

# PILGRIM TOURS WITH GUIDE

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The "Pilgrim Tours with Guide" project in Uttarakhand, India, presents a micro and small investment opportunity that caters to the spiritual and cultural interests of pilgrims visiting this picturesque state. This profile serves as a valuable reference for aspiring entrepreneurs interested in providing guided pilgrimage experiences in Uttarakhand.

## 2. SERVICE & ITS APPLICATION

The "Pilgrim Tours with Guide" project is tailored to cater to a spectrum of visitors by offering guided tours to the sacred and spiritually significant destinations across Uttarakhand. At the heart of this initiative is the provision of a multifaceted experience that encompasses spiritual tourism, cultural exploration, educational journeys, customized packages, and community engagement. By delving into the religious importance of each site, the tours aim to provide pilgrims with a deep and enriching spiritual journey, enhancing their understanding and connection to the divine. Beyond spirituality, these tours serve as a gateway for tourists to immerse themselves in Uttarakhand's rich cultural tapestry, exploring its traditions, rituals, and folklore. Educational institutions also stand to benefit, as these tours offer students a unique blend of educational content and spiritual insight, shedding light on the region's religious and cultural diversity. Recognizing the diverse needs of its clientele, the project emphasizes the creation of customized pilgrimage packages, tailored to fit the specific preferences and requirements of tourists, ensuring a personalized experience for every visitor. Moreover, the initiative actively involves local communities in tourism activities, fostering socio-economic development in the region and promoting a sense of ownership and pride among its residents. Through these guided pilgrim tours, the project not only aims to offer a memorable and enlightening experience to visitors but also to contribute to the preservation and celebration of Uttarakhand's spiritual and cultural heritage.

### **3. DESIRED QUALIFICATION FOR PROMOTER**

Prospective promoters of the "Pilgrim Tours with Guide" project should come equipped with a multifaceted skill set and deep-rooted attributes to ensure the success of these spiritually enriching tours. Central to this role is a profound knowledge of Uttarakhand, including its pilgrimage sites, cultural heritage, and local traditions, which is essential for crafting meaningful and immersive tour experiences. Equally important are guiding skills; the ability to communicate effectively and engagingly with tourists is paramount in providing informative tours that captivate and educate. Interpersonal skills play a significant role as well, as building a rapport with tourists, understanding their individual needs, and ensuring they have a comfortable and enriching experience is crucial for the tour's success. Established connections within local communities, religious institutions, and accommodations are invaluable for facilitating smooth operations and authentic experiences. Knowledge of safety protocols and first aid procedures is also necessary to guarantee the well-being of tourists under all circumstances. Furthermore, proficiency in marketing and customer service is vital in attracting and retaining clients, while a solid grasp of business management skills, including financial planning, record-keeping, and regulatory compliance, underpins the operational and financial health of the venture. Collectively, these qualifications and attributes are fundamental for anyone aiming to promote and lead successful "Pilgrim Tours with Guide" in Uttarakhand.

### **4. BUSINESS OUTLOOK AND TRENDS**

The "Pilgrim Tours with Guide" sector in Uttarakhand is buoyed by a variety of factors and trends that shape its landscape and future prospects. At the forefront is the burgeoning interest in spiritual tourism, with Uttarakhand's revered spiritual sites drawing pilgrims in large numbers, underscoring the sector's growth potential. This aligns with a heightened focus on heritage conservation, as the preservation and promotion of sacred sites and cultural traditions open new avenues for enriched guided tours. Concurrently, there's a shift towards sustainable and eco-friendly tourism practices, mirroring the state's commitment to preserving its pristine natural beauty and aligning with global conservation trends. Personalization also marks a significant trend, with tourists increasingly seeking customized

and intimate pilgrimage experiences, paving the way for specialized tour offerings. The role of digital connectivity cannot be overstated, as it revolutionizes how pilgrimage tours are marketed and booked, broadening the reach to a global audience. Moreover, tours that engage with and benefit local communities resonate more with tourists, contributing to a model of responsible and sustainable tourism. Reflecting on the broader impact, data from the Ministry of Tourism highlights a remarkable surge in pilgrimage tourism revenue, from ₹65,070 crore in 2021 to ₹1,34,543 crore in 2022, with a notable 70% of Indian travelers in 2023 expressing an interest in spiritual journeys. This trend not only underscores pilgrimage tourism as predominantly family-oriented but also reveals a significant uptick in expenditure on religious travel, indicating a thriving market with expansive growth opportunities.

