



ATDI's 2008 Feature Adventure Destinations

Assam, India

Peru

Feature Adventure Destinations

In this report you can read about 2008's ATDI *Feature Adventure Destinations*: Peru and Assam, India.

Feature Adventure Destination assessments support government and business adventure tourism stakeholders by identifying Hotspots for adventure market development and Itineraries emphasizing benefits for rural people and the environment.

They also provide specific guidance on areas for improvement relative to their benchmarked scores in the ATDI numerical benchmarks.

Assessments are conducted in each country and provide specific guidance to those looking to develop sustainable, adventure tourism markets.

As *Feature Adventure Destinations* in 2008, **Assam, India** and **Peru** engaged the ATDI team through Xola Consulting, Inc. to complete four tasks:

- Evaluate the country or region based on the Ten Pillars of Adventure Tourism Competitiveness
- Select Hotspots – these are regions that contain appealing mixes of adventure, cultural and natural resources, where marketing and investment should be focused as the region builds its adventure tourism market.
- Recommend itineraries
- Provide product development and marketing recommendations for Hotspots

This report describes the selected Hotspots in each Feature Adventure Destination and introduces possible itineraries.

These Feature Adventure Destination reports provide an excellent resource for operators and travelers who are looking for unique and authentic experiences and are seeking to participate in the development of responsible tourism.

For more information on the ATDI program and Feature Adventure Destination assessments visit www.xolaconsulting.com or send a message to atdi@gwu.edu or Christina@xolaconsulting.com.

Perú

Explore the Pre-Inca Trail

For many people, whether they have visited Peru or not, the country has become synonymous with Machu Picchu. However, Peru has many cultural treasures to offer beyond this singular archeological wonder. In this largely undiscovered North and Central regions, Peru's rich culture combines with extraordinary opportunities for adventure sport activities, as well as more gentle nature and wildlife experiences.



Most travelers to Peru visit only Lima and the Southern areas of the country, where Cusco and Machu Picchu dominate. Fewer than 5% of visitors currently venture into the North and Central regions. This presents an important window of opportunity for sustainable tourism development and a great chance for operators and travelers to participate in this process while visiting the less explored regions of Peru.

In Peru, the team selected three Hotspots and developed four itineraries. Our itineraries encourage travelers to further explore archeological ruins, digging into pre-incan history, and perhaps push their physical limits further to discover more of the natural beauty in Peru.

TRUJILLO

Trujillo is located in on the Northern Coast of Peru. It is a colonial town, with bright colored churches, a sprawling plaza and cobblestone streets – an ideal



base from which to explore the length of the North coast. This Hotspot extends up to Chiclayo and into the Chaparri Nature Reserve. Both Trujillo and Chiclayo are access by flight from Lima or overnight buses.

Highlights:

- Surfing world class waves on the Pacific Coast, including the world's longest left break at Chiclayo
- The Caballito de Tortora, reed canoes that have been used for 3000 years by the Moche people are credited with inventing the art of riding the wave
- Archeological Ruins: In Peru, archeologists are discovering something new everyday, sometimes it seems every hour! Chan Chan, Huaca de la Luna and El Brujo offer precious glimpse of life in pre-Incan times.
- Nature: The Chaparri Nature Reserve, a dry forest, is home to an impressive array of birdlife, and serves as a rehabilitation center for spectacled bear, Andean condors and other threatened animals.

Suggested Itinerary 1:

“Footsteps of the Moche”

Here we present a four or seven day itinerary. In the Footsteps of the Moche covers almost 300km from Trujillo to Chiclayo, these distances could be traveled by cycling, walking or horseback riding.

