CHAPTER - 3

Performance and Resource Potential of Kerala Tourism Industry

3.1 Introduction

The present chapter consists of two sections. The first section discusses the performance of Kerala Tourism Industry in terms of tourist inflows and income generated from both domestic tourists and foreign exchange. The inflow of tourists has been analysed on the basis of facts and figures obtained and classified them into domestic tourists and foreign tourists since 1996 to 2008. The latter section, analysis the resource potential of Kerala Tourism Industry with special focus on the attraction dimension and presents them in a precise manner.

3.2 Kerala as a State

Kerala, the narrow lush green strip of land on the south-west coast of India lies snuggled between the Western Ghats in the east and the vast Arabian Sea on its west. It is one among the smallest states in the whole of the Indian union, with only 1.2 per cent of its total area\(^1\). The state is diffused with a total area of 38,863 sq km, the length of the coastal line is 580 km, and it represents 3.76 per cent of the total population of the country\(^2\). Kerala came into existence as a state on 1\(^{st}\) November, 1956, when the states were reorganised on linguistic basis on the recommendations of the state Re-organisation Commission. Before its formation Kerala was divided into three kingdoms namely Travancore, Kochi and Malabar. Travancore in the south and Kochi in the middle of the princely states under the supremacy of British rulers in the Country, while, Malabar was a district of Madras State, a province of British India till 1947.\(^3\) On July 1, 1949, the two princely states of Travancore and Cochin were integrated into a new State of Travancore-Cochin. With the linguistic organisation of the states Malabar district added to Travancore-cochin to form the new state of Kerala. At present, Kerala has 14 districts with Thiruvananthapuram (Trivandrum) as the capital city and Malayalam and English are the principal languages.
The climate is equable but a little damp along the coast. The mean temperature in the midland and lowland is about 32°C. The high ranges enjoy a cool and branching climate throughout the year. Kerala gets rainfall both from the South-West and the North-East monsoons. The former is very heavy, between May and August.

Kerala is an asylum to India’s most civilised and advanced society. The state has India’s highest density of Science and Technology personnel, highest Physical Quality of Life Index, world-class health care system, highest life expectancy and the lowest infant mortality rate. Kerala, one can say without any hesitation, is India’s cleanest and the most peaceful state with hundred per cent literate people.

3.3 Kerala: Myth, Legend and Chronicle

In ancient times, Kerala comprised all that stretch of the west coast of India that lay between the Cape Comorine (Kanyakumari) in the south to Chandragiri River in the north. In more precisely, the tract bounded by the Western Ghats in the east, the Arabian Sea in the west, the Cape Comorine in the south and Gokarnam (South Karnataka) in the north constituted the ancient Kerala. The Pali and Sanskrit literatures refer to this part of India by the name Kerala. Katyayana and Patanjli, the two renowned grammarians were the first to use this nomenclature. Some of the Puranas (Vayu, Markandey and Brahmanda) refer this land by this name and the Mahabharata, the Ramayana and the Harivamsha also contains reference to this land.

Kerala means the land of Kera (Coconut Palm). Some scholars are of the opinion that the nomenclature Kerala has been derived from a Tamil word meaning land of coconuts and mire (precocious silt of the backwaters) which exhibit very similarity in its hues. The word Keram meaning coconut tree may also be the origin of the name of this coconut and palm studded region. Another but the most plausible explanation in this context has been given by the German Scholar, Gundert, author of a Malayalam-English Dictionary, who suggests that the word is merely a derivative of ‘Cheralam’, meaning the realm of the Charas (the kings of...
Cheralam). ‘Cher’ can also mean ‘added’. The tract that has been added to the mainland by the recession of the sea may also be termed as such.\textsuperscript{9}

The old-age traditional legendry about Kerala’s origin gives an account in one of the Sanskrit texts that Parasurama (Ram with Axe: parasu meaning Axe\textsuperscript{10}) the sixth incarnation of Lord Vishnu reclaimed the land laying between the Western Ghats and the Arabian Sea from the Ocean by his Axe and gifted to the Brahmmins, who came from the north, as their new home land\textsuperscript{11,12}. According to this legend Parasurama, the turbulent God like Thor of Nordic mythology, flung his battle-axe northwards across the waters from Gokarnam to Kanyakumari, the southernmost tip of Indian peninsula. The water receded and then emerged the land of Kerala from the sea into the sun and air.

But geologists have a different opinion that the elevation of Kerala from the sea was the result of some seismic activities, either suddenly or gradually. Another notion prevailing in scientific society is that the rivers of Kerala emptying into the Arabian Sea by bringing down large quantities of silt from the hills. The ocean currents transport quantities of sand towards the shore. Thus the coastal portions are accumulated with silt over thousands of years and elevated the land\textsuperscript{13}.

\subsection*{3.4 Kerala as a Tourist Destination}

Kerala, the most idyllic and romantic state, is strategically located on the south-west coast of India with the sublime heights of Sahyadri mountains on one side and the awe inspiring ocean on the other. This narrow strip of a land enjoys unique geographic features which have made it one of most attractive and popular tourist destinations in the world. Extensive beaches, Silken realms of emerald backwaters, long charming shorelines fringed with palm groves, mist-clad hill stations, lush tropical forests, exotic wildlife, cascading waterfalls, majestic monuments, spectacular art forms, colourful festivals and unique culture and traditions give the state a distinctive charm and fascination. Kerala, the land of myriad pleasures and exhilarations, is better known world over as ‘God’s Own Country’. The National Geographical Traveller called this landscape as one of ‘Ten Paradises of the World’.\textsuperscript{14}
Since the terrestrial feature of the state is that slanting from the Western Ghats in the East to the Arabian Sea on the West, the land of Kerala is divided into three regions such as lowland, midland and highland. The forested highlands are the habitation of wildlife and they are abounded in plantations of tea, coffee, rubber and spices etc. The midlands are fertile and rich with coconut, arecanut, cashew, tapioca, banana, rice, ginger, turmeric, pepper, sugarcane and vegetables etc. But the lowlands are networked by backwaters and deltas of rivers and lakes.

