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RESORTS AS MULTIFUNCTIONAL RECREATION AND TOURISM CENTERS

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Abstract

The article deals with the functioning of modern resorts as multifunctional recreation and tourism centers. Today, maintaining a healthy lifestyle has become a trend all over the world. As a result, traditional resort establishments are being modernized and provide the latest innovative wellness and spa services. Ukraine has a rich recreational potential to support existing and develop new resorts that can offer a variety of wellness treatments and leisure activities for various market segments.

Keywords: resort; SPA; wellness tourism; recreation; leisure activities.

Курорти як поліфункціональні центри рекреації і туризму

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В статті розглядаються питання функціонування сучасних курортів як багатофункціональних центрів рекреації й туризм. На сьогоднішній день додержуватися здорового способу життя стало тенденцією у всьому світі. В наслідок чого традиційні курортні заклади модернізуються і надають новітні інноваційні велнес та спа послуги. Україна володіє багатим рекреаційним потенціалом для підтримки існуючих та розвитку нових курортів, які зможуть пропонувати різноманітні велнес процедури та дозвіллеві заходи для різних ринкових сегментів.

Ключові слова: курорт; спа-процедури; велнес-туризм; рекреація; дозвілля.

Introduction. All over the world, scientific and technological progress is accelerating, and urbanization processes are underway, which has both positive and negative consequences for human health. There is a decrease in the functional capabilities of the human body, which is manifested in the deterioration of the activity of its most important life-supporting systems. There is an increase in the incidence of the population, as well as the emergence of new, dangerous diseases; stress loads significantly increase, and physical and mental fatigue accumulates in the human body. At the same time, there is a tendency in the world to realize the importance of a healthy lifestyle. Taking care of health and increasing vital activity has become an integral part of the modern value system. The number of people who strive to maintain good physical shape along with spiritual enrichment is growing. Employers' view of their employees has also changed. All this creates prerequisites for the accelerated development of health tourism around the world.

In the modern world, the health tourism market is undergoing significant changes. Traditional health resorts are no longer a place of treatment and recreation for the elderly and are becoming multifunctional health centres designed for a wide range of consumers [14]. Certain physical and geographical factors, or natural conditions, contribute to the development of health tourism in a particular region. Such conditions include the availability of certain natural and recreational resources, that is, resources that provide rest and restoration of human health and performance, the availability of aesthetic resources—a combination of

natural factors that positively affect the spiritual state of people, as well as health centers with modern restorative procedures [13].

A high-quality spa product is the provision of high – quality services to one client both for reception and accommodation, catering, transport support, information and animation services for guests, and directly, medical and recreational services of a high level [1].

Ukraine has a high potential for the development of health tourism-it is also a western region with a large number of Healing Springs, mountain air, clean rivers and lakes, forests. This is also the Black Sea, which, according to experts, can successfully compete in the content of iodine and other useful elements for human health. This includes the presence of springs with therapeutic mud, which can successfully compete even with the mud of the Dead Sea. An important factor in the development of health tourism in Ukraine is the absence of an acclimatization period for residents of most of Europe who are potential consumers of the Ukrainian tourist product. The need for adaptation arises when changing geographical zones (especially in the off-season) and high-altitude zones [2, 7].

From an economic point of view, for the state, the introduction of new types of tourism is something that allows you to enter new markets for tourist services and, accordingly, receive large incomes. However, despite the fact that in Ukraine there are all the prerequisites and factors for the development of health tourism, this area is not yet sufficiently studied and analyzed. It is precisely this complexity of the topic and its lack of study that has fully led to such a choice, which confirms its relevance.

The **purpose** of the article is to characterize the peculiarities of the development of health tourism in Ukraine and current trends in the development of resorts as multifunctional centres of tourism and recreation.

In the process of writing the article, the works of such researchers in this field as: O. O. Lyubitseva, M. P. Malska, V. I., Stafiychuk V. I., Pankova O. V., Vlashchenko N. M. and others were used, articles in professional publications, encyclopedic reference books of tourism and economic direction, cartographic materials, statistical data of the World Tourism Organization and statistics departments of individual countries, including Ukraine, Internet resources.