	Physical Adventure	Cultural Adventure	Nature Adventure
“Essential” Experience: Four days, fly into Trujillo and out of Chiclayo			
Day 1 –Trujillo (overnight in Trujillo)	Surfing at Huanchaco Horseback riding on beach; cycling to ruins (ST); trekking; sandboarding; kayaking at Porto Morin (LT); fishing at Porto Morin	Chan Chan Caballito de Tortora Marinera Caballos de Paso Trujillo town	Agricultural visit to farms (asparagus/sugar cane)
Day 2 – Huaca de la Luna (overnight in Trujillo)	Horseback riding or cycling to ruins; surfing at Huanchaco or El Brujo	Huaca del la Luna El Brujo Gastronomy; Volunteering through local NGO	
Day 3 – Pacasmayo or Chicama (overnight in Pacasmayo or Chicama)	Surfing, stand up paddleboarding, kiteboarding, or windsurfing at Chicama or Pacasmayo; Surfing at Puemepe;	Historic republican port	Beach activities; Fishing

	Horseback riding on the beach, cycling around Pacasmayo; Fishing		
Day 4 – Pacasmayo or Chicama (overnight in Pacasmayo or Chicama)	Surfing, kiteboarding, or windsurfing at Chicama or Pacasmayo; Surfing at Puemepe; Horseback riding on the beach; cycling around Pacasmayo or fishing	Local gastronomy; Living culture	Beach activities; Fishing
Extended Experience: Fly into Trujillo and out of Chiclayo			
Day 5: Chiclayo (overnight in Chiclayo)	Surfing at Pimentel Horseback riding at Pacora Trekking or biking at Bosque de Pomac	Sipan archeological and Royal Tumbes (Lambayeque museum); Caballito de Totorá; Cinto Community Handicrafts; Exposure to Quechua culture	Birdwatching at Bosque de Pomac
Day 6: Chaparri (overnight in Chapparri)	Trekking in Chaparri reserve Biking to Chaparri reserve	Community visits	Wildlife viewing at Chapparri; Birdwatching at Chapparri
Day 7: Tucume	Hiking around ruins	Tucume archeological visit; Tucume museum	Walking in the Dry Forest

HUARAZ

This adventure hub, accessed by bus and sporadic flights from Lima, is popular with mountaineers and trekking enthusiasts for the breathtaking sceneries of vast mountain ranges. This Hotspot includes Huascaran National Park, and the Huayhuash range.



Highlights:

- Hiking the high Andes, exploring turquoise glacier lakes and snow capped peaks, including Alpamayo – voted the most beautiful mountain in the world.
- Exploring the underground chambers at the holy site of one of the world's most ancient civilizations, the Chavin.
- Homestays with local families, learning about the meaning of wearing 14 petticoats, cultivating quinoa, and tasting guinea pig!

Itinerary 2

“Sources of the Moche”
In this itinerary we combine the ancient ruins from the Chavin civilization with the adventure opportunities of the High Andes in the Huascaran National Park.



	Physical Adventure	Cultural Adventure	Nature Adventure
Essential Experience:			
Day 1: Huaraz	Drive to Chavin de Huantar (if acclimatized, the option to bike to the archaeological site is available)	Visit Chavin de Huantar archaeological site; Visit Conchukos community	Activities in Andes (driving, walking in mountains)
Day 2-3: Huaraz (option: camping or home stays in local communities)	Hike to Lake 69; visit Humacchuco community; camping at Cebollapampa	Living Culture Lunch or homestay with local communities active in tourism	Walking and/or camping in Andes
Extended Experience			
Day 3+ day treks:	Treks to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chavin • Alpamayo Loop • Huayhuash range • Santa Cruz Mountaineering • Pisco peak • Huascaran Peak • Alpamayo peak Rock climbing	Community visits	Activities in Andes

CHACHAPOYAS

This mountain town is currently only accessible by road, but the vast panorama vistas of rolling green hills and intriguing archeological remains make it worth the journey. It was home to the fierce People of the Clouds, before the Incas conquered them. Subsequently it became an important stop of the colonial mining road to the coast, until a road that bypassed the town was constructed.



Highlights:

- Hiking through the tropical, green Andes to impressive archeological ruins including the Macchu Picchu of the North: Kuelap.
- Hiking to the third highest waterfall in the world, Gocta Falls.
- Visiting the immaculately maintained museum of Leymeybamba where 219 mummies are kept.

Itinerary 3:

“Journey with The Cloud People”

This four to eight day itinerary is a study in duality, between heaven and earth, fact and legend, past and future – discovering the hidden secrets of the Cloud People.

