CHAPTER – 4
AN OVERVIEW ON KERALA AND AYURVEDA

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4.0 INTRODUCTION

Kerala is a state situated on the tropical Malabar coast of South Western India. It is one of the most popular tourist destination in the country. Named as one of the ten paradises of the world by the national geographic traveler. Kerala's unique culture and tradition, coupled with its varied demography, has made Kerala as one of the most popular tourist destinations in the world. Growing at a rate of 13.3 per cent, the tourism industry is a major contributor to the state’s economy (Government of Kerala (GOK), 2008). Moderate climate, rich art, colourful festivals, diverse natural, and cultural attractions with a physical quality of life comparable to developed nations and causing tourism industry to flourish in Kerala. Compared to the other states in India, Kerala is unique for its geographical diversity, and it possesses within the smallest area possible. This diversity often offers tourists a range of attraction and experiences such as beaches, back waters, wild life sanctuaries, evergreen forests, and diverse flora and fauna of Kerala. It is often projected as the “Green Gateway to India” (Netto, 2004, cited by M. Edward and Babu, P. George, 2008).

4.1 TOURISM IN KERALA

Tourism is counted as an important alternation to address unemployment which is the major problem faced in the state (Kokkranik and Morrison, 2002). Furthermore, its story linkages with other sectors in the state and its potential for generating benefits are more widespread throughout the state for given level of capital investment when compared to other sectors. Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) (2000) study shows a strong multiplier effect for tourism industry in the state for both income multiplier and
employment multiplier. Kerala’s share of international tourists coming to India has increased from 5.54 per cent in 1994 to 8.85 per cent in 2005 making it a leading state for tourism in the country (Edward and George, 2008). Earnings from tourism is also projected to grow at a record level of more than 23.5 per cent which is much higher than earnings growth projected for India and the world average which is 14.3 per cent and 6.5 per cent in 2006 (Edward and George, 2008). International tourists arrivals to Kerala had reached almost half a million in 2006 and to cross the five lakh figure by 2007. For domestic tourism the arrivals had crossed 60 lakhs in 2006. This almost meets the prediction of World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) that with an average annual arrival growth rate of 18 per cent for domestic tourists and 12 per cent for international tourists Kerala is becoming one of the fastest growing destinations in the world (World Travel and Tourism Council, 2002, 2007, and 2008).

The month wise foreign and domestic tourist arrivals to Kerala earning from tourism, and trends in domestic and foreign tourists arrivals are presented in Tables – 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3.

<table>
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<th>Sl. No.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Year</td>
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<td>Percentage of Increase</td>
<td>Total revenue generated from Tourism (Direct and Indirect) Rs. In Crores</td>
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<td>------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>1.85</td>
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<td>2640.94</td>
<td>32.82</td>
<td>11433.00</td>
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<td>2008</td>
<td>3066.52</td>
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<td>13130.00</td>
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Source: www.keralatourism.org

### TABLE – 4.3

**TRENDS IN DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN TOURIST ARRIVALS INTO KERALA (2002 TO 2008)**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Domestic Tourists</th>
<th>Percentage Var.</th>
<th>Foreign Tourists</th>
<th>Percentage Var.</th>
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<td>58,71,228</td>
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<td>62,71,724</td>
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Source: www.keralatourism.org

4.2 GEOGRAPHY OF KERALA

The official website of Kerala gives a detailed outlook of geographic features of Kerala. Kerala’s 38,863 km$^2$ (1.18 per cent of India’s land mass) is wedged between the Arabian sea to the West and the Western Ghats to the East Kerala’s coast runs some 580 km in length while the state itself varies between 35 – 120 km in width. Kerala roughly divides into three climatically distinct regions. These include the Eastern high lands (rugged and cool mountainous Ferrari), the Central mid-lands (rolling hills) and the Western lowlands (coastal plains). Located at the extreme southern tip of the Indian subcontinent Kerala lies between North latitudes 8°18’ and 12°48’ and East longitudes 74°52’ and 72°22’. Kerala’s climate is mainly wet and maintains a tropical climate heavily influenced by the seasonal heavy rains brought by the monsoon.
Kerala receives an average annual rainfall of 3107 mm. Kerala's rains are mostly the result of seasonal monsoon. As a result, Kerala averages around 120-140 rainy
days per year. Kerala’s average maximum daily temperature is around 36.7°C and minimum is 19.8°C.

