

UNDISCOVERED OR LESS-KNOWN TOURIST DESTINATIONS IN MAHARASHTRA: A REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

The study of this paper aims to study the various unexplored destination of Maharashtra. Tourism in India is important for the country's economy and its sectors growing rapidly. Tourism around the world is considered a major tool of economic growth and development. Currently, Indian tourism has a share of 6.7% in its GDP, which is increasing it is roughly \$120 billion industry, employ 37 million people. Tourism means the act and process of spending time away from home in pursuit of recreation relaxation and pleasure while making use of the commercial provision. This research paper includes references to the promotion of less known places in Maharashtra which have more potential to develop a big tourist destination in Maharashtra it has lately become alive to need for boosting tourism. Maharashtra is the third largest state in terms of population .tourism being regional Maharashtra is creating its special packages to sell its advantages as tourism. Blessed with stunning beauty that is diverse culture. Also, have hundreds of secret places which are still far away from the eyes of a common tourist and subsequently from the influence of commercialization. These hidden beauties are characterized by pleasant weather natural setting and tranquil aura and are perfect stoppages for those unconventional travelers bitten by the travel bug. From lakes to hills forest to temples valley to rivers and waterfalls to meadow these less known places in Maharashtra host everything a nature lover and travelers would wish for so these. There is a lot of scope for the development of unexplored tourist sites in Maharashtra but taking some efforts and specific solutions to developed unexplored tourist sites in Maharashtra. For this paper used secondary research methodology has been used for research for data collection, secondary data collected from, the literature the review also government agency data, tourism online news has been collected.

Keywords: Unexplored Sites, Diverse Culture, Planning, Hill Forest, Secret Places, Gross Domestic Product.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Indian tourism industry is one of the important contributors to the economy of the country. Maharashtra is brimming with an array of colorful shrines, a remarkable collection of caves, olden beaches lined with swaying historic hotspots with strong past connections, and hill stations under the canopy of lush Western Ghats. The state is primarily known for ancient Ellora and Ajanta caves and pilgrim destinations. Maharashtra enjoys 720km of coastline having beaches and shorelines Also Konkan coast mesmerizes the eyes with its white beaches. People of diverse cultures and religions live amicably in the state. Maharashtra States its tops in foreign tourist arrivals (20.8%) and counted among leading states for domestic tourists (7.2%).offers a variety of destinations for its tourists business, cultural-historical, geographical, and religious, etc. Ancient and medieval Maharashtra included empires of the Satavahana dynasty, Rashtrakuta, Western Chalukyas, Mughals, and Marathas.it has popular Hindu places of pilgrimage such as Pandharpur, Dehu, Alandi, Hazur Sahib Gurudwara At Nandedsaibaba Shrine And Dikshabhumi at Nagpur. Maharashtra has ambitious plans to boost tourism as evident from the 2016 tourism policy. Aurangabad is the tourism capital of Maharashtra. These destinations in Maharashtra are very crowded tourists spots so there are a lot of less-known tourist places in Maharashtra that are not much popular but have potential to become a very popular tourist destination in Maharashtra as well as India also in the whole world also so in that paper attempt to showing less known or unexplored tourist destination Maharashtra.



(Source <https://spiritedblogger.com/travel/kass-pathar-satara-the-valley-of-flowers-best-season-to-visit/>)



Karla and Bhaja Caves

Source <https://www.clubmahindra.com/blog/places-to-visit/5-best-hidden-places-in-maharashtra>)

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

In this research paper attempt, assessing unexplored or less known tourist destinations could be developed as other tourism in Maharashtra. Also, some challenges that the unexplored tourism industry would face and suggest some steps to overcome this issue. The paper titled “unexplored or less known tourist destination of Maharashtra A review “seeks to address the following objectives

- To Study Unexplored Sites in Maharashtra
- To Suggest Some Suggestions Would Be Helpful In The Development Of Unexplored Tourist Destinations In Maharashtra.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

For this study, information has been gathered from various secondary resources. These sources encompass internet websites, Wikipedia, the Ministry of Tourism, reports from the World Travel and Tourism Council, scholarly journals and articles available online, and electronic media from pertinent literature.

Here are some offbeat/Unexplored tourist places in Maharashtra

Kundalika River originating from the tiny hamlet of bhira, about 160 km from Mumbai, kundalika is a small yet pristine river that winds way through thick forests and rice fields nestled amidst the beautiful Sahyadri ranges. on its way to the Arabian sea where it eventually ends it is fed by overflowing waters of various dams and hydroelectric projects of the region that make it ideal for numerous adventure spots attracting hundreds of adventure freaks from nearby towns especially over weekends what further add to the charm of whole rafting experience at kundalika is fun of camping on the shores of the river, with thick jungles around and sounds of birds and reptiles echoing in the air; just put the campfire on, cook a delicious bar –be-cue meal and spend a night partying with your friends under the moonlight sky and rest assured, you are certainly going to cherish these fun-filled memories of your rafting cum camping experience for the lifetime.