	Physical Adventure	Cultural Adventure	Nature Adventure
Essential Experience			
Day 1: Chachapoyas Acclimatize, city tour	Hike/horseback ride to archaeological sites of Kuelap and Revash	Huancas Community	Outdoor Activities
Day 2-3-4:	Day trip options: Kayaking/rafting on Utcubamba river* or hike to Gocta falls; hike to Huancas; hike to Levanto	Drive on a day trips to Karajia sacophigi Revash Kuelap	Day trips to Paleontology at Bagua Caves of Quiocta; Lamud Birdwatching; Nature photography; Orchids
Extended Experience			
Day 5-6-7-8:	Additional Day-trips	Volunteer in communities through organizations	Camp in the Bagua region for birdwatching, butterfly collecting

* Kayaking/rafting on Utcubamba River is recommended in this area but is not yet offered by tour operators



Itinerary 4

“The Pre-Incan Journey”

This all encompassing, 21-day itinerary visits the three Hotspots and can be combined with a trip to the South. We travel forward in time, learning about the progression of Peruvian civilizations, beginning with the Chavin and ending with the Incas in the Sacred Valley.

21 Days	Physical Adventure	Cultural Adventure	Nature Adventure
Day 1 – Arrive Lima			
Day 2 – Transfer to Huaraz	Acclimatize		
Day 3-5	Visit Chavin de Huantar (if acclimatized, the option to bike to the archeological site is available) Hike to Lake 69 Visit to Humachuco Camping at Cebollapampa OR Hike to Chavin de Huantar – Olleros Chavin	Visit Chavin de Huantar archeological site; Visit Conchukos Communities; Cultura Viva Lunch or homestays with local communities active in tourism	Activities in the Andres (walking or driving)
Day 6- Bus or Tour Operator hire private van to Trujillo – full day drive, approximately 8 hours			It's possible to make this drive along a beautiful dirt road from Huaraz, ending in Chimbote. Tour operators taking guests on this route will provide guests with the opportunity to see much more of the Cordillera Blanca range
Day 7/8 – Trujillo	Bike or horse ride to Huaca de la Luna* Huanchaco – Surf lesson/Caballito de Titora	Trujillo City tour; El Brujo archeological site; Huaca de la Luna Marinera Caballito de	Beach activities at Huanchaco Agricultural tourism

	Mountain-boarding, sand-boarding, stand-up paddle boarding Riding waves on Caballito de Totora	Totora Gastronomy Caballos de Paso	
Day 9 – Chicama	Surfing, windsurfing, kite-boarding at Chicama	Republican town of Pacasmayo	Beach activities
Day 10 - Chiclayo	Trek/Bike to Tucume	Sipan archeological and Royal Tumbes (Lambayeque museum) (Moche period) Tucume museum (story of Walter Alva) Caballito de Totora Handicrafts Exposure to Quechua culture	Beekeeping tour (Apimax)
Day 11 - Chaparri	Trekking in Chaparri	Community visits	Chaparri - Birdwatching
Day 12 – Drive to Chachapoyas			
Day 13 -15 Chachapoyas (option: stay in El Chillo or homestay in Maria)	Trek to Gocta or Trek/Horse-ride to Revash; Trek/Drive to Kuelap; Raft or kayak on Utcumbamba* ; Volunteering; Sarcophagus in Karajia; Trek to Levanto; Mountain biking to certain sites OR 3 day trek to Laguna de los Condors and visit Leymebamba museum	Volunteering; Sarcophagus in Karajia; Community Visits; Leymebamba museum	Palaeontology at Bagua; Caves of Quiocta; Lamud Birdwatching; Nature photography Orchids

Day 15 – Transfer to Sacred Valley			
Day 16-21 – Sacred Valley/Machu Picchu			

*Bike or horse ride to Huaca de la Luna is recommended by not yet offered by tour operators

* Kayaking/rafting on Utcubamba River is recommended in this area but is not yet offered by tour operators

Peru in the Ten Pillars

The following is an excerpt from the 10 Pillars of Adventure Tourism Market Competitiveness assessment conducted for Peru as a Feature Adventure Destination in the 2008 ATDI program.

