

that all beverages other than coffee, tea, and juices would cost extra, they were a bit surprised when they saw their final bill. In addition to the bar tab, there were charges for the shore excursions, Connie's trip to the spa, and the photos. It all added up. Still, the only thing they knew for sure was that four days just had not been long enough. They were ready for another cruise; but the next time, Richard said, the cruise should be for a full seven days! There had been too many things to do, not enough time, and the price was right!

Introduction

Up to this point, our journey through the tourism industry has introduced you to a variety of tourism suppliers. Each of these suppliers, from those providing transportation to those providing entertainment, plays an important role in meeting specific needs. However, as you will learn in this chapter, when the services of these suppliers are brought together in one location, we have arrived at another important stop on our journey—tourist destinations. These destinations can be found in locations ranging from rural retreats to bustling cities.

Destinations can be popular tourist cities and communities like Paris, France; Vienna, Austria; San Diego, California; and Branson, Missouri. They can be attractive geographic regions like the Napa Valley in northern California or the Costa del Sol in Spain. Or they can be the final stop on a trip to visit friends and relatives. In fact, the final stopping place on any trip can technically be considered a destination, but in this chapter, we are interested in the locations, communities, properties, and, yes, even ships that have evolved or been developed primarily to serve the needs of vacationers.

In a hectic world, filled with time pressures and a multitude of demands, people often want to “escape” daily routines. Destination locations provide the perfect setting for a brief change of pace or a more extended stay accompanied by a variety of activities. Destination locations can come in all sizes and shapes and are found almost everywhere, from mountaintop resorts to cruise ships sailing the high seas to artificially engineered environments such as Dubailand.

As we learned in Chapter 1, geography plays an important role in the development of tourism activity. People are naturally attracted to areas with pleasing natural beauty such as the snow-white sands of Destin, Florida, or the majesty of the Austrian Alps. They are also attracted to areas that have developed as entertainment magnets such as Las Vegas, Nevada, and Orlando, Florida. And areas with mild climates, such as the island paradises of the Caribbean and the Canary Islands off the coast of Africa, have been consistently popular with tourists.

As destinations grow in popularity, so do the services needed to meet visitors' needs. Airport services are enhanced; accommodations are improved and/or expanded; restaurants, retail shops, and visitor information services are added to deal with growing popularity. At some destinations, such as the islands of Hawaii, these services and facilities have often been added with little planning or consideration for the scenic beauty of the location. At other destinations, such as Cancun, Mexico, the national government has developed underutilized natural resources, beautiful beaches, and a near-perfect climate into a tourist destination.

All of the examples just mentioned have another important destination component in common: ease of access. Even locations that may not be pristinely beautiful can develop into popular destinations if they are easily accessible and close to heavily populated areas. For example, the gravel beaches on the cold English Channel at Brighton have become a popular summertime destination. With over 9 million potential visitors living in London, only a short train or car ride away, it is no wonder that Brighton has become a vacation playground.