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MODERN TYPES OF EXCURSION ACTIVITIES

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Abstract

Today, tourism is gaining increasing popularity worldwide and represents a sector with positive growth dynamics. Excursion activities are an important component of tourism. Modern excursion activities are rapidly evolving to meet the growing demands of tourists for new experiences and interactive formats. Excursions today are no longer limited to traditional forms of exploring cultural or historical landmarks; instead, they take on a creative and even adventurous character. Key modern trends in excursion activities include quest excursions, historical reenactment tours, thematic, and interactive tours, which allow participants to deeply

immerse themselves in the ambiance of a place, feeling like a part of history or culture. Quest excursions combine the traditional format with interactive tasks, enabling tourists not only to observe but also actively participate in exploration. This makes excursions more emotionally engaging and suitable for various age groups. Historical reenactment tours, where participants can immerse themselves in past eras through the reconstruction of daily life, attire, and traditions, are also gaining popularity.

The article presents current trends in excursion activities. These activities create a unique atmosphere that allows for a deeper appreciation of the culture or genre. They may include mythological or legendary journeys where tourists uncover ancient mysteries, or nighttime excursions with a mystical ambiance. Interactive tours also push the boundaries of the traditional format by including elements of virtual reality, QR codes for self-guided information access, and workshops that let participants acquire new skills. Digital technologies are becoming a significant part of the excursion process: Virtual reality and augmented reality (AR) means provide the opportunity to virtually travel anywhere in the world without leaving one's hometown. This format becomes particularly relevant during pandemics or for people with limited mobility. Interactive and thematic excursions meet modern tourists' expectations, transforming excursions into exciting adventures and significantly expanding the potential of excursion activities.

Keywords: tourism; excursion activities; modern types of excursion activities.

На сьогоднішній день туризм набуває все більшої популярності в світі та є галуззю з позитивною динамікою розвитку. Екскурсійна діяльність є важливою складовою туризму. Сучасна екскурсійна діяльність швидко змінюється, задовольняючи зростаючі потреби туристів у нових враженнях та інтерактивних форматах. Сьогодні екскурсії вже не обмежуються традиційними формами ознайомлення з культурними чи історичними пам'ятками; навпаки, вони набувають креативного і навіть пригодницького характеру. Основними сучасними напрямками в екскурсійній діяльності є екскурсії-квести, екскурсії з історичним відтворенням, тематичні та інтерактивні тури, які дозволяють учасникам глибше зануритися в атмосферу місця, відчувати себе частиною історії або культури. Екскурсії-квести поєднують традиційний формат з інтерактивними завданнями, що дозволяє туристам не лише спостерігати, але й брати активну участь у дослідженні. Це робить екскурсії більш емоційно насиченими та підходить для різних вікових груп.

Популярність набирають також екскурсії з історичним відтворенням, де учасники можуть зануритися в минулі епохи завдяки реконструкції побуту, одягу та традицій. У статті подані сучасні тренди екскурсійної діяльності. Ця діяльність має створювати особливу атмосферу, яка дозволяє глибше відчувати культуру чи жанр. Це можуть бути міфологічні, легендарні подорожі, під час яких туристи занурюються в таємниці давнини, або нічні екскурсії з містичною атмосферою. Інтерактивні тури також розширюють межі традиційного формату, включаючи елементи віртуальної реальності, QR-коди для самостійного зчитування інформації, а також майстер-класи, що дозволяють учасникам опанувати нові навички. Цифрові технології стають ваговою складовою екскурсійного процесу: Технологічні засоби віртуальної та додаткової реальності надають можливість віртуально подорожувати до будь-якого місця світу, не покидаючи рідного міста. Такий формат стає актуальним під час пандемій або для людей з обмеженими можливостями пересування. Інтерактивні та тематичні екскурсії відповідають сучасним очікуванням туристів, перетворюючи екскурсії на захоплюючі пригоди та значно розширюючи потенціал екскурсійної діяльності.

Ключові слова: туризм; екскурсійна діяльність; сучасні види екскурсійної діяльності.

Modern types of excursion activities are rapidly evolving and becoming increasingly popular among tourists of various ages and social groups. Excursions have ceased to be solely informative events that focus only on historical or cultural landmarks; today, they encompass a variety of themes, create new experiences, and even provide a sense of adventure. Such excursions are developing towards greater interactivity, emotional engagement, creativity, convenience, and adaptation to the interests of the modern tourist. In this essay, we will explore the main trends in the development of contemporary excursion activities and the most relevant types of them.