The whole land of Kerala may be designated as a river basin. In Kerala, there are 44 major rivers from Manjeswaram in the North and Neyyar in the South. Of these, 41 rivers are flowing towards west and merge in the Arabian Sea but the rivers Kabani, Pampar and Bhavani are flowing towards east and reach the Cauvery River in Tamil Nadu. The majority of the rivers in Kerala are tiny but tidy. Periyar is the longest one with a length of 224 km, the name Periyar itself means ‘big river’. The river Bharathapuzha, also known as Nila, is the second longest with 209 km length but first in regard to its width. Almost all rivers in the state are sailable for country boats up to the midland regions that provide a cheap and common means of transportation.

Notwithstanding the continuous conurbation and Kerala’s high density of population, the virginal beauty is preserved in many places in the hills, the plains and on the coast. It is said that the God who made Kerala had green fingers. Kerala represents a melting pot of different cultural traditions. Here one witnesses a synthesis of southern and northern, Dravidian and Aryan, cultures. All together, Kerala is the ideal destination for all segments of tourists.
3.5 Kerala Tourism Industry

Kerala is the most acclaimed tourist destination in India with its super brand 'God's Own Country' and is continuing as one of the prime tourist destinations of South Asia. Tourism industry in Kerala not only facilitates infrastructure development but also help in balanced and sustainable regional growth by generating income and creating employment opportunities in the state. Realising the importance of tourism in stimulating the economic development of the state, the government of Kerala declared tourism as an industry in 1986. Today, tourism is Kerala’s booming industry and one of the fastest growing, high income and employment-generating sector. The measures which Kerala has been successfully adopted to take state’s tourism to world class level are Super Brand Positioning, Thinking out of the Box, Product Differentiation, Model Public/Private Partnership, Tremendous political support and Public Acceptance. The global economic slowdown is expected to impact the tourism sector globally and regionally. The challenge of Kerala's tourist sector is to see how Kerala tourism could cope up with the crisis and how to structure its activities to a competitive advantage.

3.6 Performance of Kerala Tourism Industry

Kerala is by far the fastest growing tourist area in India and is recognised as a pioneer and trendsetter in the country. The surge of publicity which Kerala has received made it now the number one tourist destination in India. The raw statistics says that the foreign and domestic tourist arrivals in the state registered remarkable upswings in 2008. Foreign exchange earnings for the year 2007 is Rs.2641 crores, which is recorded a growth of 32.82% over the previous year and the total revenue from tourism in 2007 is Rs.11,433 crore which represent 7.70% of the state’s total GDP. Alongside of these statistics, tourism accounts for about 10 lakhs in total employment generated in Kerala in 2007, which include skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled labourers. The tourism industry invests approximately Rs. 1000 crores per year in Kerala.
Highlights of Recent Tourist Statistics of Kerala Tourism

- Foreign tourist arrival to Kerala during the year 2008 is 598,929. It shows an increase of 16.11% over the previous year. (Table 3.1)
- Domestic tourist arrival to Kerala during the year 2008 is 7,591,250. It shows an increase of 14.28% over the previous year. (Table 3.1)
- Considering the district-wise Foreign Tourist arrivals, Waynad District shows the highest variation of 37.75% over 2007. (Table 3.2)
- Considering the district-wise Domestic Tourist arrivals, Alappuzha District shows the highest variation of 37.47% over 2007. (Table 3.2)
- Foreign exchange earning for the year 2007 is Rs. 2640.94 Crores, which recorded a growth of 32.82% over the previous year. (Table 3.6)
- Total Revenue (including direct and indirect) from Tourism during 2007 is Rs. 11433 Crores, showing an increase of 25.28% over last year’s figures. (Table 3.6)

Table 3.1: Month-wise arrivals of tourist during the year 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No</th>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Foreign</th>
<th>Domestic</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>January</td>
<td>85,028</td>
<td>645,492</td>
<td>730,520</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>February</td>
<td>78,155</td>
<td>586,317</td>
<td>664,472</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>March</td>
<td>71,026</td>
<td>580,681</td>
<td>651,707</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>April</td>
<td>39,538</td>
<td>643,808</td>
<td>683,346</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>May</td>
<td>26,348</td>
<td>719,566</td>
<td>745,914</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>June</td>
<td>20,578</td>
<td>566,541</td>
<td>587,119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>July</td>
<td>31,610</td>
<td>574,544</td>
<td>606,154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>August</td>
<td>45,711</td>
<td>600,121</td>
<td>645,832</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>September</td>
<td>28,292</td>
<td>572,977</td>
<td>601,269</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>October</td>
<td>39,748</td>
<td>655,670</td>
<td>695,418</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>November</td>
<td>59,923</td>
<td>695,118</td>
<td>755,041</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>December</td>
<td>72,972</td>
<td>750,415</td>
<td>823,387</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td>598,929</td>
<td>7,591,250</td>
<td>8,190,179</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.2: District-wise arrival of tourists during the year 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No</th>
<th>District</th>
<th>Foreign</th>
<th>Domestic</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Thiruvananthapuram</td>
<td>234,797</td>
<td>1,102,115</td>
<td>1,336,912</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Kollam</td>
<td>8,728</td>
<td>180,943</td>
<td>189,671</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Pathanamthitta</td>
<td>349</td>
<td>59,832</td>
<td>60,181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Alapuzha</td>
<td>49,866</td>
<td>234,700</td>
<td>284,566</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Kottayam</td>
<td>27,230</td>
<td>230,831</td>
<td>258,061</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Idukki</td>
<td>51,025</td>
<td>531,970</td>
<td>582,995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Ernakulam</td>
<td>193,013</td>
<td>1,509,686</td>
<td>1,702,699</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Thrissur</td>
<td>3,398</td>
<td>1,671,174</td>
<td>1,674,572</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Palakkad</td>
<td>785</td>
<td>324,399</td>
<td>325,184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Malappuram</td>
<td>10,166</td>
<td>323,448</td>
<td>333,614</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Kozhikode</td>
<td>9,966</td>
<td>595,985</td>
<td>605,951</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Wayanad</td>
<td>5,638</td>
<td>295,465</td>
<td>301,103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Kannur</td>
<td>3,143</td>
<td>395,121</td>
<td>398,264</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Kasaragode</td>
<td>825</td>
<td>135,581</td>
<td>136,406</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td>598,929</td>
<td>7,591,250</td>
<td>8,190,179</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