Karla & Bhanja caves-a short rendezvous with early Buddhist temple art in India – for those who love going off the beaten track, exploring the destinations that do not fall on a convectional travel map, the Karla and bhaja caves located near the famous hill station of Lonavala, make for a perfect sightseeing destination, dating from 2 nd century BC, these caves boast of an excellent Buddhist rock-cut cave architecture in India. Housing massive prayer halls (chaitygraha) and several resting rooms (vihara) for monks complete with an outstanding sculpture of Buddha and bodhisattvas, a fine collection of stupas, and brilliant carving depicting scenes from daily lives of then men & women on the inner walls, facades and pillars these beautiful caves is the lush green surroundings and couple of enchanting waterfalls where one can take a refreshing dip deeply rejuvenating all his senses. Besides the caves the area around Karla and bhanja abounds in a number of ancient forts, a trek to which leaves all the trekkers and hikers with a fulfilling experience if you too are a trekking enthusiast pull up your socks and embark on a short trekking trip to nearby lohgad and visapur forts.

Morachi Chincholi –where peacocks enchant with you with their graceful moves: by the name itself means a village of tamarind trees and a town of dancing peacocks all around. is is situated near Pune –Ahmednagar highway about 55km from Pune. even today one can find a lot of peafowls in village there are enormous activities at Morachi Chincholi which include bullock cart rides, tractor rides, hurda parties, children parks, rural games, bird watching, kndil nights, nursery, outdoor games, camping and tent facilities. All activities revolve around population and noise-free environment. morachi village show a true ideal Indian village with all traditional culture, peacocks at this place are somewhat used to locals living in village but are shy to tourists. morachi chincholi.

Mhaismal, Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar - An unexplored beauty tucked away in the lush greenery of in Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar Maharashtra, Mhaismal is one of the few hill stations in the state which are equally popular is the home of several natural and religious sites which make perfect feel to the beauty of divinity. Apart from hills and lush vegetation, the major places here include Amne samne ki dargah, goddess Girija temple and Balaji temple .you can also visit several historical monuments such as Ellora caves and Devgiri forts, on your way to Mhaismal.

Chikhaldara-a weekend retreat for nature enthusiasts, wildlife freaks and adventure,

Chikhaldara is yet another of the picturesque yet less explored places in maharastra. the lovely hill town located in Amravati district .it abounds of wildlife, such as tigers, panthers, sloth bears, sambars, wild boar etc. Close by an famous Melghat tiger project which has 82 tigers. The scenic beauty of Chikhaldara Can be enjoyed from hurricane point, prospect point, Devi point. Other interesting places include Gavilgad and Narmada fort, the Pandit Nehru botanical gardens and tribal Museum And Semadoh lake.,A jungle safari expedition amidst a deep wilderness of reserve spotting some wild beasts including leopards tigers, wild boars, and barking deer is a must and surely an experience to be cherished for lifetime.

Kaas pathar –where nature creates colorful painting with flowers-one of the most offbeat tourism places in Maharashtra located near Satara city the place is sprinkled over by hundreds of endemic species of wild flowers that bloom in the region. is referred to as the “Maharashtra own valley of flowers” it is place enlisted in the UNESCO world natural heritage sites in 2012 owing to its rich and unique biodiversity that creates to almost 70% of all flora found in the state. Post monsoon period i.e the period between end of August and October is the right time to visit it having pink, yellows, white spread all across the 1000 acre land. Kaas pathar is rich in its biodiversity .many species are observed on the plateau are new to botanical science. More than 850 species of flowering plants are reported on the plateau

Purushwadi-a place to mesmerize you with its “glory “magic-situated about 200 km from Mumbai and Pune enroot to Nashik,purushwadi is a small tribal village inhabited by the “Koli tribes” known for cultivating rice and raising animal husbandry one of the most offbeat and least explored place in Maharashtra. besides rural area its near twinkling valleys that dazzle with lights from hundreds of thousands of fireflies that come alive here in the month of May and June. You can come here any time of year and enjoy a rustic stay with one of the local village families who are sure to leave you contented with warm hospitality, mingle with family members relish a home-cooked meal and if you wish join them doing their daily work of pounding rice, grinding spices, plowing and weeding fields and even collecting water from well.

Nighoj potholes- located about 90 km away from Pune,Nighoj potholes is famous for naturally crated potholes on the riverbed of kukadi river, experts from all over the world come here every yr. to study the phenomenon of their formation. Its spread over two to three kilometers. Look out for colonies of swifts the nest in these overhanging rocks, but hush the birds fly off at slightest sound. The best time to visit would be winter or summer when there is not much water in the river. It is 2 and half hour drive approx.,73 kms from Pune and a 5 hour drive,approx.,227 kms from Mumbai.