The topography of Kerala is that Eastern Kerala consists of land encroached upon only by Western Ghats. The region, thus, includes high mountains, gorgeous, and deep cut valleys. The wildest lands are covered with dense forests, while other regions lie under tea and coffee plantations or other form of cultivation. Forty one of Kerala’s forty four rivers have originated in this region. Just West of the mountains lie the arid land plains comprising of a swath of land running along central Kerala. Rolling hills and shallow valleys fill a greater landscape than the high lands. In the lowest lands, the arid land region hosts paddy fields, and, elevated land slopes play host to groves of rubber and fruit trees in addition to other crops such as black pepper, tapioca, and others.

Finally, Kerala’s coastal belt is relatively flat, farming with paddy fields, growers of coconut trees, and heavily crisscrossed by a network of interconnected canals and rivers. Kerala backwater region is particularly a well organised fathom of Kerala. It is an interconnected system of brackish water lakes and river estuaries that lie inland from the coast and runs virtually across the length of the state. These facilitate inland travel throughout a region roughly bounded by Thiruvananthapuram in the South and Vadakara in the North (which lies approximately 450 km to the North).

4.3 AWARDS AND RECOGNITION RECEIVED BY KERALA TOURISM

| 1. World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) selected Kerala as a partner |
2. The Das Golden Stator award at the ITB Berlin considered to be the travel industry’s Oscar.

3. One of the three finalists at the WTTC “Tourism for Tomorrow” awards in the destination category.

4. National Geographic Travel after two years of research had chosen Kerala, as one of the 50 must see destinations of a lifetime.


6. One of the 100 great trips for the 21st Century, by “Travel and Leisure”.

7. One of the ten hot spots for the millennium, by “Emirates Inflight Magazine”.

8. One of the ten love nests in India, by “Cosmopolitan”,

9. One of the six destinations of the millennium, by “Khaleej Times”.

10. In 2004 and 2006, Kerala won three PATA (Pacific Asia Travel Association) Gold Awards –
   a. The Thenmala Ecotourism Project in environmental or ecotourism category,
   b. East Fort Conservation Project in Thiruvanathapuram in the heritage and culture category,
   c. CD titled “Ayurveda” : The mantra of Niramaya for CD-ROM category.


4.4 USP OF KERALA TOURISM

The increase in tourist arrivals is the result of aggressive marketing and promotion of the destination in road shows and travel trade fairs by Kerala State Tourism Development Corporation (KTDC) along with its private partners. Kerala need not have to invent new attractions. It has capitalised on its natural strength and, has tailored it to suit the tourist requirements. Its competitive advantage is its ayurveda, backwater boat race, performing arts, and cuisine promoted in a process with its
nascent culture and tradition to the world and thus, has carved out a niche and a distinct identity for itself. The elegant mix of herbal cures and spa tourism, beach holidays, and wildlife backed by world class marketing had made Kerala be voted one amongst the best destinations. There was a demand for stress busting vacations as people preferred to take vacations where their health was also looked after and where they could rejuvenate. Kerala identified this need and to tap the potential it established ayurvedic resorts and spas by the beaches and backwaters so that the combination of wellness holiday at a location which was naturally endowed (P. Ravikanth, 2010). Tourism has emerged as an important economic alternative to develop the state economy and the state’s potential (Sarangadharan and Sunanda, 2009).

Ayurveda plays a major role in Kerala’s round the year tourism. The tourism season in Kerala is from October to March. But Ayurvedic treatments are mainly offered during monsoon months of June, July, and August. Moreover ayurvedic treatments done in Kerala are more famous than other locations due to its equable climate. The climate in Kerala is tropical and the temperature varies from 18 degree centigrade to 35 degree centigrade which is most suitable for ayurvedic treatments. Climatic conditions directly influences curing of diseases (Jacob, 2008).

