

DEFINITIONS OF CRUISE TOURISM

Akbarov Davronbek Ikromovich

Scientific Adviser,

Nurmatova Zaxro Nosirjon qizi

Andijan State University Named after Z. M. Bobur Faculty of Foreign Language

Abdurashidov Baxrombek Abdullajon o'g'li.

Uzbekistan Sharda University International

Business Administration Faculty 3rd year Student

ABSTRACT

This article is about cruise tourism. Sea Cruise Travel History of the development of cruise tourism. Classification of sea voyages. The geography of cruise tourism is given.

Keywords: cruise tourism, trips, sea, travel, sea voyages, tourism notes, travel history, cruise tour itinerary, air travel, land arrangements.

INTRODUCTION

Definitions of Cruise Tourism

The cruise tourism is an increasingly important part of the employment structure of advanced industrial nations as well as developing economies. Many of the cruise industries key players have made a significant contribution to the economic growth and development of the nation such as Star Cruises, Holland and American line Deluxe cruises. Crystal Cruises, Silversea Cruises, Princess Cruises, Royal Caribbean, and so forth. Cruise tourism provides and offers food, beverage, accommodation, recreational, casino, shopping, and other services to the tourist. It is like an informal industry which makes an arrangement of various services i.e., cruise packages and combines these with air travel to attract the potential customer. The cruise package includes a plenty of facilities designed to meet the specific requirement of passengers – such as accommodation, food, beverage, deck games, swimming pool, yoga classes, quiet lounges, sheltered dock, library, casino, disco films. Many cruises include special interest themes – like astronomy, yoga, meditation, sequence dancing, classical music and many more. The cruise industry is a modern phenomenon but it rooted from the early years of the 19th century. As travel by ship was the only means to travel overseas. The Duke of Bridgewater was initiated to start water transport services from Manchester to London in 1772. His boat was used to carry passengers as well as goods. In 1815 steamboats were developed and used to carry passengers and goods. To launch first cruise ship the credit goes to the king Charles IV of Sweden when he started his personal cruise ship in 1821. In 1824 the first commercial cruise ship was started under the flag of Ireland. Gradually, steamship excursions became so famous and it resulted in the introduction of modern age cruise lines. In 1938 the Peninsular and Orient steam was launched first long distance steamship services from India to the Far East. This company is still operating and has a good grasp of the cruise market. The Cunard ship company followed the P&O company and began regular services to the American Continent in 1840.

During the 2nd half of the 19th century, Britain dominated the cruise industry. However, this dominance has decreased in the later century with the advent of the substantial emigrant from Europe and the steady growth of US visitors to Europe. Thomas Cook (the father of travel agency business) stimulated the British tourists to visit North America. In 1866 he succeeds to operate first steamship excursion tour to the USA. In the modern age, UK started first transatlantic lines 'Titanic' in 192 which was sold to the Newfoundland Islands in 1913. Second important cruise line 'Queen Mary' was started in 1934. It had 2000 passengers capacity along with 1100 crew members. It offered every facility for passengers such as comfort, safety, and entertainment. It was considered one of the great ocean liners. Cruise Tour Package. A cruise tour package may be defined as a systematically planned return journey with entertainment and recreational facilities on board, and shore excursion. In other words, the cruise package is a pleasure an all-inclusive trip by boat or ship for specific days, to specific days, to specific destinations, and with a set price. Cruises packages may be designed and planned for an individual group, families, FITs, business executives, honeymooners, and special interest tourists. Of course, these cruise packages are designed for cruise passengers. However, these could not be segregated from air travel and land arrangement. a cruise package may vary from tour company to company, destination to destination and from region to region. On the basis of above discussion actual cruise industry environment the following main cruise packages are offered by cruise liners:

Incentive Cruise Packages

Group Packages

Family Packages

Business Cruise Package

FITs

Honeymooners Package

Special Interest Cruise Package

Fly Cruise Package

Types of Cruise

Since the introduction of the first cruise in 1821, numbers of cruises came in the cruise industry. Some of them are still operating in the industry while others which were not attracting clients discarded from the industry. Thus, the following typology is based on sales, marketing and working conditions of the cruises:

Volume Cruise

As the name indicates, volume cruises concentrate on volume turnover. That is why these are called mass market cruises. 65 percent of all cruises are volume/mass market cruises. These cruises are very popular in the Caribbean sea, Asia Pacific and South East Asia. In such cruises, accommodation and other services are comparable to the star hotel. Generally, these cruises emphasized two things i.e. Turnover and short-term passenger itinerary. These are further divided into three sub-categorized:

Short term cruises – Normally two to five days.