Sustainability Policy

Research indicates that Perú has a number of agencies and departments influencing tourism development. Many policies favor responsible and sustainable development that empower local communities.

Safety

Perú is a safe travel destination for tourists who take the usual precautions. Many major cities have English- speaking tourist police who patrol key tourism sites like plazas and museums. Guides can provide a valuable service for adventure enthusiasts when it comes to their safety.

Infrastructure

The quality of infrastructure is different in different regions of Peru, while the South is extremely well developed – our areas of focus, the North and Central regions are in the process of being developed. The Vice-Ministry of Tourism is active in identifying specific needs, and contacting investors. Peru is rated highly for its appeal to foreign investors. Nevertheless, a broad range (including some 4 star hotels) of accommodation exists in major cities, as well as culturally interesting options like homestays. Good connectivity by air and road exist as well.

Natural Resources

North and Central Peru have a wealth of diverse natural resources that will appeal to the adventure traveler: high and tropical Andes, world-class waves and dry forests full of flora and fauna. The system of national parks is administered by INRENA. There are also private reserves such as Chaparri, which provide protection to flora and fauna.

Cultural Resources

The North and Central also have a wealth of unique cultural resources. Archeological excavations are solving mysteries about the past every day.

Remains from different ancient civilizations, including the oldest on earth, are found in the North and Central resources. As well as the Caballito de Tortora, credited with inventing the art of riding the wave, the famous Marinera dance, and traditional gastronomy are other interesting cultural resources.

Adventure Activity Resources

The North and Central regions offer a range of adventure activity resources for all levels and interests. Accessing areas of natural or cultural interest by hiking or trekking in Huaraz and Chachapoyas will appeal to adventure travelers. Extreme sports like mountaineering and rock climbing are also available in Huaraz. The North coast offers world-class waves, including the longest left break.

Entrepreneurship

Tourism in Perú is growing and encouraging those businesses linked into its supply chain to multiply as well. The government is working to increase the geographic spread throughout the country by developing products in the north and central regions, and entrepreneurs are starting micro, small and medium size businesses to accommodate the arrival of tourists. Entrepreneurs are switching over from different industries and opening hotels, tour companies and even private nature reserves. No one operator controls the tourism market in Perú. The plethora of agencies, operators and outfitters demonstrate that the growing industry is supporting the development of many new businesses.

Humanitarian Organizations

There are many NGOs active in the North and Central regions and many offer volunteering opportunities for travelers. Community groups are collaborating with tourism chambers to develop grassroots based tourism initiatives across the country.

Presence of Multi-Destination Tour Operators

Almost every major international tour operator offers trips to Perú. From luxury to backpacker tours, the vast majority of trips will visit the Sacred Valley with Machu Picchu as the highlight. Longer itineraries are often combined with trips to the Galapagos, Chile and/or Argentina, creating a South American circuit that is popular with European tourists and retirees who vacation for up to four weeks at a time. As Perú also borders Bolivia and Brazil, trips can be combined with these two countries as well. Tour operators should be encouraged to lead trip to the North and Central regions and/or provide add-ons to Southern based itineraries.

Adventure Travel Image

Peru has a very positive adventure travel image, although in general the dominant image of Perú at this time focuses on Machu Picchu. Incorporating aspects of adventure travel beyond the cultural icon of Machu Picchu would benefit Peruvian tourism immensely, encouraging people to visit areas outside the popular southern Cusco region.

Assam, India

When a River Begins to Look Like the Sea, You Know it's Assam

This beautiful North-eastern Indian state, bounded by Himalayan foothills and cut through by the powerful currents of the Brahmaputra River, has only recently opened up to tourism. Because of its singular natural and cultural resources, the state's leadership has decided to focus on the adventure tourism market.



Assam is unusual in India. Many aspects of Assamese culture, food (where locals love pork and grow the world's hottest chilis), potent rice beer, bamboo houses and even their three-piece saris are unique. To fully understand and know India, a visit to the North-east is crucial.

