Sustainable development of Georgian resorts: modern trends and challenges

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Abstract.
In terms of development of tourism and resort resource potential, Georgia is an outstanding country, there has been interest in it since ancient times. Among the republics of the Soviet Union, Georgia was in one of the first places with diverse natural healing resources, and was especially distinguished by balneological and climatotherapy resources. The article discusses the development prospects of resort tourism in Georgia. The country has many health facilities, spaces and opportunities that can attract local and foreign visitors seeking treatment and health rehabilitation. Georgia has a great natural and cultural heritage, which allows us to restore old resorts and develop new resorts to ultimately create more value in the tourism sector. The paper shows that the country is divided into 11 climatic and 12 resort-recreational districts, where there are more than 102 resorts and up to 1802 resort places, the classification of which is based on the main recreational factor. Mountain climatic, balneological, seaside climatic, balneoclimatic, climatic-balneological resorts are analyzed. It is mentioned that the development of resorts is a very important direction in terms of realizing the tourist product of Georgia.

Keywords:
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**Introduction.** Today, it has become valuable and necessary to rest where there are places with favorable weather and healing resources. Supporting health tourism can bring significant economic benefits to a country. The most widespread and mass tourism is when it is focused on unique natural healing resources. Healing is a conscious action and is determined by the conditions, factors and methods that are most favorable for the restoration of the human body. The need to get healthy is due to the fact that during labor activity, psycho-emotional stress, even a practically healthy person experiences fatigue and reduced work capacity. It should be noted that the category of consumers in resort areas is gradually getting younger recently, which is not only related to the prevention of diseases, but also to the restoration of physical strength and stress relief.

Georgia has the greatest prospects for the development of recreational tourism throughout the country. The creation of health resorts in Georgia begins at the beginning of the 19th century, although Georgian people have been using mineral waters for the treatment of various diseases and for the health of the mountain air since ancient times.

The territory of Georgia is divided according to the recreational potential with various signs and character. The perspective of the recreational region of different rank depends on the development of the resort-recreational economy, the creation of service infrastructure. The modernist reforms carried out at the Tbilisi balneological resort are a good example of the fact that Tbilisi has become an international spa capital, the balneological profile of the city's tourist location has been restored, sharing its experience will help the regions in the development of recreational and health tourism. It is important that the resort space of the country starts right from the capital - balneoclimatic resort, which has already gained international recognition. Tbilisi is the second city in the world with a balneological center after Budapest. Scientists-researchers point out that it is necessary to consider the introduction of modern technologies in the country, the high quality of resort products and services, so that Georgia becomes a developed medical tourism destination [1].

In the work, attention is paid to the resort potential,
healing factors, healing resources of the natural environment, and recreational opportunities of the region, which are found in many places, but in many cases are lost without use. We consider restoration of old resort places, multidimensional development of recreational spaces, determination of recreational tourism and use of unique places rich in natural factors for recreational purposes to be an important task. According to geostat data, 7.1 million international non-resident travelers entered the territory of Georgia in 2023, which is 30.3% more than the previous year. The largest part of arrivals, 55.5%, consisted of travelers whose purpose was to rekreacion and relax [2].

Unfortunately, there are still many problems regarding the quality and availability of medical and recreational services. In a number of resorts, the existing infrastructure cannot meet modern requirements, especially in terms of quality water supply, gasification, sewage and drainage systems, purification and waste utilization facilities. There are many problems in terms of transport infrastructure in resorts and resort areas, especially in terms of roads in mountainous regions. The ecological condition of resorts and recreation areas is noteworthy.

**Aim of research.** The purpose of our research is to study the potential of resorts in terms of tourism realization. Georgia has great natural resources that allow us to restore old resorts and develop new ones to ultimately create more value in the tourism sector.

**Methodology.** For the purpose of the research, we were guided by qualitative research methods, which means the processing of analytical material presented in open sources, statistical research, within the framework of desk research, literature, publications were analyzed, data was collected, findings were discussed.

