



HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL SPORT TOURISM

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Annotation: *Every field has its own development history. Sports tourism also has a historical path of development and accumulated experience. While most sources indicate that the origins of international sports tourism date back to the mid-19th century, some sources suggest it aligns with the general development of tourism in the 17th–18th centuries. Sports tourism differs from other types of tourism due to its extreme nature: it is organized under challenging natural and artificial conditions, involves overcoming extraordinary risks, and requires a high level of risk-taking. Therefore, it is appropriate to consider the history of sports tourism as beginning with the rise of mountaineering in Europe. This article discusses the development history of sports tourism on a global scale and within Uzbekistan.*

Keywords: *tourism, sports tourism, development history, international sports tourism, national sports tourism.*

ИСТОРИЧЕСКОЕ РАЗВИТИЕ МЕЖДУНАРОДНОГО И НАЦИОНАЛЬНОГО СПОРТИВНОГО ТУРИЗМА

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Аннотация: *У каждой отрасли есть своя история развития. Спортивный туризм также имеет свой путь исторического становления и накопленного опыта. В большинстве источников начало развития международного спортивного туризма относят ко второй половине XIX века, хотя в некоторых источниках указано, что он тесно связан с общим развитием туризма в XVII–XVIII веках. Спортивный туризм отличается от других видов туризма своим экстремальным характером: он проводится в сложных природных и искусственных условиях, требует преодоления чрезвычайных опасностей и основан на высоком уровне риска. Поэтому будет правильно отсчитывать историю развития спортивного туризма с периода развития альпинизма в Европе. В статье рассматривается история развития спортивного туризма в мире и в Узбекистане.*

Ключевые слова: *туризм, спортивный туризм, история развития, международный спортивный туризм, национальный спортивный туризм.*

INTRODUCTION

According to sources, sport tourism began to take shape in the mid-19th century, as specialized clubs for alpinists started to form in Europe. However, some references trace



the earliest growth of sport tourism back to the 17th–18th centuries. During this period, a tradition emerged in Europe aimed at cultivating the young “gentleman.” Under this custom, sons of affluent families in France and Italy, after receiving a basic education, would embark on extended journeys under the supervision of a tutor. These Grand Tours often lasted five years or more.

English writer William Ramsey, in his 1672 work *The Gentleman's Companion: or, a character of true nobility, and gentility: in the way of essay*, wrote:

"Travel is necessary for testing a traveler's endurance and, ultimately, shaping him into a noble person." [18]

Leading educators of the time supported this idea, believing that prolonged travel helped young men develop courage, perseverance, nobility, and integrity.

The English philosopher John Locke (1632–1704), whose pedagogical ideas were widely influential, also endorsed the concept of the Grand Tour. In his 1691 work *Thoughts on Education*, he wrote:

"The final part of education, as the culmination of the process, must be a simple journey befitting a gentleman... I believe the benefits of foreign travel are great: while traveling abroad, young men at the age of sixteen to twenty-one are more capable of self-improvement. There are two main benefits: first, the opportunity to learn a foreign language; second, intellectual growth and the acquisition of practical experience through observation and interaction with the local people, their customs, and moral life." [4, p. 603]

The first alpinist clubs in the Alps and other major mountain ranges were formed as follows: the Alpine Club in London (December 1857), the Austrian Alpenverein in Vienna (November 1862), and in 1869 Deutscher Alpenverein (DAV), formed through the merger of German and Austrian alpine groups [1; 17]. In 1865, climbers reached the summit of the Hörnli (Hornligrat, 4,478 m) on the Swiss–Italian Matterhorn—the mountain's silhouette is even featured on the Toblerone chocolate packaging [5].

These clubs were created to develop alpinism, support club activities, train qualified guides, and consolidate best practices. In 1874, the first alpine tourism base opened in Switzerland, and in 1932, the international Alpinist Associations Union (UIAA) was established in Chamonix-Mont-Blanc, France [8]. By the early 20th century, sport tourism had gained wide traction in the USA, Canada, and across Europe.

Sport tourism in Uzbekistan and the broader Soviet Union developed through practical measures implemented during the USSR era. According to the research by M.A. Darmonova and Z.R. Darmonov, in the 1920s, the Soviet Union created proletarian tourism and excursion societies. Initially regarded as a sport-based movement, guidelines were established for walking, skiing, and extreme tourism. Alpinism began its development in the USSR in 1923 [2].

In his research, E.N. Kodysh revealed that, in 1928, the Military Tourism Bureau was established to support defense efforts. The bureau organized training trips by bicycle, horse, and foot. In 1931, scientific principles of walking technique were developed to aid geological and cartographic exploration of tourism areas [3, p. 170]. In 1932, Moscow



Amateur Tourism Society (MOLT) was founded. However, sport tourism among the public became popular only after World War II [8].

