



# Rural Tourism in Andhra Pradesh

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## Abstract

Rural tourism means travelling to non urbanised places with low population. An incredible chance to connect with local communities, support them and immerse you in their local culture. Rural tourism in Andhra Pradesh would mean walking and travelling across a region of green paddy fields amidst thatch-roof homes and dusty roads. Well, there are so many tourists who opt for rural tourism in Andhra Pradesh every year. Why because it gives them a glimpse of rural lifestyle, first hand information about world famous art and crafts work or even dances that originated in rural hinterland. In short, it gives them ‘an experience’ which cannot be compared to any trip they have taken before! What you see includes ancient temples, forts, history and culture of Andhra Pradesh, rural cuisine and an opportunity to go around with the local people in the peace of a rural background. Rural tourism may be defined as the movement of people from their normal place of residence to rural areas for a minimum period of twenty-four hours to the maximum of six months for the sole purpose of leisure and pleasure. Rural tourism refers to all tourism activities in a rural area. Rural tourism has a high potential to stimulate local economic growth and social change because of it’s complementarily with other economic activities, its contribution to GDP and job creation, and its capacity to promote the dispersal of demand in time (fight seasonality) and along a wider territory. So, many tourism places are in Andhra Pradesh attracted and visited by the pilgrims around the world in every day. In this situation government and private investors to take initiation to invest more amount on tourism development activities in other importance place in Andhra Pradesh. Then, will be obtaining more income and development to the government and as well as local area people in and around the Andhra Pradesh because of the low level of income in the state.

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## Introduction

Rural tourism may be defined as the movement of people from their normal place of residence to rural areas for a minimum period of twenty-four hours to the maximum of six months for the sole purpose of leisure and pleasure. Rural tourism refers to all tourism activities in a rural area. Rural tourism has a high potential to stimulate local economic growth and social change because of it's complementarily with other economic activities, its contribution to GDP and job creation, and its capacity to promote the dispersal of demand in time (fight seasonality) and along a wider territory.

The concept of rural tourism is by no means well defined and is subject to a number of interpretations. Fleischer and Pizam associate rural tourism with the 'country vacation' where the tourist spends the vast proportion of his/her vacation period engaging in recreational activities in a rural environment on a farm, ranch, country home, or the surrounding areas.

**OECD defines the rural area as**, at the local level, a population density of 150 persons per square kilometre is the preferred criterion. At the regional level, geographic units are grouped by the share of their population that is rural into the following three types: predominantly rural (50%), significantly rural (15-50%) and predominantly urbanized regions (15%).

The Council of Europe employed the term '**rural area**' to denote the following characteristics: A stretch of inland or coastal countryside, including small towns and villages, where the main part of the area is used for:

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1. Agriculture, forestry, aquaculture, and fisheries.
2. Economic and cultural activities of country-dwellers.
3. Non-urban recreation and leisure areas or nature reserves.
4. Other purposes such as housing.

**According to Dernoï**, rural tourism might be conceived as tourism activities in a ‘non-urban territory where human (land-related economic) activity is going on, primarily agriculture: a permanent human presence seems a qualifying requirement’.

**The OECD states rural tourism should be:**

- Located in rural areas.
- Functionally rural, built upon the rural world’s special features; small-scale enterprises, open space, contact with nature and the natural world, heritage, traditional societies, and traditional practices.
- Rural in scale – both in terms of building and settlements – and therefore, small scale.
- Traditional in character, growing slowly and organically, and connected with local families.
- Sustainable – in the sense that its development should help sustain the special rural character of an area, and in the sense that its development should be sustainability in its use of resources.
- Of many different kinds, representing the complex pattern of the rural environment, economy, and history

### **Types and forms of rural tourism**

Any forms of tourism that showcases the rural life, art, culture, and heritage at rural locations, thereby benefiting the local community economically and socially as well as enabling interaction between the tourists and the locals for a more enriching tourism experience can be termed as rural tourism.

A variety of terms are employed to describe tourism activity in rural areas: agritourism, farm tourism, rural tourism, soft tourism, alternative tourism, eco-tourism, and several others,



which have a different meaning from one country to another and indeed from one country to another.

The term 'rural tourism' has been adopted by the European Community (EC) to refer to all tourism activity in a rural area. Types and forms of rural tourism are following as:

### 1. **Agritourism:**

Although often used to describe all tourism activities in rural areas, more frequently either term relates to tourism products which are 'directly connected with the agrarian environment, agrarian products or agrarian stays': staying at farm, whether in rooms or camping, educational visits, meals, recreational activities, and the sale of farm product or handicrafts.

