

How Secularization in the West Encourages Spiritual Tourism

As Western societies become more secular-meaning less connected to traditional religion-many people still feel the need to find meaning, peace, and a deeper purpose in life. In modern capitalist cultures, where success, speed, and material things are often the focus, people can feel spiritually empty. That's why many are now using travel as a way to explore spirituality.

Instead of going to churches or mosques at home, people from the West are traveling to spiritual places like yoga retreats, meditation centers, sacred mountains, and ancient temples. These trips help them slow down, reflect, and reconnect with something greater than themselves. Often, they are drawn to places where spiritual experiences are deep and traditional-like in India, Nepal, Pakistan, or Saudi Arabia.

In Pakistan, many tourists visit Sufi shrines. These are peaceful places where music, prayer, and reflection help people feel closer to the divine. According to Khan and Khan (2021), Sufi shrines are becoming popular for both local and foreign visitors who want a spiritual experience without strict religious rules.

Similarly, Saudi Arabia, known mainly for religious tourism like Hajj and Umrah, is now opening up to other forms of cultural and spiritual tourism. Beyond the traditional pilgrimages, people are starting to visit historical Islamic sites, old mosques, and quiet desert landscapes that offer space for reflection and inner peace. As the country promotes its Vision 2030 plan, it is welcoming more tourists who are interested in heritage and spirituality.

In this way, spiritual tourism is growing because people want to feel something real and healing. They want to choose their own spiritual path. And places like Pakistan and Saudi Arabia-rich in history and faith-are becoming meaningful destinations for this personal journey.

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