Sandhan valley – “the great Canyon “in Sahyadri ranges which is combination of a canyon and valley, located in Ahmednagar district near the famous fort Ratangad known as the valley of suspense or the valley of shadows, this canyon is set against the backdrop of the Sahyadri range. The water-carved valley is 200ft deep and about 1.5 km long.Sandhan valley is located on the western side of the beautiful Bhandara region, near Samrad village.a naturally sculptured geological formation, the sides of the canyon are so narrow that even sunlight makes brief appearances, hence it name valley of shadows thrill-seekers who don’t mind getting wet will enjoy wading in cool creek deep to chest deep. Navigating slippery boulders and narrow walled crevices is also a little tricky but definitely lots of fun ,its 5 and half hour drive approximately 200kms from Mumbai and Pune. The beating retreat ceremony has become a major tourist attraction in India which attracts foreign tourists as well as domestic tourists in large numbers.

Bhigwan-is town on the border of Ahmednagar Pune and Solapur districts on the backwaters of Ujani dam in Maharashtra,bhigwan is famous for bird watching especially flamingo and wildlife photography, the place is also famous for Maharashtrian spicy fish food, special dish is kadak fish fry of chilapi. the best time to visit Bhigwan is between December and March, flamingo birds love winter season and they need less water for fishing. Hats why they choose only the season to come in India. There are village homestays for tourists. A boat ride through waters of the dam will take you into the routine life of these winter visitors .Mayureshwar wildlife sanctuary consists of dry deciduous scrub forest with grasslands, it is a favorite spot for migratory birds with more than 230 species found here.

Velas -is a village in the Ratnagiri district of Maharashtra, it is noted as the birthplace of nana Phadnis.it is also famous for its beaches and turtle festival which held by local people of Velas and Sahyadri nisarg mitra,chiploon. the “velas turtie festival which is one kind and the best time to travel is during a march to April. the eco-tourism here makes it possible as festival takes place every year with olive ridley turtles. The NGO called Sahyadri nisargmitra is mainly responsible for the conservation of these turtles along with the villagers. While here you can also pay a visit to the Harihareshwar temple located nearby. Best time to visit mid-march to mid-April.

kamshet-is a village in Maharashtra, situated in Mawal taluka of Pune district the travelers can experience a variety of adventure sports activities in kamshet including paragliding. The beauty of this place will leave anyone feeling relaxed and mud huts provide the unique ambiance to this hill station situated at a distance of just 16 km from Lonavala. The awesome paragliding opportune here makes this place the Paragliders paradise, the best time to visit October to may.

Challenges faced by less-known tourist places in Maharashtra

- The primary issue with lesser-known locations in Maharashtra is their insufficient visibility and overall lack of awareness.
- These hidden gems are not easily accessible to visitors because of their limited connectivity.
- The Maharashtra Tourism Department struggles to receive adequate support from the local community to promote undiscovered tourism and improve the visitor experience.
- A lack of financial resources is another significant challenge that these lesser-known tourist spots face.
- The absence of necessary infrastructure, such as hotels, connections to other tourist attractions, health, and transportation services, is a major concern for these lesser-known tourist destinations.
- The safety and security of tourists are crucial factors that determine the attractiveness of a tourist site.

Suggestions for the development of unexplored sites in Maharashtra

- Initially, it's crucial to identify and acknowledge the lesser-known locations, recognizing their potential significance from a tourism perspective.

- The initial step towards highlighting these under-the-radar spots in Maharashtra through audio-visual and print media.
- It's essential to ensure cleanliness is maintained at these sites.
- Facilities such as seating areas, water fountains, informational boards, and restrooms should be provided for visitors at the attractions.
- These undiscovered sites must be accurately marked on Google Maps.
- A few snack bars should be established near these sites to boost tourism in the region.
- Regular awareness programs and initiatives by the government are necessary to promote Maharashtra's tourist spots.
- Local tourism organizations should engage with the government to revise current policies and introduce new ones.
- At popular tourist destinations across each district, a directory should be displayed that includes both well-known and lesser-known attractions.
- Security personnel should be stationed at these sites to ensure visitor safety.

4. CONCLUSION

The tourism sector has emerged as the largest in the globe, and India. It is imperative to strategize every aspect of tourism activities. Maharashtra holds significant untapped potential for the development of lesser-known locales within the state. It is crucial to undertake the planning of these destinations to foster the growth of new tourism pathways. This includes enhancing amenities, improving infrastructure, and elevating the profile of tourism spots, which are essential for the advancement of lesser-known tourist destinations in Maharashtra. The aim of this research paper is to explore the lesser-known locales in Maharashtra, as well as some lesser-known areas with the potential to be developed and marketed as tourism hotspots. These lesser-known or undiscovered sites are currently overlooked due to insufficient tourism activity in those areas. By integrating these lesser-known sites with popular ones, it is anticipated that there will be an increase in tourist arrivals and duration of stay. This research paper serves as a guide for the promotion of lesser-known or undiscovered tourist locations in Maharashtra.

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