Research results and discussion. The importance of health tourism in the world is growing exponentially and is becoming more and more relevant for countries that define tourism development as basic for their territories. Although this area of tourism is considered global, it is marked by a number of specific regional and even local features.

The number of international tourists increased annually and in 2019 amounted to 1.5 billion. This is 4% more than in 2018, then due to the pandemic in 2020-2022, the number of travelling tourists fell to historical lows. And only at the end of 2023, the number of international tourists almost reached the dockside level of 1.3 billion people [15]. According to tourism statistics, travel for the purpose of treatment and wellness is the basis of international tourist exchanges, and the share of tourists travelling for the purpose of "leisure, recreation and holiday" is about 56% or 784 million people annually (UNWTO data for 2019 [15], and "health treatment", together with visits from relatives and friends, pilgrimage or religious trips, accounts for about 27% of all visits.

Health tourism as the main motivation considers medical and health measures, which should increase the ability of the individual to meet their needs in physical, mental and/or spiritual health. This type of tourism was formed on the basis of two subtypes of tourism – health and healing.

Medical tourism is carried out for the purpose of promoting health and involves staying in sanatorium-resort institutions. The purpose of health tourism is disease prevention and Recreation. It is characterized by the duration of travel, visiting fewer cities and a longer stay in one place, that is, along with leisure activities; it provides rest, relaxation, and wellness [2].

Health tourism is a type of tourism activity that aims to improve and balance all major areas of a person's life, including physical, mental, emotional, professional, intellectual and spiritual. The main motivation for a health tourist is to carry out preventive, proactive measures aimed at improving the lifestyle, such as fitness, healthy eating, relaxation, body care and treatment [4]. At the same time, medical tourism involves first of all receiving medical care to overcome a well-defined specific health problem. In this context, it is closely integrated with the system of medical institutions [3]. And health tourism focuses on recreational and tourist infrastructure. Now the basics of health tourism are balneotherapy (when the therapeutic effect is achieved due to the influence of the healing properties of mineral waters), climatotherapy (favorable weather factors and climate properties) and mud treatment (therapeutic mud is used).

The main centres where forms of health tourism are carried out are resorts. According to the law of Ukraine on resorts, a resort is "a developed natural area on health – improving lands that has natural healing resources necessary for their operation of buildings and structures with infrastructure facilities, which is used for treatment, medical rehabilitation, disease prevention and Recreation and is subject to Special Protection" [1]. Along with the

main types of resorts – balneological, mud and climatic – there are transitional resorts that use several natural healing factors at once, for example, mineral waters and mud or climate and mineral waters [4].

Recreation, from a medical point of view, is the most valuable type of tourism, which is aimed at restoring health and working capacity by relaxing in the bosom of nature, in favourable climatic conditions. To achieve this goal, patients and recreational tourists are provided with a variety of recreational services "recreation facility" in the resorts. These services are used for various purposes: health, tourism, sports and educational, the main natural and recreational resources (climate, therapeutic mud, mineral waters, etc.) and special means attract to increase the overall psychophysical potential and the development of individual functional systems of the body. Over the past decades, health tourism has undergone significant changes. Traditional resorts are turning into multifunctional health centers that are designed for a wide range of consumers [14]. On the other hand, new directions of preventive and health-improving medicine are actively developing in Ukraine- the popularity of the SPA&Wellness industry is growing, a new segment of the tourist market is being formed- medical/medical tourism – medical – SPA [3, 6, 8].

Recently, wellness tourism has been very widely mentioned in Ukraine, which can be considered as a health tourism destination. Wellness is not only the subject of significant literary research, but also the focus of the lives of millions of people around the world. That's why the current wellness industry is so powerful. It includes 10 major industries such as: beauty, anti-aging, healthy eating, fitness, preventive health, Real Estate wellness and lifestyle, spa, thermal springs, workplace wellness, wellness tourism [12]