### 2. **Farm Tourism:**

Explicitly farm-related and most usually associated with tourism involving staying in farm accommodation and seeking experiences from farm operations and attractions.

### 3. **Wilderness and Forest Tourism:**

Tourist explores the wilderness and natural beauty of the rural area. It may be implicitly included within notions of rural tourism, or they may be regarded as separate. In wilderness and forest tourism, tourists travel to the natural habitat of plants and animals.

It mostly encompasses non-consumptive interactions with wildlife and nature, such as observing and photographing animals in their natural habitats. Wilderness and forest tourism includes various tourism activities such as wild photography, safari, bird watching, trekking, and hiking etc.

### 4. **Green Tourism:**

Green tourism refers to tourism in the countryside or green areas. It is more commonly used to describe forms of tourism that are considered to be more environmentally friendly than traditional, mass tourism. In rural areas, green tourism is an important form of rural tourism.



Green tourism is portrayed as an approach to tourism development which seeks to develop a symbiotic relationship with the physical and social environment on which it depends and implicitly seeks to attain sustainability ideals.

## **5. Ecotourism:**

It is a form of nature tourism (tourism to natural, unspoiled areas) which assumes active promotion of environmental conservation and direct benefits for local societies and cultures, together with the provision for tourists of a positive, educative experience. Ecotourism is a group of sustainable tourism activities occurred in the natural environment.

## **6. Rural Tourism Activities**

Various estimates suggest that tourism in rural areas makes up 10 to 20% of all tourism activity, and a Euro barometer survey reported that 23% of European holidaymakers choose the countryside or rural areas as a destination every year.

Various cultural and nature-based activities occur in rural areas. The rural environment has a long history of being managed for recreational purposes, and this symbiotic relationship has had important impacts on both environment and activities. A range of tourism and recreation activities are found in the countryside. We can categorize these activities on the bases of their nature. Types of rural tourism activities are following as:

- Touring
- Cultural activities
- Water-related activities
- Health-related activities
- Aerial activities
- Passive activities
- Sporting activities
- Hallmark events
- Business-related activities



**Touring** include various tourism activities such as hiking, horse riding, touring in gypsy caravans, motorized touring, small village/town touring, cycling, adventure holiday or wilderness holidays.

Various **cultural related tourism activities** are found in rural areas. Archaeology, restoration sites rural heritage studies, museums, courses in crafts, artistic expression workshops are some examples of the cultural activities of rural tourism.

Fishing, swimming, river tourism, canoeing, kayaking, windsurfing, speedboat racing, sailing are some examples of **water-related activities of rural tourism**.

A variety of **sporting activities of rural tourism** are found in rural areas. Some examples are potholing, rock climbing, orienteering, Tennis, Golf, low-intensity downhill skiing, and hunting.

**Health-related activities** such as fitness training, assault course, spa and health resorts are the popular activities of rural tourism. A large group of tourists travels to rural areas for the sole purpose of health improvement through health-related tourism activities.

**Passive activities** such as relaxation holidays in the rural milieu, nature study in outdoor settings including bird watching and photography, landscape appreciation are also some famous activities of rural tourism.

## Importance and Benefits of Rural Tourism

Rural tourism is an important form of tourism sector which plays an important role and gives many benefits to rural areas community. When tourists travel to rural areas, they support the local economy and helps in various way. Rural tourism helps in the development of rural areas and living standards of host communities. Some Importance and Benefits of Rural Tourism are following as:

- Provides a source of new, alternative or supplementary income and employment in rural areas.
- Rural tourism spurs infrastructure development in rural areas.
- Help to reduce gender and other social power
- Encourage collective community
- Reinvigorate local culture.
- Instill the sense of local pride, self-esteem, and identity
- Contribution to conservation and protection.



- Increase the living standards of the local community.
- Assists refurbishment and re-use of abandoned properties.
- Provide opportunities for retaining population in areas that might otherwise experience depopulation.
- Enable areas to be repopulated.

Rural tourism is a growing form of tourism. It is not just farm stays or visits to rural areas. It is more than that. Rural tourism benefits the host community of rural areas as well as surrounding natural environment through preservation and conservation of natural resources.