## **5. KEY BUSINESS ELEMENTS**

The "Pilgrim Tours with Guide" project in Uttarakhand, India, is built upon several crucial business elements that are pivotal for its success in the competitive and culturally rich landscape of spiritual tourism. Central to this venture is the profound knowledge and expertise regarding the spiritual, historical, and cultural facets of the region's pilgrimage sites. Guides equipped with this knowledge can offer tourists insightful and enriching experiences. A cornerstone of our approach includes the customization of tour packages to meet the diverse preferences of our clients, ranging from family tours to solo spiritual journeys and educational trips, with adjustments for tour length, physical activity levels, and thematic focuses such as meditation retreats.

Sustainability and eco-friendliness are at the heart of our operations, aiming to preserve the natural and spiritual purity of pilgrimage destinations through responsible tourism practices. This ethos extends to our engagement with local communities, ensuring they are integral to the tourism value chain, which in turn promotes economic benefits locally through the employment of local guides and promotion of local crafts and cuisine.

Safety and accessibility for all tourists, including those with special needs or the elderly, are prioritized through well-organized logistics and knowledgeable guides trained in first aid and

emergency procedures. Our digital presence, through a user-friendly website, active social media, and online booking, complements traditional marketing strategies, broadening our reach. Quality assurance and customer satisfaction are maintained through continuous feedback and improvement processes, ensuring high service standards from booking to tour completion. Finally, adherence to regulatory compliance and ethical practices ensures transparency, fair employment, and respect for the spiritual significance of the sites we visit.

Together, these elements form the foundation of our "Pilgrim Tours with Guide" project, aiming to provide transformative experiences while fostering sustainable and responsible tourism that benefits both visitors and the local communities of Uttarakhand.

## **6. MARKET POTENTIAL AND MARKETING ISSUES; IF ANY**

Uttarakhand, a revered destination for pilgrims, is home to the Chota Char Dham, a sacred circuit encompassing four pivotal religious sites: Badrinath, dedicated to Lord Vishnu; Kedarnath, honoring Lord Shiva; Gangotri, marking the sacred source of the Ganges; and Yamunotri, the origin of the Yamuna River. This pilgrimage, essential to Hinduism, draws devotees to these shrines to seek spiritual solace and blessings. Alongside, the Panch Prayag, the confluence of five rivers forming the Ganga, further elevates Uttarakhand's spiritual stature, embodying the sanctity of the Ganga, worshipped as a goddess.

The region's spiritual landscape extends beyond these, including Panch Badri, encompassing five Badri shrines; Hemkund Sahib, a significant Sikh pilgrimage at 4,329 meters above sea level; Panch Kedar, a trekking route linking five Lord Shiva temples; Baijnath, a revered Shiva site; and the Kartik Swami Temple, a notable attraction in Rudraprayag.

As of 2023, pilgrims face no COVID-19 related travel restrictions but must register on the Uttarakhand government's tourism portal for the Char Dham Yatra. Air travelers need a negative RT-PCR or equivalent test report taken within 72 hours prior to departure and must install the Aarogya Setu app. The Uttarakhand Tourism Policy of 2023 encourages private tour operations, mandating Tourist Information Centers at key transport hubs, and outlines the ideal visiting seasons: the pleasant months of March to June, the rainy period

of July to September, and the cold, potentially snowy, October to February. These guidelines and policies aim to streamline the pilgrimage experience while promoting sustainable and respectful tourism practices.