4.5 **AYURVEDA**

Ayurveda, popularly known as the Indian system of medicine, is gaining worldwide recognition day by day (Sarangadharan, 2009). It is the ancient Indian health care system and is the world’s oldest and comprehensive system of natural medicine. Ayurveda is grounded in Hinduism and Vedic texts dating back 3,500 years or even
before. Ayurveda, literally knowledge or science of life represents a sophisticated system of healing that offers holistic approach to living based on the balance and nurturance of mind, body, and spirit (Shroff 2000, cited by Spitzer, 2009).

Ayurveda dictates the social norms for an individual. This helps in maintaining spiritual health and also elaborates on the daily routine and seasonal routine. Seasonal routines change according to the region of the habitat, and age of the person. Ayurveda believes that man is influenced to a great extent by his environment which affects his health status too. These routines include diets, habits, and a general attitude towards life. These are to be changed according to the age and sex of an individual, his living condition, and the environment. This helps the body to maintain its natural resistance to diseases.

Ayurveda like other systems of traditional medicine has its unique features. It lays emphasis on the promotion of positive health and prevention of diseases. In ayurveda, the main emphasis is laid upon the “field” than the “seed”. In the treatment prescribed, it does not aim at correcting the affected part alone. The treatment always aims at correcting the site of origin. Yoga and Tantra which are primarily meant for spiritual attainments have also certain prescriptions for the prevention and care of psychic, somatic, and psychosomatic ailments. They have a rich tradition of the use of plants, minerals, and animal products having therapeutic utility.

4.6 IMPORTANCE OF AYURVEDA IN KERALA TOURISM

Mr. Subhash Goel, the Travel Agent Federation of India (TAFI) president (2005) shares his thoughts about Kerala. On his attributes, the recent successful trends in
Kerala tourism; the major delight of Kerala is basically ayurveda and backwaters. He lauded the manner in which the ancient health care wisdom of ayurveda was popularised, which has now become significant. On enhancing the promotion of tourism in Kerala, it has been made a role model for other states in India and can encourage them to revive ancient knowledge systems of India so as to add value to their tourism aspirations (cited by Saranganathan and Sunanda, 2009).

Kerala is not only a beautiful destination in Southern India known for its scenic beaches and scenic backwaters but also, of late, Kerala has gained international attention for medical tourism and is becoming a popular international medical tourism destination. Tourists have also identified that Kerala has a pool of trained doctors and nurses, and an excellent network of hospitals that offer international standards at very affordable prices. Previously Indians working abroad such as residents of Kerala working in the Persian Gulf countries, would return to India for medical treatment. Now, other international travelers have also realised the advantages of travelling to Kerala and the medical tourism industry has begun to take off in big way in the state. Kerala is famous for its alternative medical therapies such as ayurveda which helps to rejuvenate and revitalise the body (Kulkarni, 2008).

4.7 MYTHOLOGICAL ORIGIN

In India, knowledge is considered as sacred since it is believed to have emanated from the Gods. According to Hindu mythology, the harmony of the universe is maintained by the Trimurtis - Brahma, the creator, Vishnu, the preserver, and Shiva, the destroyer. At the time of creation, ayurveda is believed to have been originated as a ray
of enlightenment in the cosmic consciousness of Brahma. Brahma is believed to have imparted the knowledge of Ayurveda to his disciple, Daksha Prajapati, who passed it on to the Aswins, the twin Gods, who in turn conferred it on to Indra, the King of Gods, while all this happened in heaven, humanity continued to be plagued by pains and illness. It was decided that the eminent sage Dhanvanthari reincarnated as Divodasa, and the sage Bharadwaja, and Kashyapa be deputed to go to heaven to learn the divine science of healing directly from Indra. That according to legend was how Ayurveda descended from the skies to alleviate suffering on the mortal plane (Ayurveda, The Traditional Health Sciences of India, 2000).

4.8 HISTORICAL EVIDENCE

The history of indigenous Indian medical science is probably as old as the Indus valley civilisation dating back to 3000 B.C. The meticulously planned cities of Harappa and Mohenjadaro are points not only to India’s rich cultural heritage but also to its advanced systems of hygiene and health care. The remains of deer antler and bitumen found in Harappa testify to the existence of a medical science.