## **Rural Tourism Issues and Challenges**

The major issues and challenges of rural tourism need to preserve the environment and natural resources, the need of education, proper understanding for both tourists and local people, and the need to generate a democratic movement which helps people at all levels to participate in tourism development. Some importance issues and challenges of rural tourism are following as:

- Economic Leakages.
- Local price inflation.
- Distort local employment structure.
- Seasonal patterns of demands.
- Destroy indigenous culture.
- Natural habitat destruction of rural wildlife.
- Littering, emission and other forms of pollution.
- Congestion.

The cooperative system in rural tourism can be an effective approach in bringing positive impact in rural areas. Local people can monitor and control the negative impacts of rural tourism on their own society, if they have an equal stake and authority in management and development.

## **Characteristics of Rural Tourism**



The concept of rural tourism has a noble cause. It is another kind of sustainable tourism that exploits resources in rural regions, causes little or no harmful impact, and generates increasing benefits to rural areas in term of rural productivity, employment, improved distribution of wealth, conservation of the rural environment and culture, local people's involvement, and a suitable way of adapting traditional beliefs and values to modern time. Some characteristics features of rural tourism are following as:

- Seasonality
- Fragmentation
- External market needed
- Co-operation needed between internal and external market
- Role of women
- Economic role: side income for farmers and other entrepreneurs in the rural area.

Rural tourism could help in boosting the local performing arts and help conserve the local culture and can prevent rural migration. Rural tourism could attract the tourists by providing an excellent glimpse of the village ambiance with local cuisine.

## **Rural Tourism Development**

.Rural tourism development is more than just a planned process. Using an actor-oriented approach, it can be seen as a dynamic, on-going socially constructed and negotiated process that involves many social actors who continuously reshape and transform it to fit it to their perceptions, needs, values, and agendas.

Rural tourism development attracted increasing in the 1990s and a growing literature has contributed to our understanding of it as an evolving phenomenon.

According to Long and Lane, rural tourism has moved into its second phase of development, it's first having been characterized by growth in participation, product and business development, and partnership. In their review of rural tourism development, Long and Lane argue that rural tourism- at least in Europe and North America – is entering a more complex phase of expansion, differentiation, consolidation, and understanding.





Its second predicted to be more complex, and is likely to be, given the questions that remain regarding its place in policy, its integration in practice, and its dynamic role within the restructuring countryside and within wider tourism development processes.

As tourism continues to be developed in rural areas in order to counter the economic decline in the primary production sectors, the need for sustainable forms of development is recognized. Since the early 1990s, the concept of sustainable tourism development has achieved almost universal acceptance as a desirable and appropriate approach to, and goal of, tourism development.

Rural tourism development has been driven by the need for economic growth and diversification and it is important, therefore, that tourism's potential contribution to rural economic growth is not diluted by the over-specificity of principles of sustainable tourism

Andhra Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation (APTDC) has made efforts to promote rural tourism in Andhra Pradesh. Let us know about rural places you must visit when you make a trip to Andhra Pradesh state in India.

## **Rural Places to visit in Andhra Pradesh**

### **1. Puttur**

Puttur is a small village in Andhra Pradesh. It is famous for agriculture, mangroves and the prominent silk business. Traditional homes look so beautiful. Most of the inhabitants are involved in saree weaving. You will be able to see the entire saree making process and go trekking in nearby hills.

### **2. Guntur**



Guntur is home to ancient caves, temples, sanctuaries, beaches etc. The Undavalli Caves built in the 4th and 5th century depicts rock-cut architecture. Bhattiprol village which was a hub for production of clothes in the 5th century consists many Buddhist ruins. Visit Nizampatnam village and see Uppu Mahal. About 25 kms. from Guntur is Kondaveedu which is an ideal destination for trekking enthusiasts. There is also an old fort on the top of the hill in Kondaveedu.

### **3. Kadapa**

There are a number of temples in and around Kadapa. Kadapa is known as the gateway to Tirupati - place where the popular temple dedicated to Sri Venkateswara is located. Nallamalai and Palkonda hills surround Kadapa with Pennar river flowing nearby. You must visit Tirupati temple, Pushpagiri and Gandhi, Masjid-e-Azam, Chand Phira Gumbadh, Bramham Gaari Matham and Devuni Kadapa.

### **4. West Godavari**

West Godavari is a rich and fertile district in Andhra Pradesh which offers you a memorable experience of rural tourism. Kolleru Lake here is the largest fresh water lake in India and comprises of varied wildlife. There is also the Kolleru Lake Bird Sanctuary for bird and nature lovers. You will love to see migratory and aquatic birds including flamingos, teals, herons and egrets. The sanctuary also consists of animals and reptiles such as jackals, hyenas, snakes, panthers, bears, wolves and lizards.

