

CULTURAL TOURISM

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Tourism is today recognized as a social phenomenon which brings mankind closer to different social values, cultural heritage and customs. Cultural resources include places that provide for entertainment, health, sports and religion. Health spas, centers for physical fitness, weight reduction and special medical treatment become travel objectives for many travelers. Consumer satisfaction from Kalari is attained through increased beauty, fitness, stress management, power, analytical intelligence and value-orientation.

‘Kalaripayattu’ is a scientific heritage of Kerala and it inherits the technology of the body through which self, power and behaviours develops in the right manner. ‘Kalaripayattu’ is the martial art form of Kerala after a long set back during the colonial rule. This treasure, inherited by the present day society, can be utilized for the development of Heritage Tourism in India. In Malayalam Kalari means ‘open space’ and ‘payattu’ means to exercise in ‘arms, practice’. Payattu means ‘to become trained, accustomed and to practice’.

‘Kalari’ demonstration during festivals and district-wise competitions add to the glory of this Martial Art. Although such print and visual media representations of ‘Kalaripayattu’ are recent developments, this martial art has a long history of being adapted for practice and/or presentation in a variety of contexts other than for interstate warfare and duels. This includes the training of Kerala’s Kathakali dance-drama performers, use in Hindu ‘Theyyam’ ritual performances, Health Tourism, Demonstrations and Kalari Festivals supported by Government.

Kalari treatment is done with Ayurveda medicines and different massages inside the 'Kalari'. Marma Treatment is a part of Kalari treatment in which 'chavittiyuzhichil' is important. Of the 107 vital spots identified, Susruta listed fifty-one as leading either to immediate death, death within twenty-four hours, or one month. The pragmatic or practical knowledge of Gurukkal will lead to expert therapeutic treatments such as bone-setting, massage and administration of Kizhi. When Ayurveda-Yoga and Kalarippayattu can be beautifully blended, there is ample scope for the development of Heritage Tourism in Kerala.

Pranayama (Inhalation and Exhalation) is not a physical exercise but a mental exercise to calm down the mind and soul. Many dancers acquire flexibility to the body with 'Kalarippayattu'. Performers and Dance-drama artists take traditional 'Kalarippayattu' to foreign countries to improve the perfection in Choreography and contemporary drama. According to Dr. Phillip.B.Zarrilli, inner eye is more important for an experience for both actors and audience.

'Kalari' is considered as a martial art which cultivates mental, physical and spiritual benefits. It is also considered as a scientific system of physical training beneficial to the modern sportsman. This traditional psycho- physiological discipline enables to cultivate mental physical and spiritual benefits. Kalarippayattu the martial art form of Kerala is regarded as the oldest and most scientific of its kind in the world.

‘Kalaripayattu’ which has won its fame and glory all over the world is the oldest form of indigenous martial art which has encapsulated Kerala’s cultural and historical heritage. The Kalari legacy is also well thought-out as a scientific system of physical-culture training of use to the modern sportsman. Tourists also come to Kerala for ‘Kalari Chikitsa’ (Specialty Ayurveda practices in Kalarippayattu heritage) which is meant for orthopedic problems, sports injuries and neurological ailments. The ‘Kalari Chikitsa’ is capable of healing any kind of bone fractures which are not in the category of surgical intervention such as, fractures of skull etc. There is also ‘Kalari chikitsa’ for Post operative orthopedic rehabilitation. Many Kalari/Ayurveda and Research centers in Kerala function as a specialty treatment hospital for orthopedic and sports medicine ailments which attracts tourists; both domestic and foreign.

The Kalari system is built upon the scientific reasoning of Ayurveda, Yoga and Vastu shastra. Kalari Uzhichil (Kalari massage) where the entire body is massaged with medicated oil in a methodical way is yet another area where tourists are attracted. The massage is executed by hand as well as by the feet of the therapy personal which is specific to ‘Kalari Uzhichil’. The massaging practice mainly helps to make easy the healthy and accurate flow of energy in the system, helps to promote healthy tissue conversion, waste disposal and harnessing of body-mind-soul coordination and integrity. This therapy module is the principal way to treat various disorders of the body such as, inter-vertebral disc prolapses, cervical spondylitis, frozen shoulder and many other disease conditions pertaining to musculoskeletal and neurological origins. The massage harness the functionality of Marma leads to impart corrective measures for healing the system and to rejuvenate the body. A good number of tourists are attracted by rejuvenation of the body through ‘Kalari’ massage.

Kalarippayattu Movement Therapy 'KMT' is a movement based healing methodology based on body dynamics. Kalarippayattu Movement Therapy has a broad range of health benefits. It has been demonstrated to be clinically effective at improving body image, self-esteem, attentiveness, and communication skills. It can also reduce stress, fears and anxieties, as well as lessen feelings of isolation, body tension, chronic pain, and depression. In addition it can enhance the functioning of the body's circulatory and respiratory systems. Many tourists, mainly from abroad, are attracted by the Kalarippayattu Movement Therapy also.

Kalari Marma therapies are time-honored. Many foreign tourists advised the girls to practice Kalarippayattu as a means of self-defence and protection. That is why it is considered as a means for body-mind-intellect integration. . All the interviewed tourists admitted they got the fullest degree of happiness or satisfaction from Kalarippayattu. This is because of the innumerable advantages attributed to this technique of self-defence. The Kalarippayattu is considered as a system of health and physical fitness for students. Spiritual health, mental health and emotional health can be achieved through the practice of Kalarippayattu.