**Literature review.** In the paper, we discussed the scientific publications of scientists and researchers. Tourist-resort resources of Georgia have been studied from different angles by researchers: M. Ukleba, G. Kufaradze, T. Chilingarishvili, L. Kvaratskhelia, N. Grdzelishvili, O. Paresishvili, V. Mirzaevi, N. Pavliashvili, N. Saakashvili, I. Tarkhan-Mouravi, M. Tabidze, N. Kutateladze, c. Davitulian and others.
Discussion and Results. There are all types of health resorts in the world in Georgia, where you can find natural healing factors, healing air, healing mud, mineral springs, etc. Sh. There are 102 resorts and 182 resort places in the country, which have the possibility of treatment, rehabilitation and healing of various diseases. According to the definition, a resort means a healing place, where the main means of treatment are resort factors, such as mineral and healing water, climate and mud. Unlike a resort, a resort area does not have the appropriate infrastructure to use natural healing factors for relaxation and curative and/or prophylactic purposes. Modern approaches to this issue are interesting. Definition proposed by University of Memphis School of Hotel and Resort Management, Center for Resorts and Hotel Business: "A resort is a full-service residential facility that provides access to various levels of comfort and recreational opportunities [3]. Thus, according to the complex criteria of the resort destination, both the profiling characteristics of the place, as well as the comfortable elements of the product, the quality of the infrastructure, the quality of amenities, etc. are important. Sh.

It is interesting that the majority of balneological centers in Georgia (up to 1000 m above sea level) are suitable for use at any time of the year. So, for example, Tskaltubo, Borjomi, etc. According to their diversity, the resorts of Georgia can be classified: climatic resorts, balneo-climatic resorts, mixed type, according to the general mineralization of the main balneological indicators of mineral waters, ionic composition, content of gases and biologically active microelements, radioactivity. Mineral waters of weak, low and medium mineralization are mainly used for drinking in Georgia. For baths and other balneoprocedures, both mineral waters with total mineralization up to 1 g/dm3, as well as weak, low, medium and high mineralization waters are used [4]. Kurort classification is based on the main natural healing factor, due to their diversity, let's consider some of them. We think that short information about the important resorts in the country will be interesting for interested persons. Below are the general data about the well-known resorts of Georgia according to the treatment profile.

“Borjomi” is located in above sea level 800–900 m. The
resort has been mentioned in official sources since the 19th century. "Borjomi" is carbonic acid hydrocarbonate sodium healing water in the valleys of Borjomula and Gujetiskali rivers, the mineralization of which is 6-7g/l, the temperature ranges from 17-38 °C, the debit exceeds 700-800 thousand liters per day. It is used as a treatment for chronic gastritis and enterocolitis, gastric and duodenal ulcers, liver and biliary tract diseases, diabetes mellitus, metabolic disorders, obesity and other diseases. It is used for drinking and balneological procedures (baths, showers, inhalation, etc.). Bottling of this useful water started in 1891. Georgia if there really is a source of real and not fabulous immortality somewhere, it will erupt here, in Tskaltubo, from the heart of the earth. People are brought here who are so obsessed with diseases that they don't even try to take a step on their own. Whether they go through the treatment course, which consists of 25-30 baths, they forget that they were brought to the tub on a stretcher. The healing water of Tskaltubo has long become a symbol of healthy life. This unique gift of nature was not called the "source of immortality" for nothing. The beneficial effects of the waters of the resort on the human body have been known since time immemorial. For today, modern treatment and rehabilitation devices allow us to treat, prevent and raise the tone of the body. In the Tskaltubo resort, they use a special technique of taking a bath. The peculiarity of taking a bath lies in the fact that the treatment takes place in constantly flowing water, thus the water maintains the uniformity of its physico-chemical and healing properties and temperature. "Sairme resort" is a balneological resort at 950 meters above sea level, The well-known urological profile resort Sairme operates, distinguished by coniferous and deciduous forests, mountain climate and, most importantly, rich in medicinal, mineral and thermal deposits. It has been considered an important resort area for several decades. In Soviet times, it was considered a unique health resort for state VIP. The new resort has undergone complete restoration and modernization. Sairme belongs to the humid subtropical region, the weather is mild and moderate - winter is relatively warm and summer is cool. Snow can come even in October, but it melts soon. Medicinal waters at the resort
are used in the treatment of various diseases, including kidney pathology, inflammation of the genitourinary system, inflammation of the gall bladder and biliary tract, liver and intestines [5]. “Abastumani” is located on the southern slope of the Meskheti (Adjara-Imereti) mountain range, on the river. In the Otskhi valley, from Tbilisi - 340 km. Natural healing factors: air of the lower zone of the middle mountains and thermal flint, sulfate-chloride-calcium-sodium mineral waters, with a total mineralization of 0.6 g/l. Debit 70,000 l/day passive climatotherapy, mineral water baths. Tuberculosis of the lungs in all phases of development, chronic and acute forms of pneumopleuritis and lymphadenitis; Bone-joint and peripheral nervous systems, gynecological diseases. The average rate of use of resort resources in Georgia is determined by 15%. Areas rich in resources, but economically weakly developed, can be found in the list of underutilized tourist-recreational areas [6].