Hindu scriptures are generally classified into two, namely, Sruthis and Smrithis. The meaning of Sruthi is ‘what has been heard”. It is believed that our ancient sages had a revelation from Lord Brahma and thus, they left a record of these everlasting truths for the future. These records are called Vedas. They are four in number: Rigveda, Yajurveda, Samaveda, and Atharvaveda. Of the four, Rigveda is the oldest and the Atharvaveda the last. Ayurveda has emerged out as the branch of Atharvaveda. The practice of Ayurveda is based on the Pancha Maha Bhoota theory and Tridosha theory.
The human body, according to Ayurveda, is composed of three fundamental components called *Doshas*, *Dhatus*, and *Malas*. The doshas are *Vatha*, *Pitha* and *Kapha*. They control the physiological activities of the body. The *malas* are substances which are partly used by the body, and partly excreted in a modified form after performing their physiological activities. These three elements are in a dynamic equilibrium with each other for the maintenance of health, if any imbalance of these three results in disease (G. Mahadevan and N.J. Nair, 2005).

4.9 **AYURVEDIC LITERATURE**

The Ayurvedic literature broadly can be classified into:

- Commentaries of the basic *samhitas* (compendia) and independent books based on the content of the *samhitas* (*Charaka samhita* and *Sushruta samhita*)
- Collections of various indigenous treatment methods used by ‘vaidyas’- *Ashtangahrdaya* and *Ashtangasamgraha* (Jacob, 2008).

The *charaka samhita* consists of eight main divisions:

1. Sutra Sthana (30 chapters) deals with pharmacology.
2. Nidana Sthana (8 chapters) deals with eight main diseases.
3. Vimana Sthana (8 chapters) deals with taste, nourishment, general pathology and medical studies.
4. Sarira Sthana (8 chapters) deals with anatomy and embroyology.
5. Indriya Sthana (12 chapters) deals with diagnosis and prognosis.

6. Chikitsa Sthana (12 chapters) deals with special therapy.

7. Kalpa Sthana (12 chapters) deals with general therapy.

8. Siddhi Sthana (12 chapters) deals with general surgery.

Sushrutha Samhita, the second masterpiece written by Sushruta who was a disciple of the sage Dhanawantari is a compilation of the teachings of the sage. The book Uttara Tantra has earned Sushruta the title Father of Surgery. He classified all surgical operations into eight kinds and also enumerated 101 types of blunt instruments and 21 sharp instruments used for surgery.

Ashtanga Hrudaya, known as The Kernel of Ayurveda was composed by Vagbhata. In its style of presentation, Ashtanga Hrudaya resembles the Charaka samhita more than the Sushruta samhita. Vagbhata introduced some modifications in the branch of surgery. There is an excellent commentary on the work called Sarvanga Sundari by Aruna Datta of the fifteenth century and for that work high praise has been given by eminent historians. Brunell, an eminent historian, while analysing Bhela Samhita, says: the most superficial comparison shows how much Vagbhata was indebted to this ancient work (Sarngadharan and Sunanada, 2009).

Buddhism gave a boost to Ayurveda and Ayurveda received a lot of encouragement during the Buddhist period, i.e., roughly between 500 B.C. and 600 A.D. The Buddhists spread the wonderful healing powers of ayurveda to many countries, including Sri Lanka, Nepal, Tibet, China, Mangolia, Japan, and other South-East Asian countries. According to Buddhism, Salyachikilsa (Surgery) is associated with pain and
the Buddhists viewed it as acts of violence (himsa). But they propagated the methods of general medicine (*Kayachikilsa*) which resulted in the popularity of Ayurveda. Another striking factor is that Buddhist literature mentions only seven branches of ayurveda excluding *Rasayana* because there was no concern for the Buddhists to prolong their span of life or to attempt rejuvenation. The most famous physician of the Buddhist period, Jeevaka is called the King of physicians (Saranganathan and Sunanda, 2009).

The system of Ayurveda in Kerala was carefully preserved by eight traditional families of Ayurvedic doctors known as Ashta Vaidyas. Ayurveda is not just a system of medicine. It is indeed a science and a way of life. It originated in India around 3000 B.C. and was pioneered by renowned sages. Kerala is the only place where ayurveda is practiced in its true and authentic form. Now, no country is unaware of the ayurvedic packages of Kerala. World-class medicines that are produced by various Ayurvedic houses are the best both for rejuvenation and cure. Kerala has a special tradition of Ayurveda (Saranganathan and Sunanda, 2009).

