lush greenery and the dense forests make you feel oneness with nature. This is the right place to land if you love trekking. Boating and cycling facilities are also available here. Here are some interesting places to visit and do in Morni Hills.

- Tikkar Taal Lake
- Gurudwara Nada Sahib
- Mansa Devi Temple

Haryana, the ancient land, is so compelling that you are drawn towards every one of its attractions. It is just impossible for one to overlook any of the tourist destinations here. But as always, time plays spoilsport and hence I could not say that I covered the state enough to include all tourist spots here. I would be glad to hear from you if you have more to add about Haryana's attractions.

### Conclusion

From the above discussion it can be revealed that Haryana than contributes a major part in Indian Tourism Industry in terms of Foreign Exchange Earning as well as Tourist Arrivals. The State of Haryana is one of the most desired destinations of tourists in India for both domestic and International traffic. Haryana, which is a premier tourist

destination attracts tourist for its historical forts, palaces, art and culture. Tourism occupies a prominent place in the Haryana's agenda as a crucial industry for socio-economic development of the state, by providing education & employment. Haryana with its rich historical cultural and natural heritage, coupled with colourful fairs and festivals and friendly people has become a favourite destination for tourists all over the world. Except a sea beach and snow-clad mountains, it offers everything to the tourists.

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