### **5. Nellore**



Nellore is located near Chennai (Tamil Nadu) and is a hub of beautiful lakes, temples, rivers and beaches. Kandaleru Dam is 60 kms. from Nellore city. This dam is an earthen dam and the surrounding view of green forest cover and hills looks amazing. The Pulicat Lake is home to many migratory birds like flamingos, pin tails, pelican and egrets.

## **6. Etikoppaka**

This village in Andhra Pradesh is popular for Etikoppaka Toys. Etikoppaka Toys are taken by tourists to various parts of the world. The village also finds mention for its old-age tradition of wooden carvings, artefacts resembling shapes of items from Mohenjodaro and Harappa.

## **7. Ponduru Khaddar**

This village is popular for producing the best quality and finest Khadi. Khadi is exported to countries such as America, Denmark, Japan and Sweden from Ponduru.

## **8. Budithi**

This is yet another village and rural region in the state of Andhra Pradesh which is known for brassware. Budithi Brassware involves creating beautiful shapes from alloys ranging from traditional and modern item.

## **9. Kuchipudi**

Kuchipudi is a village in Movva mandal in Krishna district of Andhra Pradesh. Classical Indian dance form of Kuchipudi is believed to have originated from this village. Kuchipudi dance form became famous owing to Bhakti movement in the 7th century. In the 14th century, ascetic Siddhendra Yogi gave Kuchipudi a new definition and direction. It must be noted here that originally Kuchipudi was a male dance tradition. Kuchipudi village is located



65 kms. from Vijayawada city and 26 kms. from Machilipatnam. There are many temples in the region. Undavalli caves, Mogalrajapuram Caves, Sri Venugopal Swamy Temple and the Kanaka Durga Temple are located nearby. Nearest Railway Station is Vijayawada.

#### **10. Machilipatnam Kalamkari craft of Pedana**

near in Krishna district of Andhra Pradesh is famous worldwide. Tourists visit Pedana for several Kalamkari and Handloom cheneta (weaving). The two distinctive styles of kalamkari in India are Srikalahasti style (pen or kalam is used for free hand drawing) and the other, the Machilipatnam style of art.

#### **11. Kamavarapukota**

Kamavarapukota is a village in West Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh. Guntupalli Hills (including Kota Gattu), Dwaraka Tirumala, an ancient place of pilgrimage and Caves of Buddha are places you must visit here. Guntupalli Group of Buddhist Monuments located 40 kms. from Eluru has Buddhist caves, viharas, and a group of stupas for you to see!

Rural tourism in Andhra Pradesh is not only about sightseeing but also about tasting sumptuous cuisine of village, participating in their festivals, learning the nuances of their craft and enjoying the peaceful and green surroundings.

#### **12. Lepakshi Village**

Lepakshi has been recognized as the Best Tourism Village 2023 in Silver Category. In Lepakshi the time seems to slow down and its air resonates with the echoes of the past where the artisans have breathed life into its magnificent stone, of the architectural epitome, the Lepakshi. Lepakshi with alluring depiction of its tradition and culture captures the eye of every tourist.



In a collaborative effort between Andhra Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation and the local community project SANSKRITI is initiated with the aim to develop the Rural Tourism appeal to empower the entire populace.

Lepakshi is a small hamlet, found in the Anantpur district of Andhra Pradesh, is a remarkable place to explore the art and architecture of the ancient Vijayanagara kingdom. This location is prominent for its impressive temples, monuments and captivating traditional art. Lepakshi is culturally and archaeologically significant.

The village is home to around 10,042 people, and its most important tourist attraction is the “Sri Verabhadra Swamy Temple.” Presently, the village attracts a significant number of tourists each year, with approximately 287086 domestic visitors and 510 international visitors. There are only 2 units to stay in the village, offering a total of 16 beds for tourists.

Heritage, Art and Culture (The village promotes its heritage as tourism attraction giving significant concentration towards sculpture and temple architecture. Like Hanging pillars, Monolithic Nandi with that Jatayu theme park and Veerapuram bird sanctuary.

