

DEVELOPING TOURISM IN SHAHRISABZ

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Annotation: This thesis focuses on studying the measures necessary to improve the tourism potential of Shahrisabz and promote it worldwide.

Keywords: Tourism, Shahrisabz, tourism potential, Amir Temur, tourist facilities, transportation, preservation of historical heritage.

Introduction:

Shahrisabz is one of the ancient cities of Uzbekistan, rich in historical and cultural heritage. The city contains numerous historical monuments related to Amir Temur and his era, which hold great significance for international tourism. The development of tourism in Shahrisabz is connected, on one hand, with preserving and restoring historical monuments, and on the other hand, with creating modern infrastructure. Through the preservation of historical heritage and the development of new infrastructure, Shahrisabz has the opportunity to secure a strong position not only in Uzbekistan but also in the global tourism market. First of all, it should be remembered that Shahrisabz is one of the oldest cities in the world. According to scholars, Shahrisabz is 2,700 years old, which equals the age of the “Eternal City” of Rome. According to UNESCO’s decision, this exact date was celebrated in 2002 throughout the cultural world.

Shahrisabz, known as one of the key destinations of Uzbekistan’s “Golden Ring,” is an important tourism center. The city is the birthplace of Amir Temur and preserves numerous monuments from his era. These monuments hold significant historical and cultural value. The most important historical sites in Shahrisabz (the Ak-Saray Palace, the Shakhizinda complex, the Mausoleum of Khoja Ahror Vali, and others) must be restored in accordance with international conservation standards. Each monument should be restored using materials unique to its structure and historical authenticity.

New archaeological excavations around Shahrisabz should be conducted to obtain additional information about historical monuments and to study them for scientific purposes. The areas surrounding historical sites must be protected both ecologically and aesthetically to help visitors appreciate the monuments more deeply. Establishing special research and cultural centers dedicated to studying, promoting, and preserving historical heritage will further enhance the cultural importance of the city. Creating new infrastructure is crucial for developing tourism in Shahrisabz. It is necessary to establish a comfortable and modern environment for tourists while also improving the overall development of the city.

Construction of Hotels and Tourist Facilities:

Modern hotels and tourist complexes that match both the historical and cultural environment of the city should be built. These structures must align with the city's traditional architecture while offering convenient services for visitors. Tourist complexes should include conference halls, entertainment areas, and spaces for cultural events.

Improving the Transport System:

To facilitate access to and from Shahrisabz, new roads and transport networks must be developed. Expanding bus routes, railway services, and air transport opportunities is essential. Additionally, suitable infrastructure for car traffic and pedestrian movement within the city must be created.

Accommodation and Service Infrastructure:

A wide range of restaurants, cafes, shops, and affordable service centers must be established for tourists. These facilities should be modern, convenient, and comfortable. Developing ecotourism and cultural tourism in and around Shahrisabz is also important. Introducing tourists to natural landscapes, ancient villages, and local traditions will open new tourism routes and opportunities. Digital services for tourists—mobile applications, interactive maps, and online platforms—should also be expanded.

Role of the Local Population:

The local population plays a crucial role in the development of tourism. Engaging them in this process will help them benefit from tourism and improve their economic well-being. Several measures should be taken in this direction, such as: education and training in tourism: Preparing local residents to work in the tourism sector by providing special courses on customer service, cultural interpretation, and the development of tourism products. This not only benefits the tourism sector but also provides stable employment and income for locals. Promoting local products: Introducing tourists to traditional goods, handicrafts, food, and other culturally significant products produced in Shahrisabz. Organizing social and cultural events: Festivals, art exhibitions, and cultural programs for local residents and visitors will make tourism more attractive and create an engaging atmosphere for travelers.

Marketing Shahrisabz Globally:

Effective marketing strategies must be developed to further promote Shahrisabz on the global tourism map. Key measures include participation in international tourism exhibitions: Representing Shahrisabz at global events and conducting international promotional campaigns. Social media and online marketing: Promoting Shahrisabz's historical and cultural treasures on the internet, expanding online advertising, and increasing social media activity. Cooperation with tourism agencies: Strengthening collaboration with international and local travel agencies, offering specialized tourism packages and routes for travelers.

The most important point is that all necessary conditions are being created in our country—particularly in the ancient land of Shahrisabz—to develop tourism, and numerous reforms are being implemented to further increase the number of tourists. Among these, we can note the diplomatic agreements and treaties currently being signed. For example, in order to showcase national Uzbek games to foreign and local tourists, the traditional game *ulok-kupkari* was organized in Kitob district on March 23, 2021. More than 80 foreign tourists and over 100 local visitors observed the event with great interest.

To intensify activities aimed at attracting more tourists, a competition has been announced to create and promote a new tourism brand of the city. A list of routes and hotels for organizing info-tours for foreign media and tourism companies is being prepared. Scripts for promotional videos and a tourist excursion map of the city are being developed, and work is underway to establish tourist information offices.

According to the results of 2019, 6.748 million people visited Uzbekistan, which is undoubtedly 125 percent more than the statistics of 2018. Out of the total number of tourists visiting Uzbekistan, 6.260 million came from CIS countries, while 488.4 thousand travelers arrived from non-CIS countries. As you walk through Shahrisabz, you can see many souvenir shops either in old madrasahs or simply along the streets. Among them, various types of magnets featuring images of the city stand out. In addition to the traditional clay and ceramic magnets, souvenirs made from wood, paper, leather, and even marble can be found.

Moreover, the climate of Shahrisabz is very suitable for tourists—the weather is not extremely hot, and the natural environment allows visitors to explore comfortably. When visiting the foothills with tourists, one can observe wild animals, and in the rivers, several species of fish can be seen. Interestingly, the main highway passing through Shahrisabz follows the same route once traveled by the great Italian explorer Marco Polo.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, Shahrisabz is, in many respects, an ideal destination for tourists. Its hotels are fully adapted to the needs of visitors. Ensuring harmony between the preservation of historical heritage and the creation of modern infrastructure is essential for the development of tourism in Shahrisabz. By restoring and protecting historical monuments, modernizing urban infrastructure, and engaging the local population in tourism activities, Shahrisabz can become not only a leading tourist center in Uzbekistan but also a globally recognized destination. Through strategic tourism development and the creation of high-quality infrastructure, the city can achieve economic growth, cultural advancement, and a strong position in the global tourism market.

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