### 4.10 PRINCIPLE OF AYURVEDA

Ayurveda briefly explains the knowledge of the dos and don’ts one has to follow, which favours the well-being of each individual to lead a healthy, happy and comfortable life, both physically and mentally. It also emphasises that prevention is better than cure. Ayurveda is also known as *Ashatangaveda* (the word literally means eight branches of knowledge). The eight specialised branches are:

1. **Kaya Chikitsa** – General Medicine
2. **Kaumara Chikitsa** – Paediatrics
Ayurveda views that every human body is a combination of five basic eternal elements called Panchamahabhoothas. They are Earth, Water, Fire, Air, and Space. These eternal elements manifest in the human body as three doshas. The word dosha literally means that which maintains and controls the body. They are Vatha, Pitha, and Kapha. Its basic principle is that each of us has a specific mind-body link, known as dosha, which is influenced by everything we do and experience. Health is maintained by balancing our dosha with our environment and lifestyle. The contributions of ancient scholarly Vaidyas of Kerala have gone a long way to earn the name cradle of ayurveda to our state. The single drug remedies or Ottamoolichikitsa of Kerala Vaidyas does wonders even in many chronic ailments. Treatment in ayurveda can be classified broadly into two.

1. Sodhana Chikilsa (Purification therapy)
2. Samana Chikilsa (Alleviating therapy)

Sodhana is applied to such cases where doshas are accumulated following an imbalance in their state and are to be purged out of the system. The main aim of this treatment is to eliminate the internal causative factors of the disease. A large quantity of
toxic by-products is formed in the body as a result of continuous metabolic process (Jecob, 2008).

The basic concept of ayurveda is that doshas cause diseases. These doshas could be eliminated from the human body through panchakarma. Panchakarma is derived from two Sanskrit words, Pancha and Karma, which means five therapeutic measures respectively. These five measures are meant for purification of the body, as ayurveda considers it necessary before starting any treatment:

1. **Vamana (Emesis Therapy)**: Internal oral medicines are administered to induce vomiting.

2. **Virechana (Purgation Therapy)**: Here internal medicines are used to induce purgation.

3. **Nasyam (Nasal Medication)**: Herbal medicines in the form of oil or powder are administered through the nostril.

4. **Vasthi (Medicated Enema Therapy)**: The herbal medicines in the form of decoction or oil is administered through anus.

5. **Rakthamoksham (Blood-letting therapy)**: Here impure blood is drained out from the body through various means (needle pricking, Venesection, Leeching etc.).

These five procedures are also known as Panchsodhana, which is meant to purify the body, thereby to bring back the body function to the normal tone (Sarngadharan and Sunanda, 2009).
Samana therapy is done where accumulation of imbalanced doshas is less in quantity. In this condition, palliative measures are adopted to balance the vitiated doshas to maintain health. Here herbal medicines are used internally and externally to convert the discrepancy of functions of Doshas, Dhatu, Malas and Agni and also to increase the body immunity (Sarangadharan and Sunanda, 2009).

4.11 PRIME TREATMENT UNDER AYURVEDA

The Ayurvedic physicians of Kerala have evolved various methods of treatment for the rejuvenation of the body and cure of diseases. Classified ayurvedic centres of the Department of Tourism offer a unique combination of ayurvedic treatment programmes.

The unique features of ayurveda treatment of medicine are:

- Treatment of individual as a whole, i.e., not only the condition of other parts of his body but also the condition of his mind and soul are taken into account while treating the patient.
- Medicines are available in reasonable prices.
- No import involved i.e., medicines are vegetables, metals, minerals, and animal products which are available in nature.

Prime treatments are meant for the prevention of illness. However, certain processes of prime treatments are used for rejuvenative and therapeutic purposes. A brief description of the procedures followed for different prime treatments are mentioned below:
1. **Pizhichil**: *Pizhichil* or Kayaseka is the process by which warm medicated oil is dripped continuously on the body of a person in a prescribed manner. A special medicated oil suited to the condition of the patient is applied on the head and then over the body of the patient sitting in the wooden thoni. It prevents and cures rheumatic diseases like arthritis, paralysis, nervous and sexual weaknesses, and nervous disorders. It is applied to a healthy person as a rejuvenative process.