### 3.6.1 Foreign Tourists Arrivals (2001-2008)

Kerala achieves highest growth rate in foreign tourist arrivals. The number of foreign tourist arrived in Kerala in the year 2008 is 598,929 against 515,808 in 2007. It shows an increase of 16.11 per cent over the previous year. The average annual growth rate of foreign tourist arrival since 1991 is about 25 per cent. It is observed that there is a moderately consistent growth in foreign tourist arrivals to Kerala since 2006. During the year 2007 Kerala has contributed 10.15% of the total foreign tourist arrivals to India. The table 3.3 given below indicates the arrival of foreign tourists to Kerala during the last eight years and percentage of variation over the previous year. The average annual growth rate is 14.41 during the period 2001-2008. Table 3.3 shows the growth of foreign tourists from 2001 to 2008.
### Table 3.3: Foreign Tourists Arrivals from 2001 to 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year of Arrival</th>
<th>Number of Tourists</th>
<th>% Variation Over Previous Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>208830</td>
<td>-0.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>232564</td>
<td>11.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>294621</td>
<td>26.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>345546</td>
<td>17.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>346499</td>
<td>0.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>428534</td>
<td>23.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>515808</td>
<td>20.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008*</td>
<td>598929</td>
<td>16.11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: *Kerala Tourism Statistics 2007*

*Tourism Statistics 2008 highlights*

### Figure 3.1: Foreign Tourist Arrivals from 2001 to 2008

Source: *Kerala Tourism Statistics 2007 & Tourism Statistics 2008 highlights*
Figure 3.2 gives a comparison of growth of foreign tourist arrivals in Kerala and India from 2003 to 2007.

![Figure 3.2: Foreign Tourist Arrivals](image)

Source: *Kerala Economic Review 2008*

### 3.6.2 Domestic Tourist Arrivals

The number of domestic tourists to Kerala in the year 2008 is 7,591,250 against 6,642,941 in 2007. It shows an increase of 14.28 per cent over the previous year. Table 3.4 shows the domestic tourist arrivals to Kerala from 2001 to 2008.
Table 3.4: Domestic Tourists Arrivals from 2001 to 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year of Arrival</th>
<th>Number of Tourists</th>
<th>% Variation Over Previous Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>5239692</td>
<td>0.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>5568256</td>
<td>0.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>5871228</td>
<td>0.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>5972182</td>
<td>0.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>5946423</td>
<td>-0.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>6271724</td>
<td>0.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>6642941</td>
<td>0.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008*</td>
<td>7591250</td>
<td>1.28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Figure 3.3 shows the growth of domestic tourist arrival in Kerala from 2001 to 2008.

Figure 3.3: Domestic Tourist Arrivals from 2001 to 2008


Figure 3.4 and 3.5 give a clear growth picture and comparison of foreign and domestic tourist arrivals in Kerala from 2001 to 2008.
Figure 3.4: Foreign and Domestic Tourists Arrival from 2001 to 2008


Figure 3.5: Foreign and Domestic Tourist Arrivals from 2001 to 2008

3.6.3 Tourist Arrival in Kerala: 1996 to 2008

Tourist arrivals to Kerala in the last 13 years are given in Table 3.5. During 1996 the percentage increase in foreign tourist arrivals recorded 23.7 per cent over the previous year. After that, up to 2001 the percentage of increase was nominal. But from 2006 onwards the percentage of increase in foreign tourist arrivals is above 20 per cent. Similarly, the domestic tourist arrivals also show a maximum increase in the years 1996 and 1997 between 1996 and 2007. But in 2008 it shows an increase of 14.28 per cent over the previous year. Total tourist arrivals show a maximum increase in 2008 since 1996. It shows an increasing trend in both domestic and foreign tourists arrivals in the state with an average growth rate of 5.72% and 12.04% respectively since 1996.

Table 3.5: Total Tourists Arrival to Kerala from 1996 to 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No. of Foreign Tourists</th>
<th>% of Increase</th>
<th>No. of Domestic Tourists</th>
<th>% of Increase</th>
<th>Total No. of Tourists</th>
<th>% of Increase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>176855</td>
<td>23.70</td>
<td>4403002</td>
<td>12.45</td>
<td>4579857</td>
<td>12.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>182427</td>
<td>03.15</td>
<td>4953401</td>
<td>12.50</td>
<td>5135828</td>
<td>12.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>202173</td>
<td>06.44</td>
<td>4888287</td>
<td>09.07</td>
<td>5090560</td>
<td>08.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>209933</td>
<td>03.84</td>
<td>5013221</td>
<td>02.56</td>
<td>5223154</td>
<td>02.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>208830</td>
<td>-0.53</td>
<td>5239692</td>
<td>04.52</td>
<td>5448522</td>
<td>04.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>232564</td>
<td>11.37</td>
<td>5568256</td>
<td>06.27</td>
<td>5600820</td>
<td>06.47</td>
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<td>2003</td>
<td>294621</td>
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<td>5871228</td>
<td>05.44</td>
<td>6165849</td>
<td>06.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>345546</td>
<td>17.28</td>
<td>5972182</td>
<td>01.72</td>
<td>6317728</td>
<td>02.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>346499</td>
<td>00.28</td>
<td>5946423</td>
<td>-0.43</td>
<td>6292922</td>
<td>-0.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>428534</td>
<td>23.70</td>
<td>6271724</td>
<td>05.47</td>
<td>6700258</td>
<td>06.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>515808</td>
<td>20.37</td>
<td>6642941</td>
<td>05.92</td>
<td>7158749</td>
<td>06.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008*</td>
<td>598929</td>
<td>16.11</td>
<td>7591250</td>
<td>14.28</td>
<td>8190179</td>
<td>14.41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Kerala Tourism Statistics 2007 *Tourism statistics 2008 highlights
Figure 3.6: Tourist Arrivals from 1996 to 2008

Figure 3.7: Tourists Arrival Growth from 1996 to 2008

Source: Kerala Tourism Statistics 2007
3.6.4 Earnings from Tourism in Kerala

The tourism sector happens to be one of the largest earners of foreign exchange in the World, and has acquired tremendous significance in recent years. The sector is growing at a fast pace in the country. The tourism industry is a major contributor to the State’s economy. In 2007, Kerala has earned Rs. 2640.94 crores as foreign exchange earnings from tourism against Rs.1988.40 crores in the year 2006, which recorded a growth of 32.82 per cent over the previous year. The total revenue generated from tourism comes to Rs.11433 crore, showing an increase of 25.28 per cent over the last year. From table 3.6 and the figure 3.8 shown below, it is clear that earnings from Tourism show an increasing trend over the years from 2001 to 2007 with an average growth rate of 26.89% per year.