## **7. SUPPLY OF RAW MATERIAL**

The "Pilgrim Tours with Guide" project, while service-oriented, relies on several key resources to ensure its operations run smoothly. Essential to these tours is the provision of transportation, which involves the use of well-maintained and comfortable vehicles like buses, jeeps, or minivans, to ferry tourists to various pilgrimage destinations. Equally important are the tour guides, who serve as the project's backbone by offering rich, informative narratives that bring the spiritual journey to life for the pilgrims. These guides must be knowledgeable and well-trained to effectively engage and educate the tourists about the sites' historical and religious significance. Additionally, communication tools, including microphones and speakers, become necessary, especially when addressing large groups, ensuring messages are clearly conveyed. Lastly, the use of printed materials such as brochures, pamphlets, and informational booklets about the pilgrimage sites, their traditions, and rituals, significantly enriches the tourists' experience, providing them with a deeper understanding and connection to the sacred places they visit.

## **8. BUSINESS MODEL**

The "Pilgrim Tours with Guide" project in Uttarakhand, India, employs a business model centered on offering guided tours to sacred sites and pilgrimage destinations, tapping into the demand for spiritual and cultural tourism. The model generates revenue primarily through the sale of diverse tour packages tailored to various tourist segments, including individuals, families, and educational institutions, with pricing based on tour length, accommodations, and additional services. Additional income comes from customized tours and the sale of religious artifacts and souvenirs. Operational costs cover transportation, tour guide salaries, marketing, and administrative expenses. This business model is crafted to deliver a comprehensive spiritual experience, leveraging Uttarakhand's religious heritage while promoting sustainability and community engagement.

## 9. BUSINESS PROCESS

The "Pilgrim Tours with Guide" project does not involve a manufacturing process in the traditional sense since it primarily offers services. However, here is a brief of the process involved in providing guided pilgrimage tours:

Initially, market research identifies target customer segments and selects destinations for the tours. Detailed itineraries are then developed. Logistics and infrastructure are arranged, including transportation, accommodation partnerships, and permits. The recruitment and training of knowledgeable tour guides follow, emphasizing proficiency and communication skills. Marketing efforts focus on online presence and targeted advertising. During tour operations, careful execution includes timely departures, informative narration, and cultural experiences. Customer feedback is gathered to assess satisfaction, leading to continuous refinement of services and itineraries for an enhanced tour experience. The Government of Uttarakhand has a travel policy that requires pilgrims to register themselves and their vehicles before starting their journey to Char Dham and Hemkund Sahib. Pilgrims must also verify themselves at each shrine they reach.

## 10. MANPOWER REQUIREMENT

Sr. No	Particulars	No. of Person	Months	Monthly Wages Amount/Person (Rs in Lakhs)	Monthly Wages - Total (Rs in Lakhs)	Annual Expenses (Rs in Lakhs)
1	Skilled	2	12	0.20	0.40	4.80
2	Semi-skilled	2	12	0.15	0.30	3.60
3	Unskilled	1	12	0.10	0.10	1.20
	<b>Total</b>					<b>9.60</b>

## 11. IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE

Sr. No.	Activity	Time Required (in months)
1	Acquisition of premises	1.5
2	Construction (if applicable)	2

3	Procurement & installation of Plant & Machinery	1.5
4	Arrangement of Finance	1
5	Recruitment of required manpower	1
	<b>Total time required (some activities shall run concurrently)</b>	<b>6</b>

## 12. COST OF PROJECT

Sr. No	Particulars	Amount (Rs in Lakhs)
1	Pre-operative Expenses	0.75
2	Land and Building	7.00
3	Machinery	22.29
4	Equipment and Furniture	0.48
5	Working Capital	0.80
	<b>Total Project Cost</b>	<b>31.32</b>

## 13. MEANS OF FINANCE

Bank-term loans are assumed @ 75 % of fixed assets.