Medical / medical tourism has such great potential that currently stands out as an independent segment of the tourist market with a wide range of investment opportunities: from large-scale hotel projects adjacent to clinics and located within the city, to existing specialized complexes with some modifications in the structure of services. The growth of recreational needs of the population and their requirements for the quality of recreation at the resort led to the transformation of the sanatorium-resort business into a resort-recreational system, the main goal of which is to improve human health, quality and life expectancy [8, 9]. The revival of medical prevention at the stage of spa treatment is one of the most important areas of development and improvement of the healthcare system in Ukraine. The solution of this problem is facilitated by the development of the concept of Health Protection of a healthy person, the purpose of which is to reduce the redistribution from the population of healthy to sick, provides for the introduction of modern technologies of recovery, the addition of the

existing system of rehabilitation treatment with SPA programs with the inclusion of medical SPA services (medical SPA) aimed at prevention, the formation of a health culture among the population [3].

The specifics of the tourist wellness industry are characterized by its diversity and include: independent wellness resorts, wellness hotels, spa resorts, spa hotels, spiritual centres, spiritual shelters, self-improvement centres, cruise wellness trips by sea, rivers, lakes, land, alternative medicine centres, spiritual practice centres, weight loss centres, cosmetology, plastic, anti-aging and dental centres, sports and fitness centres [13].

The style, design, material and technical base and equipment of wellness resorts and hotels are in perfect harmony with the natural environment and local culture and therefore have an incredibly strong impact on the perception of guests. They prefer small buildings, recycled materials and colours that create a sense of intimacy with nature, pay attention to the equipment of rooms with fitness devices, small gyms, a variety of spa services, a healthy menu, bio-products, etc.

Thus, today there are both traditional and the latest areas of health tourism.

Among natural recreational resources, a special place belongs to climatic ones, since they determine the spatial organization of recreation. Recreational climatic resources include, first of all, favourable weather conditions: sunlight, ultraviolet radiation, clean, saturated with phytoncides and ionized air, etc., which together ensure the implementation of various recreational activities. Climate as the main therapeutic and preventive factor is the basis for creating climatic resorts, the health-improving effect of which is primarily due to the use of aero-, helio-, thalassotherapy. At the same time, climatic resorts use landscape therapy, features of the local microclimate (in particular, caves and mines — speleo therapy), and other natural healing factors (therapeutic mud, mineral waters, watermelons, koumiss, etc.) for therapeutic purposes. In all natural zones of Ukraine, there are climatic resorts and resort areas [2, 7].

Balneological resources include mineral waters and mud, and ozokerite is also classified as ozokerite. The tradition of using their medicinal properties goes back to ancient times. And it was balneological resources that became the basis for the formation of the resort economy. Sources of almost all types of mineral waters have been discovered in Ukraine. Radon medicinal waters with a diverse chemical composition have the greatest territorial distribution (except for mineral waters without specific components). They are typical for the northern and central regions of the Right Bank and the Azov Sea region.

An important component of balneological resources is therapeutic mud (peloids), which is used in the form of baths and applications. Therapeutic mud includes silts, sapropels, peats, hill mud, etc., whose deposits are divided into silt, peat, and pseudovolcanic by origin, silt organo-mineral sulfide mud of salt lakes and estuaries of the sea coast region is widely used in sanatorium-resort institutions of Ukraine. They are a plastic mass of green-gray or black colour. The largest deposits are the Alibey, Shagany, Kuyalnitsky, Tiligulsky, and Hadzhibeysky estuaries [4]. Approximately half of these fields are not yet in operation. Silt mud is widely used both separately and in combination with other therapeutic factors in the resorts of the Black Sea coast.

Ozokerite (mountain wax), which is a mixture of high-molecular compounds of carbohydrates, resins and asphaltenes, is widely used in sanatorium-preventive institutions mainly in the Carpathian region, which determines its medicinal properties. Most of the ozokerite deposits in Ukraine are discovered in the pre-Carpathian region. It is here that the world's largest Boryslavske (operated since 1856) and Truskavets fields are located.

The health direction of tourism involves, first of all, the restoration of spiritual, physical, moral and ethical forces. In Ukraine, a whole industry has been created to provide services related to meeting the recreation and health needs of the population.