Table 3.6: Earnings from Tourism (From 2001 to 2007)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Foreign Exchange Earnings (Rs. In Crores)</th>
<th>% of Increase</th>
<th>Earnings from Domestic Tourists (Rs. In Crores)</th>
<th>Total Revenue Generated from Tourism (Direct &amp; Indirect) (Rs. In Crores)</th>
<th>% of Increase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>535.00</td>
<td>1.85</td>
<td>2561.16</td>
<td>4500.00</td>
<td>9.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>705.67</td>
<td>31.90</td>
<td>3011.31</td>
<td>4931.00</td>
<td>20.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>983.37</td>
<td>39.35</td>
<td>3492.68</td>
<td>5938.00</td>
<td>12.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>1266.77</td>
<td>28.82</td>
<td>3881.92</td>
<td>6829.00</td>
<td>15.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>1552.31</td>
<td>22.54</td>
<td>4281.42</td>
<td>7738.00</td>
<td>13.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>1988.40</td>
<td>28.09</td>
<td>4891.94</td>
<td>9126.00</td>
<td>17.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>2640.94</td>
<td>32.82</td>
<td>5978.65</td>
<td>11433.00</td>
<td>25.28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: *Kerala Tourism Statistics 2007*
Figure 3.8: Earnings from Tourism from 2001 to 2007

Table 3.7 and figure 3.9 shows Foreign exchange earnings from tourism in Kerala from 1996 to 2007.

Table 3.7: Foreign Exchange Earnings from 1996 to 2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Earnings (Rs. In Crores)</th>
<th>% Variation over Previous Year</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>273.20</td>
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<td>1998</td>
<td>302.08</td>
<td>10.57</td>
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<tr>
<td>1999</td>
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<td>2006</td>
<td>1988.40</td>
<td>28.09</td>
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<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>2640.94</td>
<td>32.82</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Source: Kerala Tourism Statistics 2007
3.6.5 Awards and Recognitions

Kerala has received several awards and citations for its tourism related activities in recent years. Following are some of such accolades.19

- Best Tourism State Award from the Government of India in 2006-07. This was followed by two related awards; Best Tourism Village – Aranmula and Best Tourism Website – www.Keralatourism.org.
- SMART TRAVEL-ASIA Selected Kerala as its Number 3 Best Tourism Destination.
- Kerala is one of the three top finalists in WTTC’s ‘Tourism for Tomorrow’ International Destination competition.
- Kerala’s tourism promotional film was acknowledged in Berlin with the Golden City Gate Award (ITB Berlin) as the ‘Best Tourism Film’.
- Kerala was awarded the PATA Grand Award for ‘Zero Waste’ in the ‘Environment’ category. PATA also conferred Gold Awards for ‘Kumbalangi Tourism Village’ and the book Ayurveda-Mantra of Niramaya.

Source: Kerala Tourism Statistics 2007
UNESCO awarded Kerala its Asia Pacific Heritage Award for heritage conservation in 2006.

3.6.6 Chief Promoters of Tourism in the State

Department of Tourism, Kerala Government

The central and state government and the department of tourism have been taken tremendous amount of planning, coordination and resources at every level to promote tourism in Kerala. The central government has taken the lead in this endeavour by creating tourism related legislation, committing technical expertise, manpower and financial resources. The government and the state department of tourism are actively engaged in the promotion of tourism in the Kerala developing new resources and upgrading existing tourist activities. The development of tourist related products, development of wayside facilities, and the conservation of nature, history, heritage, and culture are the result of the part played by the state government and tourism department. Cultural programmes, rural tourism, eco-tours, farm related tourism and adventure tourism are all receiving promotional boosts from the State and Central Government.

Kerala Tourism Development Corporation (KTDC)

The KTDC is involved in running hotels and wayside amenity centres throughout Kerala. It conducts package and conducted tours all over the State and maintains a high tech reservation system.

District Tourism Promotion Councils (DTPC’s)

The DTPCs have undertaken the responsibility of creating and marketing local tourism products and opportunities. They are constantly improving the quality of these tourism products and services through surveys and other collected information. The DTPCs also monitor and supervise the levels of sanitation in tourist areas.

Tourist Resort (Kerala) Ltd (TRKL)

The TRKL researches, develops and assists in the implementation of joint venture projects within the State of Kerala. It also oversees the local Land Bank scheme.
Kerala Institute of Tourism & Travel Studies (KITTS) and Food and Craft Institutes (FCIs)

These institutes are actively involved in the recruitment, training and placing of quality staff in the tourism sites throughout Kerala. All aspects of Human Resource Development for the tourism and hospitality sectors are taken care of by KITTS and FCIs by establishing and monitoring the quality regulations of the Tourism and Travel Training Institutes.

Bekal Resort Development Corporation (BRDC)

The BRDC was established specially to benefit tourism and tourist attractions in Bakel and its catchment areas. It’s main focus is to provide marketing resources and to be actively involved in local, regional and state-wide marketing promotions.

Directorate of Eco-Tourism

One of the most progressive groups active in Kerala today is the Directorate of Eco-Tourism. Charged with developing and creating new Eco-Tourism destinations throughout Kerala, it is also active in the development and maintenance of wild life sanctuaries as tourist attractions.
3.7 Resources Potential of Kerala Tourism Industry

Natural beauty, clean air and primordial greenery amidst the vast expanse of water and sky typify Kerala from the other states of India. The enigmatic strip of land is abounded with endless miles of tranquil backwater that adds to its marine beauty. The slopes of the Western Ghats are teemed with rare flora and fauna and the fragrance of its coffee blossoms always waft in the ambience. The uncustomary art forms, temple festivals, long line of caparisoned elephants and the breathing fireworks are something which can be seen in Kerala alone. These unique resources and unequalled geographical features have been made Kerala one of the sought-after destinations in Asia. However, to have a clear and first-hand account of the tourism resources in Kerala the following segments of tourism resources need attention.