2. **Dhara**: In this treatment, medicated oil, cow’s milk, buttermilk, water or decoction, whichever is prescribed, is poured in a continuous stream on the head especially on the forehead in a specific manner. It is mainly done for mental tension, rheumatic complaints, skin diseases, and diabetics.

3. **Sirodhara**: In Sirodhara, lukewarm medicated oil is poured continuously as an even stream onto the forehead. As per Ayurveda, the head is the root of the human body and hence this procedure has a holistic relaxing effect throughout the body and is ideal for eliminating stress and strain.

4. **Vasthi**: Certain herbal oils and herbal extracts are applied through the rectum, daily for a period of 5 to 25 days. This is done for arthritis, paralysis, numbness, gastric complaints associated with rheumatism, and constant constipation.

5. **Sirovasthi**: This is a process of keeping medicated oils on the head usually up to 45 minutes. Sirovasthi is done for facial paralysis, dryness of nostrils, mouth and throat, severe headache, insomnia, burning sensation of the head, and other vatha created diseases.
6. **Kizhi**: A cloth bundle containing medical leaves and herbal powders is used to massage the body. These are applied to the whole body with hot medicated oils for 45 minutes per day for a period of 7 to 21 days. It is useful in muscular–skeletal disorders, other degenerative disorders, and neurological problems. It is highly effective for osteoarthritis, arthritis with selling, spondilosis, and sports injuries. It boosts blood circulation and infuses brightness and vigour.

7. **Abhyangam**: Through abhyangam, the human body becomes strong and lubricated. Based upon individual body constitution, special oils are used which stimulates the lymphatic system. This assists in the flow of nutrients in the body and removes toxins from the cells. It prevents ageing and has a rejuvenating effect. The body can be able to endure fatigue and physical exertion, induce sleep, improve complexion and strength, and prolong life. It is used for therapeutic and rejuvenative purposes. This treatment is very useful for obesity, especially for diabetics, etc.

8. **Nasyam**: Herbal juices and medicated oils are applied through the nose for 7 to 14 days. This treatment is highly effective for headache, mental disorders, and certain types of skin diseases (Jecob, 2008 and Sarngadharan and Sunanda, 2009).

Kerala offers a variety of unique products as a tourist destination. It holds almost all the tourist attractions of the world.

The tourist products can be analysed in terms of attractions, facilities, and accessibility. Tourism product is anything tangible or intangible that can promote
marketing of tourism. Kerala is endowed with sufficient tourism products like fantastic beaches, backwaters, monuments, ayurveda, cultural sites, wild life sanctuaries, pilgrim centres, hill stations, well-developed transportation, and accommodation in addition to its geographical advantage. Kerala has inherent uniqueness as regards tourism products such as backwater, eco-tourism, beach tourism, festival tourism, monument tourism, heritage tourism, and health tourism. Among these, health tourism is prominent. In health tourism, Ayurveda stands unique.

4.12 CLASSIFICATION SCHEME OF AYURVEDIC CENTRES

Jacob (2008), discusses about the classification of ayurvedic centres as to provide uniformity of practice and avoid misuse. Government of Kerala has brought out a scheme for approval of ayurvedic centres vide G.O. (M.S.)140/98/GAD dated 23-3-1998. According to this order, a uniform approval was given to all the centers fulfilling the conditions prescribed, irrespective of its differences in class and quality. Later, the Kerala Government came up with a Government Order G.O.(M.S.) 35/2002/GAD/dated 28.1.2002, for classifying the ayurvedic centers into two types named Olive Leaf and Green Leaf to differentiate them in the quality of facilities and services provided.

Though Kerala tourism is an amalgam of ayurveda, beach and back waters, culture and cuisine, the present study concentrates on preventive health tourism; mainly about ayurvedic health care resorts.