In Assam, the team selected seven Hotspots:

GUWAHATI

The bustling capital city of Assam is a picture of modern India, the “gateway to the North-east,” – the city is modernizing and growing at a rapid pace.

Highlights:

- Colorful and chaotic temples, including the tantric center at Kamakya and the mystical temple of nine planets at Naba Graha, where astrologers will read your palm.
- Deepor Beel wetlands are an Important Birding site and can be navigated in traditional wooden boats.
- Pobitora Reserve is a perfect day trip from Guwahati where visitors can spot the one-horned rhino, Asiatic buffalo, wild boars, and leopards.

NAMERI

Nameri national park shares a border with Pakhui sanctuary in Arunachal Pradesh. Located in the foothills of the former, it is the only park where visitors can hike through the forest.

Highlights:

- Staying at eco-lodge near Nameri, an ideal place to start hikes in the park.
- Spotting rare gangetic dolphins.

KAZIRANGA

Kaziranga is currently Assam's best-known and most visited attraction. The oldest national park in the region, it is internationally recognized as the site with the highest number of one-horned rhinos which local conservation saved from extinction



Highlights:

- Jeep safari through the park – chances to see one-horned rhinos, Asiatic buffalos, tigers and leopards.
- Early morning elephant treks through the park – opportunity to come face to face with the parks' wildlife.

DIBRUGARH

The Northern city of Dibrugarh, an important center for tea, is also growing at an impressive pace, it is the ideal base to explore the Northern part of the state and can also be the gateway to Arunachal Pradesh.

Highlights:

- Exploring the Dibru-Saikhowa nature reserve by kayaking or canoeing on the Brahmaputra, which weaves through the park.
- Visiting the Ketetong community, a Thai tribe which grows organic tea and runs an eco-lodge
- Exploring the area's role in World War Two by visiting the local museum and war cemetery.

MANAS

The National Park of Manas is located in the Western part of the state. The park promotes responsible conservationist policies, and assists ex-poachers in finding alternate sources of livelihood.

Highlights:

- Birdwatching
- Elephant treks through the park.
- Spotting tigers!
- Staying at the eco-lodge fun by Moajigendri, a local NGO; and visiting the nearby museum displaying tools used by poachers.

JORHAT/MAJULI



Jorhat's tea plantations and proximity to Majuli, an expansive river island, allow the visitor to experience many facets of Assamese culture.

Highlights:

- Visiting Buddhist Syamgaons, villages with important cultural links to Thailand and learning about their distinct culture,

history and traditions.

- Visiting local artisans in this area provides an unvarnished glimpse into the process of Assamese trades.
- Visiting the Satras on Majuli island; these Vaishnavite monasteries – important pilgrimage sites.

HAFLONG

Set amongst the picturesque North Cachar Hills is the old British Hill Station of Haflong. While perceptions of danger to tourists as a consequence of local tribal disputes have kept investment and tourism at bay, the result is the area has been well preserved and provides an excellent starting point for responsible tourism development.



Highlights

- The train ride from Guwahati, although it can be crowded, is a beautiful journey winding through the North Cachar hills and in and out of tunnels.
- Hiking in the North Cachar hills and staying with local communities – each belonging to different tribal groups.
- Learning about the mysterious suicidal birds at Jatinga

Possible Itineraries

Based on activities available in Hotspots, itineraries were created which are not currently emphasized by tour operators. In order to appeal to adventure tourists, each itinerary has elements of cultural interaction, adventure sports and nature exploration.

The itineraries are offered in one-week segments that may be linked for two week trips. Also many itineraries suggest navigating the state and its attractions by boat on the Brahmaputra – this mighty river provides a low impact way of traveling and offers unique sights and experience.

Itinerary 1 – Premier Assam

This 6 day itinerary shows the visitor the major Assamese attractions by visiting a luxury tourist bungalow and two superb nature reserves with guaranteed sightings of rhinos and other wildlife.