According to the 1928 resolution of the Council of People's Commissars of the Georgian SSR, the coastal resorts of the Adjara Sea, Kobuleti, Tsikhisdziri, Green Cape, Makhinjauri and Batumi were recognized as resorts of state importance [7]. Due to its unique physical and geographical conditions, Adjara occupies a special place among the regions of Georgia. A distinctly humid subtropical climate, ranging from coastal beaches and swampy plains to alpine meadows. A diverse combination of landscapes, rich water and forest resources. Resorts and resort areas are almost evenly distributed throughout the territory. This wealth, gathered in a relatively small area, leads to an ever-increasing interest in the economy and natural ecosystems of Adjara. More than a century ago, researcher Nicholas Veru wrote: "Batumi with its surroundings will become one of the best resorts... In Batumi, the splendor of the Riviera and the majestic mountains of Switzerland come together in harmony. There is less strong wind here. There are twice as many quiet days as in Sukhumi and Sochi. And in 1904, Nicholas Lander predicted the future of the Batumi Riviera, the Riviera meant not only the city of Batumi, but also the region with the sea, mountains, surrounding charming landscape and mild subtropical air, as it was then in the Italian Riviera, the province of Liguria on the coast [8].
Recreational space - Imereti area in Georgia is rich in karst caves. The microclimate of the Imereti caves is excellent for medicinal purposes, but the region cannot use this resource. The material and technical base cannot meet modern requirements. In the Kakheti region, there is a popular mud healing resort of Akhtala, which cannot satisfy visitors with modern infrastructure. Guria-Bakhrmo, Nabeglavi, Grigoleti, as well as important resorts - Tsagveri and Tsemi, Surami, Kvishkhetti, Biisi and Khovle in Kartli and others are important among many resort places. The tourism industry of the regions, which includes treatment, rehabilitation, recreation, requires appropriate infrastructure and services and proper quality, which is rarely found in the mentioned resort destinations. Regions and their resort-recreational factors provide a great opportunity for both local tourists and foreign visitors to solve health-related problems [9].

Many countries of the world are successfully developing this type of tourism (Germany, Austria, Switzerland, France, Italy, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Israel), which have rich traditions of resort-medical activity, high-level medical and health services, a wide range of natural and climatic resources for healing. Choice, developed infrastructure, modern effective methods of disease prevention and rehabilitation, treatment [10].

Conclusion and recommendations. The growing pace of life in the civilized world, the presence of stress and fatigue in daily activities, the increasing environmental pollution every year, require maintaining the normal physical and mental condition of a person. A person has a need to bring his physical and spiritual state into harmony. He wants to prolong youth, stop aging and have a zest for life. The presence of the relevant service complex in one place is becoming more and more demanding. In the modern world, many people around the world try to use the tourism products and services of resorts. For this purpose, resorts are a good tool. Ensuring, maintaining and developing the sustainability of a resort destination depends on effective actions. Thus, the country should develop a strategy and destination management plan, organize infrastructure at the local level, attract investments to develop resort destinations. Studies should be conducted based on scientific arguments, decisions should be
made for the sustainable development of the resort destination. It is important to monitor the impact on businesses, local residents, tourists and their expectations. A valid solution would be to analyze the recreational use in the study area. Consideration of information that should include sensitive environmental issues, landmark protection issues, and more. The study of the issues described by us will create a favorable, new potential in the development of recreational tourism.

References:
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