The significance of ayurveda in tourism promotion of Kerala is of immense potential in lieu of health tourists. Present study concentrates mainly on Kerala’s holistic health care system – Ayurveda. An attempt was made to examine the customer
perception and satisfaction of health tourists in some of the leading ayurvedic health resorts of the state. For the present study, the researcher has identified eight ayurvedic resorts in Kerala. It includes three in Trivandrum (Ayur Bay Health Resort, Somatheeran Health Resort, and Coconut Bay) two in Alleppy, Lake Palace, and Keraleyam Resort, one in Cochin (Punarnava Ayurvedic Centre), one in Palakkad (Kairali Health Resort) and finally one in Kozhikode (Kadavu Resort). Nearly 520 questionnaires were distributed, 65 each in these health resorts. There were only 360 questionnaires which were completely filled in. Hence, the present study was based on the feedback of these 360.

4.13 AYURVEDIC RESORTS UNDER THE STUDY

The study delves into eight prime ayurvedic centres in Kerala.

These resorts are identified with some of the following objectives. Thiruvananthapuram in Kerala receives maximum tourists (foreign) as compared to other destinations. Moreover, Kovalam in Thiruvananthapuram has maximum ayurvedic health resorts in comparison to other districts. Hence, the researcher has identified three ayurvedic resorts namely Somatheeram, Ayurbay, and Coconut Bay Resort. After Thiruvananthapuram it is Cochin and Allappuzha is the other most sort after destination in Kerala. Hence, in Allappuzha two resorts in the middle of back waters were identified for the study, namely Keralleeyam and Lake Palace Back Water Resort. In Cochin Punarnava Ayurvedic Centre is selected for the study. Kairali in Palakkad was the next resort under study. To have an even distribution of samples the researcher has identified the location Palakkad is one of the major transit point and Kairali was one of
the pioneers in health resort. The researcher has taken Kadavu resort at Calicut for the study, thereby including atleast one resort in the north Malabar or north Kerala region.

Ayurbay beach resort is situated in Nellikunnu beach which is 4 km from Kovalam, enroute to Poovar and 22 km from Kerala’s capital Trivandrum which is a green leaf authorised ayurvedic centre. This medicos ayurvedic centre was founded by Dr.K.R.Chandra Babu, renowned ayurvedic physician. The centre is now managed by his wife Dr.Lalitha Babu. She is a dedicated ayurvedic physician. She gets repeated health tourists mainly from Germany. It is a beautiful heritage villa which has been renovated into a beach resort with 16 rooms and two apartments.

The other health resort in Trivandrum is Somatheeram Ayurvedic Beach Resort. They claim this to be one of the first ayurvedic beach resorts in India with a combination of wholesome-a beach resort with ayurveda and yoga. Situated atop a hill, it spreads over an area of 15 acres of lush greenery.

It has traditional wooden houses, stone bungalows, and cottages consisting of 50 spacious rooms casuite bath. The ayurvedic centre is under the supervision of 18 ayurvedic physician and nearly 65 trained therapist. There were nearly 24 hygienically maintained treatment rooms. Out of which, 6 rooms are open air rooms, having a panoramic ocean view. A well-maintained herbal garden with more than 600 varieties of ayurvedic herbs are preserved and used for treatment. Somatheeram Ayurvedic Health Resort not only provides health care programmes it also provides other recreational activities like indoor games, fishing, boating, and cultural programmes.
Coconut Bay Ayurveda Centre is another green leaf certified ayurvedic centre located in Vizhinjum, Trivandum facing the Arabian sea the beach resort is located in 4 acres of land with 25 independent villas. These villas are well furnished with great cane and design sense. The separate frontage for each villa facing the sea and are closest to the beach. Yoga is being taught and practiced at coconut bay under an expert yoga guru. Apart from these facilities it has other indoor and outdoor recreation for tourists.

Keraleeyam and lake palace are the two back water resorts in Alleppy under the study. Keraleeyam is a traditional Kerala house built 70 years back with breath taking beautiful backwater frontage. One has to take house boat or ferry from Alappay to reach Keraleeyam. The property can accommodate only 11 people at a time. Hence it is of 100 per cent occupancy throughout the year. An open air theatre ‘Kalithattu’ in front of Keraleeyam, periodically stages folk art form of Kerala. Thus, it gives a true traditional experience of Kerala in harmony with nature, 5000 years old Ayurvedic rejuvenation messages with herbal oil and herb enriched steam bath others. The therapy centre at Keraleeyam is managed by SD Pharmacy with more than 60 years tradition of excellence in ayurvedic health care.