3.7.1 Beach Tourism

Kerala has a 600 km long coastline, stretching across 11 out of its fourteen districts, dotted with some of the finest, internationally renowned and most charming beaches of the world, coconut groves, natural harbours, lagoons and sheltered coves. The beaches and shorelines of Kerala, washed by the pleasant tropical sun, are peaceful and pristine as ever to attract both domestic and international tourists.

Beaches of Kerala are at their best in Kovalam. Situated on the Malabar Coast, Kovalam Beach is full of swaying coconut trees and has gained fame with the sea surfers all over the world. Kerala is known throughout the world as one of the world's best beach destinations. The beaches of Kerala are beautiful stretches of clean sand, fringed by swaying palm trees on one side and rippling waves on the other. Tourists get to relax on the golden sands, stretch out in the shade of the rows of palm trees along the beaches, or undergoing an ayurvedic massage.

Some of more popular beaches in Kerala are those of Kovalam, Sankhumugham, Varkala, Thirumullavaram, Alappuzha, Cherai, Vakkad, Padinjarekkara, Vallikunnu, Kozhikode, Beypore, Kappad, Payyoli, Payyambalam Muzuppilangad, Meenkunnu, Bekal, Kappil etc.
3.7.2 Backwaters

The network of waterways, inlets, estuaries, lagoons, lakes, and natural canals on the coastal regions of Kerala, the backwaters in the state stretches about 900 km\(^2\). A trip across the interlinked water bodies in traditional houseboats is a fabulous experience to tourists and is extremely popular among the foreign travellers. The boat gives a firsthand experience of the village lifestyle in the state and its rustic activities like coir-making and prawn farming etc. Such travellers would not miss the breathtaking view of the water, land, birds and human habitation on the waterside, coexisting peacefully.

Kerala showcases a great deal of its picturesque backwaters in Alleppey. The houseboat rides along these backwaters can prove exhilarating to the tourists as they take them through the water bounded regions of Kottayam, Alapuzha, Kollam, Kolluram and Kuttanad. The major backwater resources in the state are Thiruvallam, Kappil, Kasaragode, Kollam, Alappuzha, Kuttanadu, Thiruvananthapuram, Kumarakom, Kochi, Kottayam, Kozhikode, Akkulam, Veli, Neendakara, Vembanad, Valiyaparamba, Kottapuram etc.

3.7.3 Wildlife Tourism

Kerala, the naturally green state in India, with a plethora of greens with thick undergrowths and verdant forests, a temperate climate and so many natural sources of water, provide the perfect habitat for the growth of wildlife. The lush green forests abounded with elephants, tigers, wild dogs, sambar, gaurs, leopards, as well as many exotic species of reptiles, land and water birds offer a wonderful sight to the tourists.

Naturally, as the wildlife sanctuaries in Kerala have been developed to look after and preserve the wide variety of birds and animals in its wilderness, they became one of the major tourist attractions in state where people from all over the world come to have a glimpse of some rare species of animal or bird and some stunningly beautiful nature spots.
There are treks that can be taken along with nature trails and nature walks along the green pastures of the sanctuaries. The visitors can also go on wildlife safaris, on jeeps or elephants, and watch the wild animals in their natural habitats in the interior of the wildlife sanctuaries in Kerala. There are a number of wildlife sanctuaries and bird sanctuaries in Kerala, which constitute a repertoire of natural wealth for the state. The vital among them are Silent Valley, Wayanad, Periyar, Kumarakom, Idukki, Shendurney, Thattekkad, Peppara, Aralam, Parambikulam Muthanga, Kadalundi, Peech-Vazhani, Konni Elephant Cage and Neyyar.

### 3.7.4 Hill Stations and Mountains

The mountain ranges in Kerala consisting of the highland area of the Western Ghats exude an exotic charm. The high ranges and hill stations are the favourite spots of nature enthusiasts and adventure seekers. Expansive plantations of tea, coffee, rubber and fragrant cardamom and other spices, for which Kerala is famous, are cultivated on the slopes of these hill stations.

Much of Kerala's exotic appeal is centered in these highland areas of the Western Ghats. Ideal places for adventure tourism and trekking, the fresh mountain air, the mist clad hills and a panoramic view make them worthy of a visit. Places like Munnar in Kerala produce an exotic species of flowers (*Neelakurunji*) that bloom once in twelve years.

Hill stations in Kerala offer tourists an opportunity to spend their vacations amidst clean and fresh air of the hills. Some of the more popular hill stations in Kerala are those of Mattupetty, Munnar, Devikulam, Tekkadi, Agasthyakoodam, Vagamon, Nelliampathy, Attapadi, Silent Valley, Ponmudi, Wayanad, Idduki, Kannur, Kasargod, Tusharagiri, Edakkal, Soojipara and Kozhikode. Here one can see the milky waterfalls, mighty rocks, lakes, and hill-plantations.

### 3.7.5 Pilgrimage Tourism

Kerala has a number of pilgrimage places and famous pilgrim centres consisting of ancient temples and shrines, remote places of worship in villages and on hillocks as well as popular and crowded pilgrim centres spread across the state. The sacred
temples of Kerala that lie in different parts of this picturesque coconut country are popular among devotees.

Kerala provides a pure and pristine atmosphere where one can spend his pilgrimage tours in divine prayer, invoking the Almighty by participating in devotional songs, temple festivals and other temple activities. Various fairs and festivals are celebrated all year round in these pilgrimage places, with special sets of religious rituals characteristic to specific festivals.

Kerala has a number of pilgrimage centres of importance to Hindus, Muslims, Jains and Christians alike. Some of the popular destinations comprising temples, churches and mosques are Guruvayoor, Sabarimala, Chottanikkara, Attukal, Bharananganam, Malayattoor, Maramon, Parappanangadi, etc where thousands throng to worship their deities and pay obeisance. Kerala also houses some ancient Jewish synagogues in the island town of Fort Kochi.