The theoretical foundations of excursion studies have been developed and analyzed in the research of V. Babarytska, I. Chahaida, M. Malska, and V. Khudo.

Excursion activities have ancient roots. The first forms of organized excursions appeared in ancient times when wealthy Romans and Greeks traveled to temples, baths, and other landmarks. Later, in the Middle Ages, pilgrimage became an important form of travel as people

sought to visit holy places in Europe and the Middle East. With the beginning of the Renaissance, interest in science and art stimulated travel to study architecture and history. In the 18th and 19th centuries, the development of transportation, particularly the railway, made excursion activities more accessible [1]. One of the first examples of organized tourism is considered to be the work of Thomas Cook in Great Britain, who began organizing group trips in 1841. In the 20th century, excursions became a popular form of educational and recreational activity, and in the post-war period, tourism gained mass appeal due to rising prosperity and the development of aviation. Today, excursion activities are an important part of the tourism industry, contributing to cultural exchange and the promotion of world heritage [2].

One of the main trends in excursion activities today is themed tours. Modern tourists want not just to familiarize themselves with new places but also to feel part of a particular story, culture, or genre. Themed tours create a unique atmosphere that allows guests to immerse themselves in a specific era or worldview. The following types of tours are included in this category:

1. *Quest Tours* are an exciting way to spend time, combining elements of traditional excursions with interactive games and tasks. This format has gained popularity due to the opportunity to delve deeper into the history and culture of a city or region through active participation. Instead of simply listening to a guide, participants in quest tours follow a specific route where they must solve puzzles, complete tasks, and collaborate with their team. This makes the tour not only informative but also emotionally engaging. A distinctive feature of quest tours is their adaptability: routes can be created for different age groups and can include themes related to local legends, historical events, or famous personalities. For example, quests for schoolchildren often combine educational moments with gaming elements, helping them remember information more effectively. This format also encourages the development of teamwork skills and logical thinking [4].

Quest tours open up new opportunities for tourism development, especially in small towns and historical sites, where an unconventional approach helps attract the attention of tourists. They have the potential to transform an ordinary tour into an unforgettable adventure, where participants become explorers seeking captivating stories and secrets of the area.

2. *Historical reenactment* tours are a format of tourism that allows participants not only to observe historical sites but also to feel like part of them. Such tours typically include interactive

theatrical elements: costumes, battle reconstructions, and displays of everyday life and traditions from specific eras. This approach not only entertains but also deepens the understanding of history through emotional experiences. The popularity of these tours is on the rise, as they offer opportunities for full immersion, sparking interest in exploring the past. Participants can experience the atmosphere of the Middle Ages in castles or take part in Cossack festivities. This is especially appealing to families with children and young people, as it makes history more accessible and engaging. Historical reenactment tours are an effective means of developing domestic tourism, enriching the regional cultural landscape, and promoting the preservation of national heritage. They enhance a sense of pride in the history and cultural achievements of the country, as such events help people connect with the past and the cultural heritage of their region [6].

3. *Mythological and legendary tours* are a unique type of tourist travel that allows participants to immerse themselves in the atmosphere of past mysteries, feel the spirit of their ancestors, and rethink ancient perceptions of the world. Journeys to places associated with myths, legends, or historical traditions hold great value for both tourists and the preservation of the region's cultural heritage. For example, in Ukraine, there are many such routes: in the Carpathians, one can learn about ancient pagan rituals, tales of Hutsul magicians, and spirits of nature. In Khmelnytskyi Oblast, in particular, visitors can dive into the world of legends from Podillia and Volhynia, hearing stories about castles, ancient settlements, and rituals preserved in folklore. In these tours, guides reveal the mythological worldview of past generations, passing on their traditions and values. This type of excursion combines captivating storytelling with historical research, engaging tourists in an interactive appreciation of heritage. Myths and legends not only enrich cultural experiences but also deepen the understanding of the mentality and values of the people.