	Physical Adventure	Cultural Adventure	Natural Adventure
Day 1 - Kaziranga Embark boat in Guwahati and float to Kaziranga	Paddle to Umananda Temple	Assamese dinner/Cooking class	Jeep Safari in Kaziranga national Park
Day 2	Trek through hills near Iora		Morning elephant trek in Kaziranga
Day 3 – Boat to Nameri	Rafting Angling Trekking in Nameri	Homestay or meal in local village	Dolphin Spotting Birdwatching in Nameri
Day 4/5 – Balipara	Walk around tea gardens Bike through town	Tour sustainability campus at Balipara Tea Tasting Visit Mishing Village	
Day 6 – Return to Guwahati			

**Can extend itinerary with a multi day elephant trek or trip into Arunachal Pradesh*

This trip can take place overland instead of by boat.

Itinerary 2:

Assam Adventure: Temples, Treks and Rhinos.

This itinerary visits the lesser known region of Haflong as well as the region's best-known tourism site, Kaziranga.

	Physical Adventure	Cultural Adventure	Natural Adventure
Day 1	Walk or bike to temples Kayak to Umanada Kayaking or canoing at Deepor Beel	Visit Guwahati temples (Naba Graha, Kamakya and Umanada) Community visits around Deepor Beel	Golden Langur Monkeys at Umananda Deepor Beel kayaking/canoing Birdlife at Deepor Beel

			Fishing at Deepor Beel
Day 2	Train/drive to Haflong		
Day 3/4	Trek in North Cachar Hills Bike around Haflong city	Community visits to various villages (Kuki, Naga, Ahom etc) Cooking classes Visits to artisans	Birdwatching at Jatinga
Day 5	Train to Furkating, drive to Kaziranga		
Day 6	Trek in hills near lora	Visit tea plantation	Wildlife viewing at Kaziranga
Day 7: Rtn to Guwahati			Morning elephant trek

Itinerary 3

Essential Assam – Tea, Rhinos, Satras and Silk.

*Trip could commence in Dibrugarh **Additional day in Sivasagar can be added

	Physical Adventure	Cultural Adventure	Natural Adventure
Day 1 Jorhat	Drive/fly to Jorhat:		
Day 1-2 Jorhat	Bike around tea gardens Bike to Patpattsaku community	Tour tea garden Tea tasting Tradition lunch in community Homestay in community	Float on Brahmaputra to Majuli
Day 3-4 Majuli Islant	Bike around Majuli	Visit artisans on Majuli Visit Satras	Float on Brahmaputra to Kaziranga
Day 5 Kaziranga	Hike around lora		Jeep safari or elephant ride for wildlife viewing in park
Day 6	Return to Guwahati by boat		

Itinerary 4

Hidden Upper Assam

	Physical Adventure	Cultural Adventure	Natural Adventure
Day 1-2 Dibrugarh/Ketetong	Bike around Ketetong community Kayak on river Walk through tea gardens	Tea tasting Organic farming Cooking classes Digboi Memorials Community visits	
Day 3-4 Dibru Saikowa	Walk through park Kayaking on Brahmaputra	Visit with Mishing community	Birdwatching Wildlife spotting Stay at Eco-lodge
Day 6 Sivsagar	Bike around Patpattsaku	Community visits at Ahom village/Homestay Temples and monuments in Sivsagar	
Day 7	Horse back riding in Jokai	Tea plantation visit Community and school visits Volunteering	Visit Jokai forest

Assam in the Ten Pillars

The following is an excerpt from the 10 Pillars of Adventure Tourism Market Competitiveness assessment conducted in Assam, India as a Feature Adventure Destination in the 2008 ATDI program.

Sustainability Policy

Assam's leaders have seized on the opportunity to develop tourism in a responsible way – government policies and schemes exist to support local entrepreneurs seeking to enter into the adventure industry and greater emphasis is being placed on natural resource management and regulation.