In the 1930s, as fascism spread in Germany and Italy and the threat of war increased, the USSR focused on defense system strengthening. This included identifying strategic mountain routes and passes with the help of sport and physical education. Subsequently, mountain tourism was promoted as a defense reserve. From the 1950s, technically demanding—and financially costly—alpinism grew in Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, and Uzbekistan. As a result, climbers and tourists from the USA, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and France visited to conquer regional peaks, including:

- **Uzbekistan:** Hazrat Sultan (4,643 m), Hazarxon (4,496 m), Hojipir (4,424 m), Xarbatog‘ (4,395 m), Adalunga (4,301 m), Beshtar (4,299 m)
- **Kazakhstan:** Khan Tengri (6,995 m), Talgar (4,973–4,979 m), Nursultan (4,330.9 m), Satpaev (4,317 m)
- **Kyrgyzstan:** Victory Peak (7,439 m), Lenin Peak (7,134 m), Military Topographers Peak (6,873 m), Friendship Peak (6,800 m), Shater (6,700 m), Chapaev (6,371 m), Sarijoz (5,816 m).

During the USSR era, until the 1950s, tourism primarily included water-based, walking, cycling, and skiing activities. By the 1980s, mountain, motorcycle, and automobile touring were also classified as sport tourism. Rebuilding of bicycle factories in Kharkov and Riga after World War II boosted cycle tourism, which was officially recognized in 1949. In the Uzbek SSR, cycle tourism began to flourish; for example, in 1975, Andijan’s A. Gersfeld cycled about 190,000 km across Vladivostok, Brest, Siberia, Kalmykia, Arkhangelsk, even crossing the Kyzylkum and Karakum deserts in 45 days [2].

In the 1970s, sport tourism was promoted via regional and all-Union competitions, which later became championships. In 1976, the All-Union Federation Council of Trade Unions established the Tourism and Excursions Central Council—later renamed in 1985 under its jurisdiction, with local federations formed. By the late 1980s, there were over 950 tourism departments and more than 40,000 amateur groups across the USSR [7, pp. 151, 247].

By independence, Uzbekistan also focused on developing auto-moto sport tourism, water sports, and equestrian tourism. Despite establishing legal, material, and technical frameworks, these types did not become widely popular among youth. Reasons include:

- Sedentary lifestyles and family obligations in Eastern–Uzbek culture reducing interest in travel, especially sport tourism
- Lack of integration between transport, agriculture, and sporting sectors
- Organizational-resource limitations
- Scarcity of qualified trainers
- Insufficient collaboration among sport tourism entities, youth institutions, educational organizations, and defense bodies

Qualified athletes engaged in listed sport tourism activities; however, amateur participation lacked systematic development. Youth participation was mainly limited to school-organized summer camps.



Mental and cultural factors also influenced low popularity. Uzbek youth, accustomed to sedentary family lives, faced seasonal domestic duties. This made planning long trips difficult, limiting exposure and motivation for sport tourism.

In early independence, President's Decree PF-447 (July 27, 1992) and Cabinet Decree No. 484 (October 20, 1992) led to the founding of the national tourism company "O'zbe...rturizm," laying the groundwork for national and sport tourism [15, 11]. This brought unified tourism development strategies, introducing organizations like the "Intur-Toj" joint venture.

Subsequent initiatives included the use of the Great Silk Road in tourism revival (Decree PF-1162, June 2, 1995), modernization of international tourism infrastructure (Cabinet Decree No. 210, June 3, 1995), and creation of free economic zones in Samarkand, Bukhara, Khiva, and Tashkent, alongside simplified customs procedures — all aimed at expanding cross-border tourism [10, 13]. An Interdepartmental Council for Tourism was also formed [10].

Further decrees emphasized tourism as a strategic economic sector (PF-2286, April 15, 1999), strengthening international arrival facilities, building hotel infrastructure in Tashkent (Decree No. 310, September 2, 2002), and adoption of the Tourism Law (18 July 2019) [12]. This law prioritized protecting tourist rights, ensuring equality, encouraging competition, and promoting investment and innovation following global standards.

Most recently, Decree PF-102 (18 July 2024) focuses on improving infrastructure and increasing foreign tourist inflows, reinforcing Uzbekistan as an attractive destination [14].

In summary:

1. Although tourism developed through educational and cultural motives, sport tourism originated with the formation of the first alpinist clubs, leveraging its adventurous nature.
2. Its emergence reflects broader societal shifts in culture, science, and technology, sparking growing interest and motivation.
3. Regional attitudes and cultural traits—such as sedentary living among Eastern Uzbek populations—affected adoption levels of sport tourism.
4. Uzbekistan's sport tourism history is intertwined with Soviet legacies and evolved through interconnected developments.
5. Since independence, the Uzbek state has actively promoted tourism and sport tourism within national economic strategies and public health policy, encouraging youth involvement and preserving cultural heritage.

Thus, sport tourism, like any field, possesses its own historical evolution. Studying its global and national development enables identification of best practices and opportunities. This knowledge supports designing strategic directions for the future growth of sport tourism.



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