3.7.6 Monument Tourism

Beyond the cool coconut groves and lush paddy fields, palm fringed beaches and emerald backwaters, verdant hills and rain forests, Kerala has a sound treasure of architectural monuments which symbolize art, culture, tradition and architecture. The state has a great composite culture, enriched by three main religions – Hinduism, Christianity and Islam. These communities have greatly contributed to the monumental wealth of the state in terms of its history and culture. Some of the great architectural treasures of the state like the beautiful wooden palace at Padmanabhapuram and the 16th century Jewish synagogue at Fort Kochi are marvelous tourist attractions and are worth visiting.

The different monuments of Kerala symbolic of its art and architecture that stand in between the golden palm beaches, the serene lagoons and the pristine hills offer every tourist in Kerala a spectacular sight. The massive forts, once a witness to the chaos of sprawling powers and kingdoms stand silently as an acknowledgment of the past glory. The temples, mosques and churches are also reminiscent of the elegance and prosperity of a bygone era. The most popular monuments of the state include the Padmanabha Swami Temple, Napier Museum, Padmanabhapuram
Palace, Krishnapuram Palace, Bolgatty Palace, St. Francis Church, Vasco da Gama Squire, Palakkad Fort, St. Angelo Fort and Bekal Fort.

3.7.7 Waterfalls

The forests of Western Ghats are punctuated with large and small waterfalls that gurgle and splash down the mountain side of Kerala. The wooded forests of the Western Ghats are hidden with cascading showers that enchant the visitors. Waterfalls in Kerala have a great influence in the growth of the tourism industry in the state. Some of them especially the ones at Athirappilly and Vazhachal are scintillatingly beautiful and offer a bewitching sight. Others like the Palaruvi fall is said to contain medicinal properties. There are also others ranging from small gurgling streams to roaring rushing falls that provide a scintillating attraction to visitors. The important waterfalls in Kerala include Athirapally, Vazhachal, Palaruvi, Meenmutty, Aruvukuzhi, Adyanpara and Tusharagiri. The picturesque places around the falls are popular trekking and picnic spots, with the greenery and landscape infusing freshness into any tired soul.

3.7.8 Parks and Gardens

Parks and Gardens in Kerala with green areas not only add to the beauty of the land, they also help to conserve nature as well as serve as refreshing picnic spots/sanctuaries housing specimen of tourist interest. One can get to bask in the glory of nature and rejuvenate himself in these elaborate gardens and parks that are found aplenty in Kerala. The artificial parks and gardens are also becoming a part of the metro lifestyle throughout Kerala.

The extensive Malampuzha Gardens located on the outskirts of Palakkad town is the most popular tourist park in the state. The Silent Valley National Park spread over an area of 90 sq. km preserves some of the country’s last substantial stretch of virgin tropical evergreen forests. This park represents one among the spectacular biodiversity spots in the Western Ghats and houses some exotic species of flora and fauna that include more than 100 species of orchids and rare animals like the slender Loris, Gaur and lion tailed macaque.
There are also reptile parks, bird sanctuaries and other wildlife centres besides artificial parks and gardens present in Kerala that add to its greenery and enhance the beauty of nature.

### 3.7.9 Rivers and Dams

The rivers in Kerala have become an unavoidable part of the state’s tourism industry. Kerala has forty-four rivers among them 41 are flowing to west and 3 are flowing to east. These rivers are very attractive to tourists because of their beauty, cleanliness and bewitching sight. Rivers and Dams in Kerala have a great influence in the growth of the tourism industry in the state that provide a scintillating attraction to visitors. Some of the important rivers and dams in the State are Maniyar, Moozhiyar, Neyyar, Aruvikkara, Mullaperiyar Dam and Periyar River, Cheruthoni, Idukki Arch Dam, Malankara Reservoir, Malampuzha, Kanjirapuzha, Mangalam, Sitharkundu and Meenkara.

### 3.7.10 Eco Tourism

Kerala, the tourist friendly state of India, gives special attention in promoting Eco-Tourism in the state. Eco tourism has taken off in a great way in the tourism industry of the state, since it has ample destinations known for its natural beauty and exquisite landscape. Kerala is the only perfect hub for promoting eco tourism in an exalted way as it is one of the greenest destinations in country.

The verdant beauty of Kerala is richly highlighted through the different eco tourism destinations. The hill stations, Western Ghats, Silent Valley, the wildlife sanctuaries, jungles, waterfalls, etc. are all splendid eco tourism destinations.

Eco tourism is all about being sensitive to ones surroundings and the need to preserve nature. The greenery that abounds in Kerala is not only relaxing but also refreshing. The green patch that is Kerala offers shelter to some of the best plant, bird, mammal, reptile, and amphibian species. The important eco-tourism destinations in Kerala include Thenmala, Nelliampathy, Kuruva, Poovar, Bhoothathankettu, Konni, Thatekkad, Peruvannamoozhy, Kumbalangi and Thekkady
3.7.11 Adventure Tourism

Kerala is a hot destination for nature lovers and adventure seekers as it offers the tourists umpteen opportunities to unleash their enthusiastic selves. The high mountains, gushing rivers, dense forests and the vast stretches of ocean water present just the right destinations to let loose the adventurous spirit and indulge in some really exciting activities. From water sports to wildlife tours and trekking trips, adventurous travellers have plenty of choices to rejoice about in Kerala.

The adventure seekers can opt for backwater biking, bird tours, camping, jungle safaris, canoeing, hiking and biking, trekking, water sports, wildlife tours and much more in Kerala. It is a paradise for the bird watcher with hundreds of species of birds. Kerala, being the land of rivers, lagoons and lakes in the interiors and the sea on the west, also makes it an ideal destination for those inclined to indulge in water sports for relaxation and adventure. For the wildlife enthusiasts, Kerala offers its diversity in the wildlife parks. The tropical evergreen rain forests in Kerala like the famous Silent Valley National Park offer scope for a variety of exciting adventurous activities for travel enthusiasts.

3.7.12 Sports Tourism

Kerala has always shown a keen interest in the field of sports and games and the state has gifted some of the best athletes and stars in cricket and football. Those who have genuinely motivated with sportsman spirit can see facilities for indoor and outdoor games in all important towns and cities of the state. Cricket, Hockey, Football, Baseball and Tennis are the popular games here. The hills stations, peaks and mountains of Kerala never regret a sportsman to find adventure in trekking and mountaineering. Besides, Kerala is famous for its backwater cruises and boat races. The fantastic boat races in Alappuzha are pure adrenalin, with 30 metre-long snake-shaped boats, and hundreds of oarsmen singing loudly as they tug at the oars, competing for the most coveted prize in these parts.

