

# MANCHESTER OF SOUTH INDIA- COIMBATORE AS A TOURISM DESTINATION

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## ABSTRACT

Tourism is one of the world's fastest growing industries as well as the major source of foreign exchange earnings and employment for many developing countries. The Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report for the year 2017, ranked India 40<sup>th</sup> out of 136 countries overall. Tamil Nadu is the second largest economy of India with a GDP of \$150 billion and Tourism is one of the main sources of its revenue. UNESCO has declared 29 places as world heritage center in Tamilnadu, out of which 4 heritage sites located in Tamilnadu. Coimbatore referred to as the Manchester of South India is the second largest city in the state of Tamil Nadu. As per the statistic reports by Tamil Nadu Tourism Department, a total of 32,64,876 visitors visited Coimbatore in 2010 among which 32,30,196 are domestic travellers. Coimbatore stands in tenth position with regard to average number of tourists arrivals in Tamil Nadu during the last five years. Coimbatore city has 1,200 rooms in the three and five-star hotels, and about 2,000 lodging rooms. Even in the peak seasons, the average occupancy rate is 80 per cent. Coimbatore has healthcare centres with state-of-the-art technology providing quality medical care at affordable prices which makes it a potential health tourism spot. The State Tourism Department shall strive to realize the vision of making Coimbatore as a preferred tourism destination by implementing various tourism infrastructure projects and providing tourist friendly services. The State shall involve the private sector and the local community to promote environmentally and culturally sustainable and socially inclusive tourism development in the State.

## Introduction

According to United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), tourism is determined as “an activity of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes not related to the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the place visited”. Tourism is one of the world's fastest growing industries as well as the major source of foreign exchange earnings and employment for many developing countries. Tourism is vital to the well being of many countries, because of the income generated by the consumption of goods and services by tourists, the taxes levied on businesses in the tourism industry and the opportunity for employment and economic advancement by working in the industry.

### Tourism in India

Tourism in India is important for the country's economy and is growing rapidly. The Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report for the year 2017, ranked India 40<sup>th</sup> out of 136 countries overall. The report ranks the price competitiveness of India's tourism sector 10<sup>th</sup> out of 136 countries. Over 10 million foreign tourists arrived in India in 2017 compared to 8.89 million in 2016, representing a growth of 15.6%. Domestic tourist visits to all states and union territories numbered 1652.49 Million in 2017 at an annual growth rate of 2.3%.

#### Key Statistics about Tourism in India, 2017

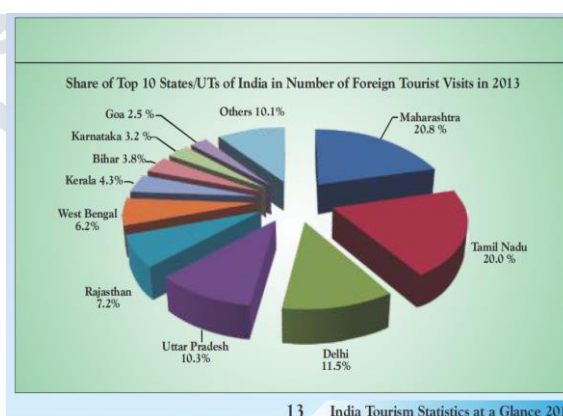
No. of Foreign Tourist Arrivals in India Annual Growth Rate	10.04 Million 14.0%
No. of Indian Nationals Departures from India Annual Growth Rate	23.94 Million 9.5%
No. of Domestic Tourist Visits to all States/UTs Annual Growth Rate	1652.49 Million 2.3%
Foreign Exchange Earnings from Tourism In INR terms Annual Growth Rate In US\$ terms US\$ Annual Growth Rate	Rs.177874 Crore 15.4 % 27.31 Billion 19.1 %

### Tourism in Tamil Nadu

Tamil Nadu is the second largest economy of India with a GDP of \$150 billion and Tourism is one of the main sources of its revenue. Tamil Nadu is one of the multidimensional tourism spot in India having several natural, cultural and historical based activities going on along its coast. UNESCO has declared 29 places as world heritage center in Tamilnadu, out of which 4 heritage sites located in Tamilnadu. According to a survey conducted foreign tourist’s arrivals in Tamil Nadu stands second next to Maharashtra which accounts for 20 % share of the total.

