

Marketing Strategies for Promoting Wellness Tourism in Khon Kaen, Thailand

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Abstract:

The purpose of this study was to examine the development and future prospect of wellness tourism in Khon Kaen province of Thailand, using semi-structured interviews and non-participant observation. Wellness services such as Thai massage, herbal therapy, yoga, and cultural activities are offered to both domestic and international tourists seeking relaxation and health benefits. In addition, customer-support services and service adjustments as appropriate are provided as part of the integrated wellness offering.

The non-participant observer findings supported the interview data in that, both felt that there was genuineness and cultural specificity of wellness experiences. The application of a strategic analysis using the 4Ps and SWOT frameworks demonstrated that Khon Kaen had desirable attributes (rich culture, value for money, emerging infrastructure) as a regional wellness tourism destination as well as areas requiring improvement. Strategies such as service coordination, multilingual communication and focused marketing will enable the sector to meet a global clientele more effectively. In addition, wellness tourism simply cannot take hold and build to a significant market size without some level of official support.