3.7.13 Village Tourism

The villages in Kerala offer a feast to the eyes of the travellers by way of its panoramic view of the fields, farms, hillsides, rivers and lakes. The locals engage in
fishing, farming, pottery, jute making and handicrafts. The visitors are taken on a
tour around the village, where you can see many artisans at work. Stone cutting,
carpentry, inlay work, textile block printing, and potters at their wheels – such rare
sights offer joy and relief to the travellers. Some of Kerala’s most interesting
features can be seen during these tours. These tours can also be combined with
visits to tribal villages and to major places of tourist interest. Such village tours are
not only informative but also enjoyable and relaxing. Some of the popular village
tourism destinations are Aranmula, Cheppad, Thodupuzha, Alapuzha, Kumbalangi,
Cherai, Marayoor, Nilamur, Palai etc.

3.7.14 Farm Tourism

Farm tourism is a relatively new tourism product. Kerala, being an agricultural
dominated state, has tremendous potential for developing Farm Tourism in a best
profitable way without much additional investment. Reports state that Kerala has
30.2 lakh hectares of gross cropped area which is 56.78% of the State’s total
geographical area. More than 1/3rd of this cropped area contains Tea, Coffee,
Rubber, Pepper, Cardamom and Ginger plantations, and another 1/3rd of this area
is covered by Coconut palms. The State has about 350,000 lakhs hectares of land
under paddy cultivation.

There is a possibility of converting potential cropped areas of the state as tourist
attractions with minimum intervention to transfer the benefits of tourism directly to
the farmers. The various schemes underway are intended to prepare the
Farms/Plantations of Kerala to receive tourists by presenting a positive image of the
farm and of agriculture as a whole, in view of revitalising the agriculture sector of
Kerala through tourism.

3.7.15 Institutional Tourism

Institutions are another important tourism resource in the modern and post- modern
world. There are so many institutions in the world which attract the tourists because
of its resourcefulness, physical beauty, architecture, traditional and cultural
importance, the skills and knowledge imparted, and of many other attractive
features. In Kerala a number of foreign and domestic tourists are interested in
visiting institutions like Vijnana Kalavedi (imparts training in traditional arts and crafts), Vaastu Vidya Gurukulam (centre to conserve and preserve the ancient art of traditional building and construction methods), Kerala Kalamandalam (home of Kathakali, the renowned Kerala dance drama), Kerala Sahitya Academy, Kerala Sangeetha Nataka Academy, Kerala Lalitha Kala Academy, Kottakkal Arya Vaidyasala (one of the best Ayurvedic centres in the World), etc.

3.8 The Unique Experiences and Resources in Kerala

Apart from the schematic tourism resources like monuments, beaches, backwaters, waterfalls, rivers, lakes, Dams, hill stations, mountains, pilgrim centres, wildlife sanctuaries etc., Kerala has its own quaint tourism experiences and resources which could not be availed or experienced in its originality and intimacy elsewhere in world. The indispensible among them are presented precisely.

3.8.1 Ayurveda - Harmony of Body, Mind and Soul

Kerala is the only place in the world where Ayurveda, the ancient form of science and the holistic system of medicine based on nature is practiced with its real spirit, absolute dedication and perfection. The state’s equable climate, natural abundance of forests with a wealth of herbs and medicinal plants, and the cool monsoon season are best suited for Ayurveda’s curative and restorative packages and programmes.

Ayurveda evolved around 600 BC in India. This system of medicine focusses on holistic treatment and stressed on the prevention of body ailments in addition to curing them. Today, it is a unique indispensible branch of medicine - a complete naturalistic system that depends on the diagnosis of one’s body humours - *vata, pitta and kapha* - to achieve the right balance. Ayurveda believes in the treatment of not just the affected part, but the individual as a whole. This makes it the natural way to rejuvenation, eliminating all toxic imbalances from the body and thus regaining resistance and good health.

Recently Ayurveda became as a vital part of Kerala tourism industry as it has been bringing unlimited foreign exchanges to the state. Kerala has been well known for hundreds of years for its practice of Ayurveda – a system of medicine that believes
in not simply treating the ailment but attending to the whole person. Tourists from the western world have been travelling here for spiritual and physical awakenings ever since the Beatles made their sojourn to India in the mid 60’s. Kerala has experienced a boom in the development of Ayurveda retreats, designed exclusively for Health Tourists. Recently Kerala with the support of the government of India, initiated assertive marketing initiatives to specifically promote Kerala as the premier health tourism spot in the world.

3.8.2 Houseboat Cruises

A leisure cruise in *Kettuvalloms*- houseboats, along the palm-fringed backwaters of Kerala is the most enchanting holiday experience for the travellers. The boat ride takes the travellers the past ancient Chinese fishing nets, water lilies, lush paddy fields, coir villages, rustic homes, ancient temples and coconut groves. The Kettuvallams provide all modern comforts and services that include well furnished rooms and other facilities with cabin crews.

Houseboats are huge, slow moving, exotic barges made of fine but heavy-duty planks of jack-wood held together absolutely by coir knots, designed for sheer leisure trips. Formerly, houseboats were used to ship rice, spices and other goods between Kuttanad and Cochin port. A standard houseboat, which could be about 100 feet long, can hold up to 30 tons, and that is as much as three big Lorries can. The major houseboat locations in Kerala are Alappuzha, Kuttanad, Kumarakam, Thiruvallam, Kollam, Kottayam, Kozhikode, Kasaragod, and Valiyaparamba.