4. *Interactive Tours*. Interactive tours are becoming increasingly popular as they provide active participation for visitors in the process of exploring a new place. Unlike traditional tours, where tourists simply listen to a guide, interactive tours incorporate elements such as virtual reality, audio guides, QR codes for self-reading information, as well as special tasks and quests. This allows visitors not only to admire landmarks but also to immerse themselves in the culture and history through personal experiences. Besides their entertainment value, interactive tours hold significant educational importance, as they stimulate thinking, enhance information

retention, and promote better memorization of facts. They encourage tourists to actively engage with culture and history, increasing their interest. Thus, interactive tours are an effective method for promoting tourist routes, combining entertainment with education and making cultural experiences more engaging and accessible to a wide range of travelers [3].

Another direction of modern excursion activities is the active engagement of participants in the process. *Interactive excursions* allow tourists to become part of the event, participate in workshops, and try out skills or technologies. Examples include:

1. *Gastronomic tours* – visiting local farms, vineyards, or restaurants with opportunities to taste local dishes and drinks, and preparing traditional recipes.
2. *Eco-tours* – integrate the educational process with nature conservation, where tourists can participate in environmental actions, such as beach cleanups or tree planting.
3. *Craft tours* – include visits to workshops for pottery, weaving, and jewelry-making, where participants can create something by hand.

Digital technologies are fundamentally changing the excursion industry. Thanks to virtual and augmented reality (VR/AR), excursions are now accessible from anywhere in the world without the need for physical presence. Virtual tours offer the opportunity to visit museums, galleries, and historical sites virtually through VR headsets or simply online platforms. This is especially relevant during pandemics or for those with mobility restrictions. Augmented reality excursions utilize AR applications to add historical or cultural elements to existing sites, such as reconstructing destroyed architectural landmarks or showcasing how they looked in the past [5].

The new format of excursions is focused on the search for adrenaline and new emotional experiences. These tours are designed for those who want not just to learn something new but to experience it with vivid emotions. They include: 1. *Extreme tours* – visiting hard-to-reach places, mountain hikes, rafting trips, jeep tours, or climbing to the peaks. 2. *Night excursions* – for example, night tours of old cemeteries, abandoned buildings, or historical areas to feel the mystical atmosphere. 3. Excursions creating “*living history*” – where participants not only listen to history but also become part of past events (such as reenactments of battles or living in ancient houses without modern conveniences).

The popularity of excursions aimed at in-depth study of a specific topic or scientific research is growing. Educational excursions involve visiting places related to science, research, and innovation.

New forms of excursion activities include: 1. *Archaeological tours* – allowing tourists to participate in archaeological digs under the supervision of specialists and study ancient artifacts. 2. *Industrial tours* – involve visiting operational factories and plants, where guests can learn how specific products are made or how industrial processes occur. 3. *Tasting tours* – participants can sample local products, wines, brandies, and cheeses, as well as receive information about their production. 4. *Culinary master classes* – participants not only taste but also learn to prepare dishes using traditional recipes. 5. *Enogastronomic excursions* – a combination of wine and dishes, where guests learn about the art of pairing food and beverages. 6. *Volunteer excursions* – tourists participate in volunteer projects, such as assisting in the restoration of historical monuments, caring for animals, or managing nature reserves. 7. *Cultural and Educational Tours* – tourists can visit regions with various social issues to learn about the living conditions of the local population and participate in helping them. 8. *Charity Tours* – a portion of the funds from such tours goes to charitable causes, allowing tourists to feel that they are contributing to good deeds. 9. *Urban Photo Tours* – walks through the city where there is an opportunity to take beautiful photographs of landmarks, architecture, and street life. 10. *Nature Photo Tours* – tours to natural locations such as mountains, forests, and bodies of water, where tourists can capture wildlife, landscapes, and other natural elements. 11. *Ethnic Photo Tours* – focused on the culture and daily life of various ethnic groups, visiting villages and places where traditional life and customs can be observed [6].

Excursion activity is an organized form of tourism activity aimed at conducting excursions for the purpose of learning about and familiarizing oneself with the cultural, historical, natural, social, or other specific characteristics of a locality. Excursion activity encompasses the development, organization, and implementation of excursions, which can be targeted at local residents or tourists. The primary goal of excursion activity is to satisfy the informational and cognitive needs of participants by providing new knowledge, impressions, and experiences.

CONCLUSION

Modern types of excursion activities reflect the diversity of interests and needs of tourists, who are increasingly seeking new experiences and emotions, striving to immerse themselves in the culture and traditions of local communities. With the development of technology and the emergence of new formats, excursions are becoming more interactive, creative, and accessible.

Modern excursion tours allow tourists to become active participants, discover the world in a new way, and share this experience with others.

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