Standard cruises – For one-week duration.

Large cruises – Duration is from the week to two weeks.

Premium Cruises

Premium cruises are the second largest segment of cruise industry accounting for mere than 40 percent of all cruise revenues. The duration of this cruise varies from one week to three months. Due to this, these are known as upscale cruises. Their product and services are equivalent to its class resort, and hotel. Royal cruise, Star Cruises, Princess Cruises, Panama Canal Cruises are offering premium cruise service. Alliances and Networking.

Shifting tourist demands.

Restructuring ownership.

Labor flexibility and Employment.

Boom-bust cycles and tourism.

Process for Development of Cruise Tour Package

The development of air transportation and improvement in their technology in so far as safety, speed economy, and comfort are concerned to have admittedly hurt the cruise industry. However, steamship travel remains as today's transportation of pleasure, relaxation, and comforts with service comparable to country's best hotels and resorts. The cruise industry is now a resort or hotel activities that must be promoted as floating hotel/resort, not for just vacation at sea but a romantic interlude, wedding anniversary, mind-dazzling, nightlife, resort cruise, and a pleasure of meeting new people. Many thousands of rupees are spent annually by the cruise companies to promote their products and services directly or, through the tour operators and travel agents but a crucial question remains unanswered. What should be included in the cruise package? How it is to be marketed? What will be the core ingredients? In many cases, tour operators failed to find the right mix of cruise package for their clients. Standard Components of Cruise Tour Package Cruise packages are developed to all clients such as honeymooners, nature lovers, students, adventurers, fitness/health conscious, sport minded, music lovers, special interests and education professional etc. Thus, a cruise company has to consider a wide spectrum of market demands. Therefore, the components of a cruise package will vary from client to client and company to company. However, the following main components or ingredients can be drawn from the cruise packages offered by the most cruise companies and tour operators:

Air travel or land arrangements.

Cruise segments

Accommodation

Food and beverage

Entertainment and recreation

Deck games

Swimming pool

Health clubs

Casino

Films

Music-dances

Entertainment facilities for children

Quite lounges

Sheltered decks

Special Interest Theme

Cricket

Bridge

Astronomy

Education

Library

Shopping

Other activities

Process of Cruise Tour Package Development

Developing cruises trips/tours, working with some other players; formulating effective marketing, managing and determining cost and price are the activities that are not easy to handle for the cruise company. However, if the manager approaches in a planned and systematic way, tour designing will become a simple, and easy task.

Cruise Tour Itinerary

A well-planned cruise tour itinerary identifies embarkation points, ports of calls, types of cabin, cruise facilities, meal services, shore excursions, tipping, and other services. Gradually, the cruise itinerary combined with air travel and land arrangement to make it more attractive and effective. However, individuals needs cannot be overlooked. Thus, in developing cruise tour itinerary, tour planners/cruise planners normally considered the market forces, cruise industry environment, and cruise reference tools. Moreover, a cruise planner keeps in mind the following facts while designing cruise itinerary:

Name of the Cruise

Sailing date

Destinations

Port of Embarkation

Port of Termination

Client choice client budget

Legal formalities

Types of Cruise Tour Itineraries

Cruise tour itineraries are broadly categorized in the following types:

Short duration itineraries

Medium-haul – Short and long duration itineraries (7 night, 10 nights and above)

Long haul – Medium duration itineraries (7 months)

Transatlantic and Round the world itineraries (6 to 12 months)

Cruise tour itineraries are not limited only to sea but river cruise itineraries can be developed.

The main rivers of the cruise are Amazon, Mississippi, Yangtze Kiang, Hung He, Nile, and the Rhine, etc. Determination of Cruise Tour Package Coast and Price

Determination of cost and price of a cruise tour is one of the most difficult tasks of a cruise manager/planner. What should be the exact cost? What should be the right margin? These are the two important question which a tour planner has to face. Total price must be perceived by the passenger to be reasonable. The cruise planner must ensure about the cost. Thus, before determination of the cost of a cruise package tour planner considers the following factors:

Length of Tour

Types of accommodation

Type and quality of facilities

Position of cabin

Density of ship

Date of travel

Govt. Policy

Competitive forces

Seasonality

A typical cruise package includes accommodation cost, meal cost, recreational and entertainment cost, activities for children and teenagers, port taxes, shore excursion cost, and airfare may also be a part of total cost. Thus, at first glance, it may seem an expensive package, but we must understand the cost represents not only the accommodation, Food, and transportation but also entertainment together with other services and opportunities to visit a foreign port. Cruise prices vary among cruise companies, depending on various factors and quality of product and services. More importantly, price depends on the selection of itinerary and standard of qualities. In cruise, segment price is not the main criteria but the quality of services is important. Thus, a cruise package must create value for money to repeat clients. Generally, cruise companies adopt a mix of pricing strategies such as:

Cost-oriented pricing

Market-oriented pricing

Product line pricing

Competitive or seasonal pricing

Cruise Tour Sales and Marketing

The selling of cruise tour ticket is substantially different from the selling of airline ticket. One of the most important features relating to this is that the airline industry is well organized and regulated as compared to the cruise industry. Today, selling cruises are becoming more easier and profitable than ever. Due to competition, the cruise companies are offering more discounts and other promotional incentives to the passengers. Besides 15 percent commission, more incentives are offered to the tour operators or travel agencies by the cruise companies. There is a minimum procedure involved in selling and booking cruise package. Like other means of transportation, cruise liner issue the ticket, and provide other information through cruise brochure such as accommodation, entertainment, travel insurance, foreign currency, travel tips, and so forth. Thus, successful selling and booking steamship cruise requires knowledge of both passengers and cruise on which client will have the product services, comforts, and entertainment. Tour operators need certain information to book a cruise package about the client such as:

Name of clients

Itinerary

Duration of tour

Date of sailing

Cabin choice

Meal option

Entertainment and Recreational activities

Address with e-mail and telephone no

Budget

Other information which is mere relevant

After obtaining required information, tour operator negotiates with cruise lines/companies. He has various options – i.e. to select a cruise for any age group. A long cruise “Round the World” takes long-range planning while shorter cruise can be booked with 3 to 5 days or shorter notice. Tour operators or a travel agency follow a well defined and designed procedure for booking a cruise. The process may vary from company to company and point to point, but it includes all most following steps: Cruise Ticketing

Preparation and issue of cruise ticket is the last step in the process of cruise reservation. The cruise ticketing is mostly done by the cruise companies or by the tour operators/travel agencies who are authorized to hold stock and issue the ticket. A cruise ticket is a legal contract between the cruise line and passenger, entitling him/her or groups, at a stated price, to travel and avail cruise facilities specified – i.e. cruise products or services during a set time. Thus, the acceptance of cruise ticket means acceptance of those terms and conditions which contained in the passage contract ticket. A cruise ticket document includes or conditions the following items:

Staterooms, inside, outside

Food and Beverage.

Dining room seating.

Sports deck.

Movie.

Entertainment.

Social life.

Children's corner.

Teenager rooms.

Shopping.

Library.

Port of call.

Insurance.

Fare.

Date of issue

Agent validation No.

Address of tour operator.

Luxury Cruises.

CONCLUSION

Luxury cruises occupied a meager percentage of the cruise market. It may be due to its high-quality product and services and it focuses on long-haul itineraries for exotic destinations. These cruises are meant for elite people. The duration of itinerary may range from 6 months to 12 months. In spite of high prices, these cruises are more popular among the tourists and honeymooners. Luxury cruises are operated by the Royal Caribbean cruises, Crystal Cruises, and Star cruises etc. Specialty Cruises These cruises are launched to cater the demands of specific interest passengers, such as newly married couple, whale watching, oceanography, scuba diving. The quality of products and services is comparatively low as other cruises. The

duration of these cruises is very less but depending on the package. Presently, there is more than 150 cruise ship with 90,000 cabins world over. The largest cruise lines is Royal Caribbean cruises liner (RCCL) with nine ships and have a capacity of 15,000 births. The Star Cruises is the 2nd largest cruise lines having five ships with 7000 births capacity. Followed by Deluxe cruise lines, Crystal Cruises, Radisson seven seas cruises, Seabourn cruises, Silversea cruise and princes cruises etc. Significance of Cruise Industry For Touris The tourism industry in many countries of the world has been profoundly helped by the cruise sector to shape the tourism product and to satisfy the sophisticated travelers. The relationship between the cruise industry and tourism industry is, therefore, a highly complex subject involving a mixture of socio-economic factors, technological factors, market pressures, government policies, management attitude ad tourist expectations.

The following points can be perceived pivotal for the significance of the cruise industry:

Evolving cruise as a vacation option.

Realizing the competitiveness.

Development in MICE destinations.

Image Conscious.

Increasing the size of the cruise market.

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