The Lake Palace Back Water Resort in Alleppey is much admired worldwide for its scene location in the heart of Alleppey which is nestled in a 50 acre for flowage island on the Vembanadu Lake. The choice of accommodation varies from the typical Kerala Cottages to the innovative water villas. The Kerala Cottages traditional villas depict the glorifying Kerala architecture. The water villas are the USP of this resort, which one cannot find anywhere else. Perched on pillars in the lake, these villas are in traditional architecture with gabled tile roofs and a veranda all around. This widespread
green carpet and the shiny stretch of backwater is so close to nature, hence, one cannot neglect the role of Ayurveda Lake Palace. Ayurvedic centre administers ayurvedic centre built in the traditional. Nallukettu stage villas which ensures 100 per cent hygienic and dust free. The centre offers all curative and restorative therapies. In association with Sahayadri Ayurveda division, it provides authentic ayurveda medicines. Special therapeutic diet is also provided for these health resort.

The queen of Arabian Sea ‘Cochin’ is another most visited destination in Kerala. Hence, the researcher has identified ‘Punarnava’ Ayurvedic Centre in Cochin for the study. It is a green leaf certified health centre. The literary meaning of the term ‘punarnava’ refers to ‘new again’, which otherwise symbolically acknowledges the rejuvenations principles of ayurveda. Punarnava is managed by ayurvedic professionals trained at renowned ayurvedia medical colleges in India. Thus, in Punarnava Ayurvedia Hospital, healing and hospitality is a pleasure with expert doctors and caring therapists.

The next ayurvedic health resort under the study is Kairali Ayurvedic Health Resort in Palakkad. As Palakkad is an enroute to visit North Kerala and South Kerala and Tamil Nadu. The Resort combines a health orientation with a living experience that can be best described as ‘Return to nature’. A place where one can lean back and relax in elegantly ethnic surroundings. Kairali group with over eight decades of experience in production and practice in traditional science of ayurveda.

Kairali group claims to be pioneers in running ayurvedic health resorts, spa centres all over the world. Their ayurveda services are famous for its quality and results. They have received green leaf certification from Government of Kerala. This group was
founded by Mr. K.V. Ramesh and Mrs. Gita Ramesh. Kairali Resort spread over 50 acres of coconut grower, paddy fields, organically cultivated fruit, and vegetable gardens. There are 30 exclusive villas with each of them having a distinctively different design that blends with surroundings yet it is the very epitome of comfort and elegance. Ayurveda is practiced at Kairali in its true traditional form using herbs grown in its own garden. Apart from the treatment rooms and traditional equipment for ayurvedic procedures, Kairali has a yoga and meditation centre with expert instructors.

Kadavu Resort and Ayurveda Centre in Kozhikode (Calicut) is the only resort under the study in the North Kerala or in the North Malabar region. This resort is located on the banks of Chaliyar river in a sprawling tea acre coconut growers with glorious scenery around.

Kadavu Resort is a five star resort located at just 15 km from Calicut. It is a unique blend of mappila and Hindu culture, aesthetically designed and decorated. Set right on the water front, there are 17 cottages with wide spacious balancing that other panoramic view of river. It also has 97 deluxe rooms and six executive suite rooms beautifully furnished with modern comforts and traditional charm. Ayurveda at Kadavu is an extension of its loyalty to nature. The centre is a Green Leaf certified ayurvedic centre. At Kadavu one practices the art of healing at the master’s feet. The legacy of Ashtavaidyan Thaikkattu Mooss a legend among the Ashtavaidyar is alive here and practices here.

4.14 CONCLUSION
Thus, the researcher has studied Kerala tourism with ayurveda which otherwise is a synonym for Kerala. Ayurveda plays a vital role in promoting perennial tourism in Kerala. Moreover, monsoon tourism is fast getting greater attention in Kerala because of Ayurveda’s monsoon applicability among health tourists. It indirectly encourages round the year tourism in Kerala.