

**India Religious Tourism Market Assessment, By Sector [Organized, Unorganized], By Religion [Hinduism, Islam, Sikhism, Christianity, Others], By Booking Mode [Online, Offline], By End-user [Solo, Family, Group], By Region, Opportunities and Forecast, FY2018-FY2032F**

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**Report description:**

India religious tourism market was valued at USD 202.85 billion in FY2024, expected to reach USD 441.19 billion in FY2032, with a CAGR of 10.2% for the forecast period between FY2025 and FY2032. The market is vibrant with several pilgrims and attracts tourists from all over the world. It includes diverse options with regard to sacred places such as temples, mosques, churches, monasteries, and other destinations, making the country a rich heritage site for religious traditions.

Based on religious preferences and travel styles of devotees and tourists, the market has a mix of both organized and unorganized sectors. The organized sector provides well-organized tour packages, including special services for travelers. This segment is mainly preferred by people seeking family group trips. The unorganized sector mostly caters to people who have experience in traveling or are mainly solo travelers and are flexible with their choices.

In April 2024, The Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanam (TTD), responsible for looking after the management of the Lord Venkateswara Temple in Tirumala, started accepting reservations for "special entry darshan tickets" priced at USD 3.61 for July. Such initiatives drive the religious tourism of the states creating a haste among tourists to make the bookings immediately so as not to miss the opportunity.

Online tourism companies provide ease of booking to their consumers. Traditional buyers generally go for offline bookings, as visiting the office develops confidence in the reliability of the company. Individuals seeking comfort and flexibility in booking opt for online channels. Understanding the diverse segments of consumers in the religious tourism market in India is quite significant for the market players to survive in the evolving and vast landscape of religious tourism.

In April 2024, with growing demand for religious and spiritual tourism, tour and travel company Thomas Cook (India) Limited, along with its subsidiary SOTC, collaborated with the Uttarakhand Tourism Development Board for aerial darshans to Adi Kailash

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and Om Parvat for travellers.

#### Promotion of Religious Festivals and Events

Religious tourism is significantly impacted by the promotion of religious festivals and events. Such promotions attract millions of domestic and foreign visitors to the country each year. These festivals and events uplift believers' spirits and strengthen the domestic economy by bringing in money, assisting already-established companies, and luring in new ventures. For instance, the declaration on Pran Pratishtha event at Ayodhya's Ram Mandir, attended by around 7,000 special invitees, held on January 22, 2024, led to a surge in religious tourism in the country. People from all around the world were attracted to visit the temple after it was inaugurated and opened for general public.

#### Government Initiatives Propel India Religious Tourism Market Growth

The Government of India launched the National Mission on Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual Heritage Augmentation Drive (PRASHAD) Scheme under the Ministry of Tourism in FY2014-FY2015. The initiative aimed at the comprehensive development of well-known pilgrimage destinations. By January 2024, the government has sanctioned 46 projects under PRASHAD, totaling USD 200 million. Such initiatives lead to a surge in domestic and foreign tourists visiting India's pilgrimage places.

According to the Ministry of Tourism, in 2022, 1,433 million Indian tourists traveled to places of pilgrimage, compared to 6.64 million international visitors to India, while the same was 677 million and 1.05 million, respectively, in the year 2021. Compared to USD 8,600 million earned from religious tourism in 2021, USD 16,380 million was earned in 2022. Besides, every state in India has its tourism development board, which promotes religious tourism through websites, portals, and social media handles, increasing India's religious tourism market size.

In December 2023, Lieutenant Governor of Jammu launched an online booking option for the passenger ropeway from Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Bhawan to Bhairon Ji for the convenience of pilgrims. Earlier, the tickets were only available through offline mode.

#### The emergence of Online Booking Platforms Drives Market Growth

Online booking platforms make it easy for travelers in India to plan religious tours. These platforms offer several benefits to propel market growth. Apart from convenience, these platforms enable users to research, compare, and finally book the tour and accommodations using their smartphones, laptops, or other internet-connected devices.

Moreover, detailed information about the packages and reviews from past travelers offer transparency and better accessibility to users, building trust and confidence among them. Competitive pricing strategies and affordable travel plans appeal to budget-conscious individuals and families. In October 2023, EaseMyTrip introduced EasyDarshan, an online portal for spiritual travel in India. With several carefully selected packages covering popular pilgrimage sites across India, the portal aims to enhance and simplify pilgrimage experiences through services such as transportation, lodging, guided tours, and special pujas.

#### Future Market Scenario (FY2025 - FY2032F)

-□With a growing awareness of holistic well-being and mindfulness, spiritual wellness tourism is expected to gain momentum. Religious destinations in India may position themselves as hubs for spiritual retreats and meditation centers, offering visitors opportunities for self-reflection, healing, and spiritual rejuvenation.

-□The digital transformation of booking and marketing processes will continue, with online platforms becoming the primary mode of booking religious tourism experiences.

-□The integration of technology, including virtual reality, augmented reality, and AI-driven experiences, is likely to revolutionize the way religious tourism is experienced and marketed. Virtual tours, digital guidebooks, and other such options can enhance visitors' engagement and accessibility to religious sites.

#### Key Players Landscape and Outlook

In India's religious tourism sector, the market players are involved in organizing trips and tours to religious destinations offering deals and discounts to their customers. These players curate specialized pilgrimage packages, leveraging digital platforms, and traditional marketing for outreach. Companies providing hospitality service options, ranging from hotels to homestays, provide accommodation options customized as per diverse budgets and preferences, ensuring comfortable stays for religious tourists. Additionally, religious institutions organize festivals and events, drawing devotees and tourists to sacred sites.

The outlook for the market players is optimistic, with a focus on technological integration and customer-centric approaches. Collaboration among players, innovation in offerings, and a commitment to enhancing the overall visitor experience will be critical for navigating the evolving landscape of religious tourism in India, ensuring continued growth and prosperity for the industry. In

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2023, Cleartrip Private Limited witnessed a rise of 40% in flight bookings for religious destinations and a rise of 150% in hotel bookings in destinations such as Amritsar, Katra, Ujjain, Kochi, Bodh Gaya, as compared to the year 2022.

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12.5. Yatra Online Ltd.

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12.8. Le Travenues Technology Limited

12.9. Mahindra Holidays & Resorts India Limited

12.10. Holiday Triangle Travel Private Limited

\*Companies mentioned above DO NOT hold any order as per market share and can be changed as per information available during research work

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