

WELLNESS TOURISM INDUSTRY REACHES \$495 BILLION IN REVENUE



According to a recent report released by the Global Spa and Wellness Summit, wellness tourism has become a \$495 billion industry. The study was conducted by SRI International.

According to the report, wellness tourism industry earned revenue of more than \$494 billion in 2013. **This was an increase of over 12% from 2012. Before the study, SRI International had forecasted a growth of only 9%.**

The report was released at a press conference in New York. The conference was organized after the 8th Global Spa and Wellness Summit held in September, 2014 in Marrakech, Morocco. At the summit, over 400 leaders from 45 countries were present to analyze the future of the wellness tourism industry.

According to GSWS CEO and Chairman, Susie Ellis, the wellness industry, including wellness tourism, has been gaining incredible momentum in the last few years. SRI International conducted its first study in 2007. During the period, the wellness industry was expected to become a fruitful field in the global economy. However, no one had expected such a rapid growth in revenue.

At the time, it was called the Global Spa Economy. The term spa was dropped for wellness because the former was a narrower concept. According to Ellis, the wellness industry includes a lot more than just spa and rejuvenation. It is also reaching many other industries, including real estate, hotels, architecture and more. More people have started taking wellness seriously.

According to Ellis, there are many reasons for the rapid growth. Some of these include the aging population, rise of lifestyle illnesses, widespread economic prosperity, stressful living, traditional healthcare failure and more. All these factors have led to the wellness movement. Some reports suggest that the worldwide wellness economy is worth \$3.4 trillion. This is thrice the revenue for the worldwide pharmaceutical industry.

According to reports, wellness tourism shares a major part in the global wellness economy. While wellness tourism earned more than \$494 billion in 2013, **the spa industry earned more than \$94 billion and the mineral/thermal springs industry earned over \$50 billion.**

The mineral/thermal springs industry is relatively new to the wellness tourism industry. However, it is rooted in ancient traditions of rejuvenating and bathing in mineral and thermal waters. There are many destinations around the world that are modernizing their mineral and thermal water facilities. Some of them are even building resorts and hotels near the water sources. Japan, Germany and China are the top three countries modernizing the mineral/thermal industry.

Additional Findings of the Study

- In 2013, around 586.5 million wellness trips were taken around the world. This was a 12% increase from 2012.

- International tourists spent around \$1,639 per wellness trip in 2013. The amount is 59% higher than what an average international tourist spends.
- Domestic tourists spend around \$688 per wellness trip. The amount is 159% higher than what an average domestic tourist spends.
- The top 5 wellness tourism markets include the United States, France, Germany, Austria and Japan.
- In 2013, there were 105,591 spas around the world. This was a 47% increase from 2012.
- In 2013, there were more than 27,000 mineral and thermal spring establishments around the world.

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