### **13. Peda Labudu**

Araku Valley “Ooty of Andhra” is a hill station & valley region in the Indian state of Andhra Pradesh. Amaravati the state capital is 442 km away, while Visakhapatnam has the closet airport and railway station is 115 km far. It is a valley in the Eastern Ghats inhabited by different tribes, mainly Araku Tribes. Pedalabudu village near Araku Valley is home to a tribal lifestyle and has also set up an eco-tourism village. The Galikonda hill is notable for being the tallest hill in the Andhra Pradesh state. Araku Valley is renowned for its abundant coffee plantations and Tribal Museum which provides a glimpse of Dhimsa Tribal dance in addition to being a stunning hill station.

### **14. Ecotourism**



Mogalarajapuram Caves Mogalarajapuram caves are located at a distance of 5km east of city. It has five rock cut sanctuaries dating back to the 5th century AD and of these only one is in good condition. The Mogalarajapuram temple has an 'Ardhanarisvara' statue which is thought to be the earliest in South India and one of its kind. One of the caves has an overhanging cornice with artificial windows. The idols of Lord Nataraja and Vinayaka in one cave are still in good condition compared to the other worn out images of deities. It is also a place of archaeological importance.

### **15. Bhavani Island**

Bhavani Island with a total area of 130 acres is situated in the middle of river Krishna. Journey to the island by boat is a very pleasant experience. An ideal place for picnics and other special occasions. This island is under the control of APTDC. Meetings and marriages can also organized on this island with prior permission. Bhavani Island is a unique aquatic joint blessed by the placid waters and rows of shady bowers. The picnickers can spend an exclusive day out with the family, friends and relatives at a low budget. Fringed by mangroves and manicured gardens, the woodlands, sparkling water bodies and undulating meadows, Bhavani Island is just the right destination for fun, frolic and amusement.

### **16. Kondapalli Fort**

Kondapalli Fort has been constructed as a rock tower rising up to 3 storeys. The fort has 3 entrances and the main entrance is called Dargah Darwazah, built with a single block of granite. Another entrance gate called as Golconda Darwazah is located on the other end of the hill, leading to Jaggaiahpet village. Located on a crest between two hills is the Tanish Mahal or Palace, the major attraction of Kondapalli fort. There is a deep reservoir near the palace where the water is very cold. Also, one can see several ruined structures in the fort. The surrounding Kondapalli village is famous for the toys made of light wood available on the hill, famously known as Kondapalli toys.

### **17. Gandhi Hills**

Gandhi Hill, the first Gandhi memorial in India on a hillock, is a major tourist spot in Vijayawada. Situated at a height of 500 ft, this Gandhi memorial with seven stupas was



constructed to pay tribute to the Father of the Nation. The 52 ft tall Gandhi stupa is the major attraction here, unveiled by Dr. Zakir Hussain, the then President of India, on 6th October 1968. Gandhi Memorial Library, with good collection of books; a Sound and Light show, depicting the life of Mahatma Gandhi; and a planetarium are other attractions here. A toy train ride around the hill is a favourite among the kids. The panoramic view of the Vijayawada city as seen from the Gandhi Hill is an added attraction here.

### **18. Victoria Jubilee Museum**

The Bapu Museum (formerly: Victoria Jubilee Museum) is an archaeological museum, located at M. G. Road of Vijayawada. It was renamed in the memory of the renowned film director, illustrator, cartoonist and author Bapu (film director). The museum is maintained by the Archaeological department and has large collection of sculptures, paintings and artifacts of Buddhist and Hindu relics, with some of them as old as 2nd and 3rd Centuries. The structure of building is an Indo-European style of architectural and is more than a hundred years old structure.

### **Conclusion:**

Rural tourism may be defined as the movement of people from their normal place of residence to rural areas for a minimum period of twenty-four hours to the maximum of six months for the sole purpose of leisure and pleasure. Rural tourism refers to all tourism activities in a rural area. Rural tourism has a high potential to stimulate local economic growth and social change because of its complementarity with other economic activities, its contribution to GDP and job creation, and its capacity to promote the dispersal of demand in time (fight seasonality) and along a wider territory. Rural tourism means travelling to non urbanised places with low population. An incredible chance to connect with local communities, support them and immerse you in their local culture. Rural tourism in Andhra Pradesh would mean walking and travelling across a region of green paddy fields amidst thatch-roof homes and dusty roads. Well, there are so many tourists who opt for rural tourism in Andhra Pradesh every year. So, many tourism places are in Andhra Pradesh attracted and visited by the pilgrims around the world in every day. In this situation government of AP and private investors to take initiation to invest more amounts on tourism development activities in other importance place in Andhra Pradesh. Then, will be obtaining more income and development to the government and as well



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