Share of Top 10 States/UTs of India in Number of Foreign Tourist Visits in 2013

Rank	State/UT	Foreign Tourist Visit in 2013 (P)	
		Number	Percentage Share %
1.	Maharashtra	4156343	20.8
2.	Tamil Nadu	3990490	20.0
3.	Delhi	2301395	11.5
4.	Uttar Pradesh	2054420	10.3
5.	Rajasthan	1437162	7.2
6.	West Bengal	1245230	6.2
7.	Kerala	858143	4.3
8.	Bihar	765835	3.8
9.	Karnataka	636378	3.2
10.	Goa	492322	2.5
Total of Top 10 States		17937718	89.9
Others		2013308	10.1
Total		19951026	100.0

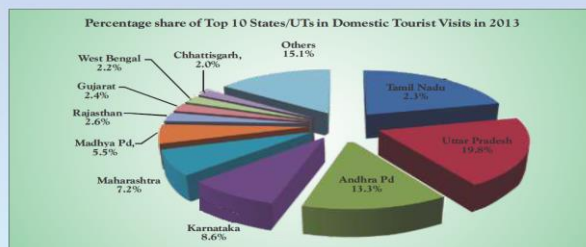


Data shows that in terms of the number of domestic tourist visits in India, Tamil Nadu occupies the first place with a percentage share of 21.3%

**Share of Top 10 States/UTs of India in Number of Domestic Tourist Visits in 2013**

Rank	State/UT	Domestic Tourist Visit in 2013 (P)	
		Number	Percentage Share %
1.	Tamil Nadu	244232487	21.3
2.	Uttar Pradesh	226531091	19.8
3.	Andhra Pradesh	152102150	13.3
4.	Karnataka	98010140	8.6
5.	Maharashtra	82700556	7.2
6.	Madhya Pradesh	63110709	5.5
7.	Rajasthan	30298150	2.6
8.	Gujarat	27412517	2.4
9.	West Bengal	25547300	2.2
10.	Chhattisgarh	22801031	2.0
Total of Top 10 States		972746131	84.9
Others		172534312	15.1
Total		1145280443	100.0

Source: State/UT Tourism Departments.  
(P): Provisional.



### Manchester of South India-Coimbatore

Coimbatore also called as textile city or cotton city is the second largest city in the state of Tamil Nadu. It is often referred to as the Manchester of South India due to its growing commercial importance. Coimbatore is situated in the Western end of Tamil Nadu and is well connected by road, rail and air with major towns and cities in India.

### General Information of Coimbatore City

Area	23.5 sq. kms.
Population	District : 34,58,045 ; City : 10,61,447
Altitude	43.2 mts.
Climate	Summer 39.4 °C (Max.) 23.3 °C (Min.) Winter 32.8 °C (Max.) 20.7 °C (Min.)
Rainfall	92.2 mm - Average
Season	Throughout the year
Clothing	Tropical
Languages spoken	Tamil, English, Telugu and Malayalam
Industries	Textile, Textile Machinery, Automobile spares, Motor, Electronics, Steel & Aluminium Foundries

As per the statistic reports by Tamil Nadu Tourism Department, a total of 32,64,876 visitors visited Coimbatore in 2010 among which 32,30,196 are domestic travellers. This place promotes eco-tourism by involving tribal population for example Kovai Kutralam which gives regular employment to fifty men and women from tribal areas. Another such project is Baralikadu near Pilloor, where more than 50 people from tribal areas got employed. From this single project, the tourism department is earning more than 70 lakhs per annum.

**Average Number of Tourists arrivals (Centre wise) in Tamil Nadu -2012-2017**

S.No.	Destination	Domestic	Foreign	Total
1.	Chennai	35662677	1011275	36673952
2.	Rameshwaram	22863967	122390	22968357
3.	Madurai	20554380	281560	20835940
4.	Kanyakumari	18491540	410128	18901668
5.	Thiruchendur	17940441	93948	18034389
6.	Thiruvanamalai	17643364	163818	17807182
7.	Ooty	17310810	282266	17593076
8.	Kanchipuram	15213026	344904	15557930
9.	Hogenakal	14552750	25901	14578651
10.	Coimbatore	14106492	65137	14171629

Source: Commissioner of Tourism, Chennai-2

Coimbatore stands in tenth position with regard to average number of tourists arrivals in Tamil Nadu during the last five years.