Sr. No.	Particulars	Percentage Share	Amount (Rs in Lakhs)
1	Promoter's Contribution	25%	7.83
2	Bank Finance	75%	23.49
	<b>Total</b>		<b>31.32</b>

## 14. FURNITURE AND FIXTURES

### A. Fixtures

Sr. No.	Particulars	Unit	Unit Cost (Rs in Lakhs)	Amount (Rs in Lakhs)
1	Tourist Vehicles (Buses/Minivans/Jeeps)	Vehicle	15.00	15.00
2	Microphone and Speaker Systems	Set	0.30	0.30
3	Informational Material Printing	Set	0.15	0.15
4	First Aid Kits	Kit	0.03	0.03
5	Communication Tools (Walkie-Talkies)	Set	0.07	0.07

6	Tour Guide Uniforms	Set	0.04	0.04
7	Laptop/Smartphone for Tour Coordination	Unit	0.40	0.40
8	GPS Navigation Devices	Unit	0.15	0.15
9	Marketing and Promotional Materials	Set	0.20	0.20
10	Tourist Registration and Booking Software	License	0.40	0.40
11	Storage and Organizational Equipment	Set	0.10	0.10
12	Accounting and Record-Keeping Software	License	0.30	0.30
<b>Total Amount in Rs.</b>				<b>17.14</b>
Tax, Transportation, Insurance, etc. in Rs.				3.43
Electrification Expenses (Wiring) in Rs.				1.72
<b>Grand Total Amount in Rs.</b>				<b>22.29</b>

### B. Furniture & Setup

Sr. No	Particulars	Unit	Unit Cost (Rs in Lakhs)	Amount (Rs in Lakhs)
1	Office Furniture (Desks, Chairs, etc.)	Set	0.25	0.25
2	Information Desk and Signage	Unit	0.08	0.08
3	Tourist Waiting Area Furniture	Set	0.15	0.15
<b>Total Amount</b>				<b>0.48</b>

## 15. SALES REALIZATION CALCULATION

Sr. No	Product	Quantity (No. Packages)	Sales in Percentage	Total Sales (Rs in Lakhs)
1	Tour Packages – Various	150	100%	75.00
<b>Total</b>			100%	75.00

## 16. PROFITABILITY CALCULATIONS

Sr. No	Particulars - Amount (Rs.)	Year-I (Rs in Lakhs)
A.	Sales Realization	
	Sales (Assuming 15% growth per year)	75.00
	Other Income (Assuming constant)	
	Total Sales Realization	75.00
B.	Cost of Production	

	i) Raw Materials	3.75
	ii) Utilities (Assuming constant)	22.50
	iii) Manpower (Salaries/wages)	9.60
	iv) Administrative Expenses (Assuming constant)	6.00
	v) Selling & Distribution Expenses (Assuming constant)	3.00
	viii) Interest (Assuming constant)	3.14
	Total Cost of Production	47.99
	Gross Profit/Loss (A – B)	27.02
	Less: Depreciation	2.51
C.	PBIT (Profit Before Interest and Tax)	24.52
D.	Income-tax (Assuming 28% tax rate)	6.87
E.	Net Profit/Loss (C - D)	17.65
F.	Repayment	3.14
	Retained Surplus (E - F)	14.52

## 17. BREAKEVEN ANALYSIS

Fixed cost	Year-I (Rs in Lakhs)
Depreciation	2.51
Interest	3.14
Manpower	2.88
<b>Total Fixed cost</b>	<b>8.53</b>
<b>Variable cost</b>	
Raw materials	3.75
Utilities	22.5
ManPower	6.72
Administrative expenses	6
Selling & distribution expenses	3
<b>Total Variable cost</b>	<b>41.97</b>

<b>Contribution margin</b>	<b>20%</b>
Break-Even Point in Value	42.65

## 18. STATUTORY/GOVERNMENT APPROVALS

Operating a "Pilgrim Tours with Guide" project in Uttarakhand, India, requires adherence to various statutory and government regulations. Here are some key approvals and permits that entrepreneurs should consider:

- **Tour Operator License:** Obtain a tour operator license from the relevant government authority, such as the Uttarakhand Tourism Development Board or the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India.
- **Commercial Vehicle Permits:** Ensure that all tourist vehicles used for transportation are registered and have the necessary commercial vehicle permits.
- **National Park and Wildlife Sanctuary Permits:** If your tours include visits to national parks or wildlife sanctuaries, obtain the required permits and comply with wildlife protection regulations.
- **Goods and Services Tax (GST) Registration:** Register for GST as applicable and comply with GST regulations for tour services.
- **Local Municipality Licenses:** Check with the local municipality or municipal corporation for any specific licenses or permits required for conducting tourism-related activities.
- **Environment Clearance:** If your project involves any construction or infrastructure development, obtain environmental clearance if required under environmental laws.
- **Safety and Security Compliance:** Ensure compliance with safety and security regulations for tourist vehicles and tour operations. Implement safety measures and training for staff.
- **Insurance Coverage:** Consider insurance coverage for tour vehicles, liability insurance, and other relevant policies to safeguard against unexpected events.

## 19. TRAINING CENTERS AND COURSES

In Uttarakhand, India, several training centers and courses are available to support individuals interested in the "Pilgrim Tours with Guide" business and related tourism activities. These centers offer valuable training and education in various aspects of tourism, hospitality, and guiding. Here are some notable institutions and courses:

- **Uttarakhand Tourism Development Board (UTDB):**
  - UTDB plays a crucial role in promoting tourism in Uttarakhand. It offers training programs and workshops for tour operators, guides, and those involved in the tourism industry.
  - Courses cover topics such as tour management, customer service, and cultural sensitivity.
- **National Institute of Mountaineering and Allied Sports (NIMAS):**
  - Located in Uttarkashi, NIMAS offers a range of courses related to adventure tourism and mountaineering.
  - These courses include guiding, wilderness first aid, and outdoor leadership.
- **Indira Gandhi National Forest Academy (IGNFA):**
  - Located in Dehradun, IGNFA provides training in forestry and environmental management, which can be valuable for guides involved in eco-tourism and nature-based tours.
- **Institute of Hotel Management (IHM), Dehradun:**
  - IHM Dehradun offers courses in hotel management and catering technology.
  - These courses can be beneficial for individuals interested in the hospitality aspect of tour operations.
- **Language Training Centers:**
  - Language institutes in major cities like Dehradun and Haridwar offer language courses in English, Hindi, and other regional languages. Proficiency in multiple languages can be advantageous for tour guides.
- **Online Tourism Courses:**

- Several online platforms offer tourism-related courses, including tour guiding, travel management, and customer service.
- These courses provide flexibility for individuals looking to enhance their skills and knowledge.
- Swayam portal (link: <https://swayam.gov.in/>) can also be accessed for enhanced learning on business commerce, accounting, production, marketing, and areas of entrepreneurship.
- **Government-Sponsored Skill Development Programs:**
  - The Government of Uttarakhand often initiates skill development programs aimed at enhancing the employability of the local youth in tourism-related fields.
- **Cultural Heritage Courses:**
  - Some universities and cultural organizations offer courses on the cultural heritage of Uttarakhand, which can be valuable for guides providing cultural tours.

Aspiring tour guides and entrepreneurs in the "Pilgrim Tours with Guide" industry can explore these training centers and courses to acquire the necessary skills and knowledge. Additionally, staying updated with the latest trends and best practices in tourism and guiding is essential for providing high-quality services to tourists in Uttarakhand.

## **Disclaimer**

Only few machine manufacturers/institutes are mentioned in the profile, although many machine manufacturers/institutes are available in the market. The addresses given for machinery manufacturers/institutes have been taken from reliable sources, to the best of knowledge and contacts. However, no responsibility is admitted, in case any inadvertent error or incorrectness is noticed therein. Further the same have been given by way of information only and do not carry any recommendation.