Safety

Tribal conflict has been noted in Assam in the past. No tourist has ever been affected by these local tensions, however. Travelers to Assam are encouraged to take normal precautions but will find Assamese people to be

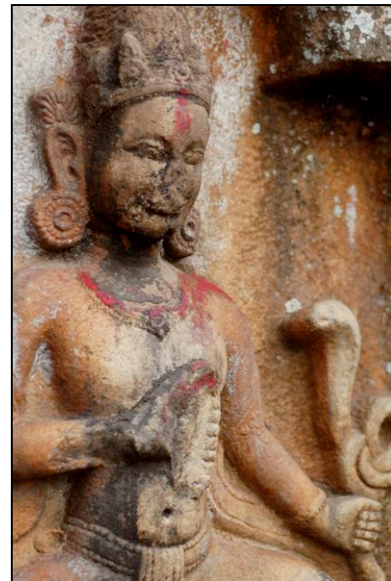
genuine and welcoming. Hospitals exist in major cities, and the army can be called on to assist in an emergency.

Infrastructure

Local authorities are placing increased focus and attention on improving the infrastructure in the state of Assam. New airports to facilitate an increased number of flights, upgraded train lines connecting upper and lower Assam¹, and the construction of new roads throughout the state are all indications of the government's commitment to providing improved connectivity to Assam as well as between its tourism destinations. Adequate lodging is available and many community groups are building eco-lodges in traditional styles in rural areas.

Natural Resources

Currently, the biggest draw to Assam is the unique wildlife viewing opportunities contained within the boundaries of its five national parks and 10 wildlife sanctuaries. Two of these national parks, Kaziranga and Manas, are UNESCO World Heritage sites, with the presence of internationally recognized and highly successful conservation policies. Assam is internationally recognized for its successful protection of the one horned rhino. The North Cachar Hills and Karbi Hills in lower Assam provide ample opportunities for trekking and birdwatching, while the Brahmaputra and its many tributaries and river islands, including the largest in the world, Majuli, are a resource that have much tourism potential.



Cultural Resources

The topography of Assam insured that for centuries the many plains and hill tribes of the region remained isolated and therefore preserved their unique cultures and traditions. Within the geographical boundaries of the state are several diverse groups, each with their own foods, festivals, dances, crafts and history.

Adventure Activity Resources

There exists potential in Assam for the following activities:

- Rafting
- Cycling/Mountain biking
- Hiking
- Trekking
- Hang-gliding
- Canoeing
- Kayaking
- Rock climbing

¹ Conversion of meter to broad gauge between Lumding and Silchar

Tour operators are encouraged to develop trips that offer these type of adventure activities.

Entrepreneurship

In Assam we found several schemes designed to support small businesses, some of which are focused specifically in the tourism sector and others dedicated to supporting startup business in general. Several NGOs are working in micro-finance and support tourism related projects, such as NEADS in Jorhat, Krishna Nyaas in Sivsagar and SEWA in Dibrugarh. A few entrepreneurial tour operators are active in Assam.

Humanitarian Organizations

Humanitarian organizations operating in Assam can be divided into two principal categories: Handicrafts and Environment (including organic farming, wildlife and nature conservation). These NGOs are usually made up of many grass-roots organizations or self-help groups, as they are locally termed. Many of these NGOs could be linked with tourism to create programs of volunteer tourism, either as part of a larger itinerary or as the sole purpose of a trip.

Presence of Multi-Destination Tour Operators

While nearly every foreign-based tour operator is active in India, very few lead trips to the North-east. Currently, most tour operators will spend two days in Kaziranga before moving on. For the volume of the current market, there is no shortage of tour operators. Regional tour operators may need to increase linkages to international markets, either through partnering with international TOs or commonly used travel resources such as guidebooks, websites and national and regional marketing campaigns.

Adventure Travel Image

Assam is clearly differentiated from the rest of India by its multitude of diverse cultures, temperate year round climate, and lack of poverty. Because of its geographic location, the North-East is a destination in and of itself and it is time consuming and expensive for visitors to India to add it on to a visit to other parts of the country. Internationally, it is known to only those travelers with special interests like wildlife enthusiasts, birdwatchers, and perhaps those with an interest in the “Old Raj” tea estates. Assam has a good adventure travel image, for many people – simply coming to this region is an “adventure,” it will benefit from this as it pursues its tourism development.