3.8.3 Kerala Cuisine

Kerala has a distinctive Cuisine with its salivating recipes as its cultural life and traditions. It is greatly influenced by its long coastline and flavoured by the all-pervasive coconut. The cuisine is enriched by the exotic fruits, vegetables and seafood, and garnished to perfection with the redolence of spices like green chillies, cumin, coriander, clove, cinnamon, cardamom, and dried red chillies. Curry and coriander leaves added fresh provide a subtle yet irresistible flavour.
Kerala is the best place to have one of the most fabulous breakfasts, both in terms of taste and nutritional values, in the world. Some of the usual items of breakfast are the Puttu (made of rice flour and coconut) and Kadala (gram) curry; Idiappam (noodle like rice cakes) and egg/vegetable curry; appam (soft centred lacy pancakes) and mutton/vegetable stew. The Sumptuous Sadya, served on a plantain leaf and eaten with hand, is the traditional Kerala feast and the non-veg delights like prawns, lobsters, crabs, mussels etc are enticingly cooked with exotic spices. Besides, the Moplah cuisine of Malabar and Syrian Christian cuisine are unique in its rich flavour, while the former show clear Arabic influences, the latter has Syrian, Dutch, Portuguese and British influences.

3.8.4 Commercial Centres

Fort Koch: An obscure fishing village that become the first European township in India and made up an eventful and colourful history. A leisurely walk through the city is the best way to discover historic Fort Kochi. The town was shaped by the Portuguese, the Dutch and later the British. The result of these cultural influences is seen in the many examples of Indo-European architecture.

Jew Town: The area round the Synagogue is called Jew Town. Tourists from various countries frequent here to buy spices and various items of antique value. The art galleries and art cafes here sell and exhibit paintings, drawings and sculptures.

3.8.5 Shopping

As the state has been renowned for its handlooms, gold ornaments, spices etc, Kerala is an ideal place for shopping. The handicrafts of Kerala are known for their uniqueness of style, perfection of form and elegance of design.

The Aranmula Kannadi (a kind of mirror made of an alloy of copper and tin, and oval in shape), Nettur Petty (the ethnic jewel box made of rosewood with handcrafted casket) Kasavu Mundu (handloom saree), spices and traditional gold jewellery are some of the most precise items that tourist can buy at shops across the state as a monument of his visit.
3.8.6 Performing Arts

Classical Arts: Kerala is home to a stunningly unique variety of art forms which have impacted the social and cultural life of the state, adding to its typical character. The tradition of classical arts in Kerala dates back to a thousand years. Perhaps the oldest of these classical arts is \textit{Koodiyattam}, a dance-drama associated with temple rituals. This art form was recently selected by UNESCO as one among the ‘Masterpieces of the oral and intangible heritage of Humanity'.

\textit{Kathakali}, popular as the art form of Kerala has been referred to as ‘the first theatre of imagination’ of the world owing to its elaborate costumes, ornaments and facial make-up and the entire body is used to portray a story. Besides, \textit{Mohiniyattom}- the dance of the enchantress and \textit{Thullal} with different dimensions like \textit{Ottanthullal} etc are the different traditional classical arts forms in Kerala.

Folk Arts: Kerala has a rich repertoire of folk performing arts, folk songs and folk drama reflecting man’s overpowering rapport with nature and his constant desire for communication with the unknown. The tribals of Kerala, \textit{Adivasis}- the first native people, keep alive a folklore tradition in the eco-friendly life they lead and the natural pharmacy they practice. \textit{Theyyam, Thira, Mudiyettu, Kaduvakali, Velakali, Kakkarissi Natakam, Chavittunatakam, Margamkali, Kolkali, Parichamuttukali, Bhadrakalipattu, Pulluvanpattu, Thiruvathirakali} are only a few of Kerala’s folk arts forms.

Kalaripayattu: Martial Art Kalaripayattu the martial art form of Kerala is regarded as the oldest and most scientific in the world. The training in combat is given at the \textit{Kalari}. The principles of Kalari education stipulate that training in martial arts begins with an oil massage of the body which goes on until the body is agile and supple. Feasts like \textit{chattam} (jumbing), \textit{ottam} (running), \textit{marichil} (somersault) etc. are then taught, followed by lesson in the use of weapons such as daggers, swords, spears, maces, the bow and arrow and so on. Kalaripayyattu training aims at the ultimate co-ordination of the mind and body. The traditional training in Kalari includes specialisation in indigenous medical practices as well.
Kerala is also distinctly famous for its other art forms like music and poetry as well as craft forms including murals, sculpture and architecture. The rich and vibrant culture of Kerala has been continuing to intrigue people worldwide. The traditional classic and folk songs and dances of the people, their ballads, their rituals and their intellectual pursuits form the real treasures of Kerala contributing to its rich cultural heritage.

3.8.7 Festivals and Fairs

Kerala is the land of festivals and fairs. With its beautiful landscapes, Kerala has more than enough reason to celebrate and the varied culture of the state has given expression to a colourful mosaic of festivals and fairs. The spirit of celebration is very much a part of the ethos of the state of Kerala and for visitors to this state, its fairs and festivals are a must see event to be included in their travel. A closer look at the Kerala calendar will reveal that it is a land where the festivals never end. Apart from the traditional festivals like Onam and Vishu there are a score of temple festivals like the world-renowned Thrissure Pooram. The notable festivals in the state are Poorams, Elephant Pageants, Boat Races, fireworks display, traditional rituals etc. The fairs and festivals of Kerala give the best opportunity to display the traditional performing arts and the delicious cuisine of the land.
Conclusion

This chapter is dedicated to discuss and analyse the performance and resource potential of Kerala Tourism Industry. The performance analysis depicts a clear picture of the Kerala Tourism Industry in regard to the tourist inflows and generation of income in the State. It sketched out the trends of tourist arrivals both domestic and foreign since 1996. The inflow of tourists in the state (both domestic and foreign) shows an increasing growth rate since 2001. The facts and figures of the earnings from tourism show an increasing trend over the years from 1996 to 2007.

The resource potential analysis of Kerala Tourism Industry reveals that it has abounding tourism resources which include beaches, backwaters, wildlife, hill strations, waterfalls, vegetations, pilgrim centres; monuments, parks and gardens, adventure and sports tourism, village tourism, farm tourism, Ayurveda, house boat tourism, and cultural tourism resources. These natural and man-made tourism resources and attractions help to develop and market varied tour packages and thus to attract almost all segments of tourists to the state. These resource potentials and attractions made the State to known worldwide as ‘God’s Own Country’.
References

    p. 1
    p. 1
18. Ibid., p. 18 & 26
19. Ibid., p. 26