Landscapes are an important recreational resource, especially their components such as topography, flora and fauna. Topography significantly affects the spatial differentiation of climatic, biotic, and other resources. On the other hand, relief plays an important role in meeting a person's need for beauty, creating a favourable psychological climate for successful treatment, recreation and recovery. Terrain features are used for health therapy in sanatoriums. Terrenkur is a comprehensive program based on dosed therapeutic cross – country walking, including climbing a mountain at an angle of 3° - 20° . Terrencourt for the elderly, as well as for young people, is prescribed individually. Paths are laid taking into account landscape features. The therapeutic effect is achieved by regular, repeated walking trips with the use of moderate loads, which alternate with different complexity of routes. For example, interactive maps have been developed in Truskavets, where you can choose the route of the terrencourt [5].

If the terrenkur is located in a forest zone, then the species composition of trees is also taken into account. The species composition and age structure of forests determine their impact on the process of treatment (recovery) and the effectiveness of the implementation of the sanitary and hygienic function of recreation. The therapeutic and health-improving function is largely due to the phytoncidity of the forest, that is, its bactericidal, fungicidal

effect. Air ionization is one of the factors of beneficial effects of forests on the human body, in particular, on the nervous system (insomnia, fatigue, etc.). The medicinal properties of ionized air are used for hypertension, atherosclerosis, bronchial asthma, and tuberculosis. This is the reason for the territorial distribution of the corresponding resorts in the Ukrainian Carpathians, forest-steppe zone and Polesie.

The vast majority of sanatoriums, boarding houses, holiday homes, tourist bases and other recreational facilities are located on the banks of reservoirs or in close proximity to water bodies, the presence of which significantly increases the recreational potential of the area. According to statistics, two-thirds of respondents prefer recreation on the shore of a reservoir.

Sea water treatments are divided into a separate type of balneotherapy – thalassotherapy. The use of the Sea coast for thalassotherapy purposes is influenced by the climatic parameters of the natural resort area, as well as the regime of the adjacent water area. Thalassotherapy is a combination of therapeutic applications of all factors that are formed under the influence of the sea: climate, sea water, algae, silt of estuaries and seafood.

Conclusions. According to official WTO data, the health tourism sector is characterized by an increase and intensification of flows, over the past 15 years, the number of tourist trips for the purpose of treatment and recovery in the world has increased by 10%. The medical tourism market is currently just being formed and continues to acquire a global scale and, according to some experts, is the most stable and attractive.

A healthy lifestyle, which today is considered a trend direction, has become the key to the development of health tourism. Therefore, the position of organizing travel to improve your health and improve your own well-being is logical. This type of tourism is designed to ensure a balance between mind, body and soul. Well-known tourist regions, as well as newly developed ones, are actively searching for optimal models for the development of such a direction of tourist activity. However, health tourism is still poorly identified; data on it is fragmented, and its definitions and concepts vary significantly from country to country.

The health resort base of Ukraine is widely represented by sanatoriums of various forms of ownership and departmental subordination, which are located in different regions of Ukraine. The dynamics of the number of health resorts in the last pre-war years tended to decrease due to the unstable situation in the country and the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to the strict quarantine restrictions that were introduced in our country (as in most countries of the world) in 2020 and the first quarter of 2021, almost all tourist accommodation facilities, including those that provided health and wellness services, completely ceased their activities.

Only in the spring of 2021, quarantine restrictions were relaxed and tourist flows were gradually restored.

Today, the Carpathian region remains the most attractive, but in order to change the dynamics of the development of medical tourism in Carpathian for the better and increase the interest of visitors to resort complexes for the purpose of treatment and recovery, it is necessary to actively involve a marketing strategy. We mean the creation of a product of medical tourism in accordance with the demand that exists in the tourist market, its improvement through the creation of additional services, a combination of different types of recreation in resort institutions (hiking in mountainous areas, animation programs for children, cycling). It is necessary to promote resort establishments, spread information about the type of procedures that are provided in sanatoriums to potential clients, as well as a description of the healing properties of mineral waters, climatic resources that have a positive impact on human health. In the information environment, all this can be done through advertising in social networks, which are actively used by people of different age groups.

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