**Coimbatore-Tourism Products**

- **Attractions**

Coimbatore is a significant business city that has well structured schools, colleges, engineering firms, textile industries, automobile spare parts manufacturing and health care centers. It experiences a soothing weather as it lies on the banks of the river Noyyal. It is an excellent spot for tourist destination with temples, scenic amusement parks, botanical gardens, nearby hill stations and much more. Some of the major attractions of Coimbatore District are Aliyar Dam, Monkey Falls, Kovai Kutralum, Siruvani Dam, Kodiveri Dam, Adhiyogi Shiva and Dhayanalinga Temple at Isha Yoga Centre, Marudhamalai Hill Temple, Perur Pateeswarar Temple, Botanical Garden and Vaitheki Falls to name a few. Coimbatore serves as an entry and exit point to the neighboring Kerala State and the ever-popular hill station of Udhagamandalam (Ooty). It is the landing point for those who want to take the Nilgiri Mountain Train that has been added as an extension to the World Heritage Sites of Darjeeling Himalayan Railway in 2005.

- **Transportation**

Coimbatore is the second largest city in the state of Tamil Nadu. Being a major commercial center, it is well connected to all parts of the country. It is very easy to access the city through road, rail or air. As per the report provided by the Highways department 2016, the roadways in Coimbatore has been vastly developed and connected to all the important cities and places of interest by road. Six major arterial roads along with three National highways pass through the city. Coimbatore junction connects almost all major cities of India to Coimbatore through rail. The city has Coimbatore International Airport which is located about 11 km away from the city. Several international and domestic flights connect Coimbatore to other cities across the world and to major cities in India.

- **Accommodation**

Coimbatore, being a business center, attracts a lot of tourists who come both for business as well as pleasure reasons. Hence, this city provides varied lodging options to tourists ranging from luxurious

hotels with modern facilities to budget friendly hotels. It has 1,200 rooms in the three and five-star hotels, and about 2,000 lodging rooms. It also has apartment hotels. The last few years have seen quite a few star and business hotels opening facilities in the city. For the hotels here, the growth potential comes from several factors – the district’s industrial strengths in sectors such as textiles and foundries, presence of large number of educational institutions and hospitals, location advantage as the gateway to Ooty and proximity to export hubs such as Tirupur and Karur. These bring visitors to Coimbatore not only from other countries but also from different parts of the country. Some of the star category hotels in Coimbatore include Marriott, Le Meridien, Vivanta by Taj, Gokulam, The Residency Towers, Aloft, Poppys International apart from which there are few more hotels upcoming in the City.

- **Food**

Coimbatore will serve a variety of South Indian delicacies as well as all kinds of cuisines catering to its multi cultural populace. Besides traditional delicacies of Coimbatore, one can get really good preparations of North Indian and Chinese dishes. Traditional sweets, various kinds of juices and street foods are also popular here.

### **Tourism Potential**

Coimbatore city has 1,200 rooms in the three and five-star hotels, and about 2,000 lodging rooms. Even in the peak seasons, the average occupancy rate is 80 per cent. Development of the Madukkarai-Walayar road will help the hospitality industry promote Coimbatore as a gateway to Kerala, especially for medical tourism. Coimbatore has healthcare centres with state-of-the-art technology providing quality medical care at affordable prices which makes it a potential health tourism spot. The city can be made attractive and can encourage visitors to explore the city by having more flyovers and skywalks or subways. Also promoting traditional industries, products and heritage with the support of proactive tourism department and local community can enhance tourism potential. As a sustainable tourism promotion effort, Tourism Department promotes ‘less known tourist destinations’ which have tourism potential. Such places can absorb the excess traffic also will be an alternate destination.

### **Conclusion**

The State Tourism Department shall strive to realize the vision of making Coimbatore as a preferred tourism destination by implementing various tourism infrastructure projects and providing tourist friendly services. The State shall involve the private sector and the local community to promote environmentally and culturally sustainable and socially inclusive tourism development in the State.