

SPAIN LEADS THE WAY IN "CHINESE FRIENDLY" TOURISM ATTITUDES



The Chinese market is a big deal for European tourism because of the potentially high visitor numbers and revenue; however, attracting these visitors to the continent's cities and attractions requires more than your average, simple promotion. The Chinese mentality is different to that of Europeans and they have different expectations and needs when it comes to travelling that often go unfulfilled. It is vital to look at the problem from different angles; online promotion, such as blogging, is still important for reaching this market but businesses need to go further, such as showing potential visitors that they can communicate with them in Chinese on their arrival or highlighting an appreciation of their cultural needs and cuisine. Simply adding more Chinese food to a hotel menu can do wonders as Chinese visitors like to feel at home and have familiar meals.

Spanish experts are promoting the idea that if Europeans are to bring in more Chinese business, they need to start thinking like them.

Spain experienced a 30% rise in Chinese tourists in 2013 and they are hoping to encourage more visitors this year. The city of Zaragoza is leading these efforts through the new "Chinese Friendly" scheme, a trend that is a deliberate attempt to be more accommodating to Chinese needs and customs such as through a new appreciation of cultural expectations or changes in Spanish restaurants. This shift is also being seen in Madrid where the Thyssen Museum and Las Rozas Outlet Shopping Village are both making alterations.

Experts in Zaragoza recently spoke at the Chinese Friendly Cities Tourism Conference to promote their new way of thinking to new businesses so that their alternative mentality and appreciation of Chinese needs can progress through Spain and on to other European nations. This city is setting a great example for the rest of Europe to follow, one that could prove to be an important aid for increasing tourism revenue; 100 million Chinese tourists are expected to make an international trip in 2014, which could mean a lot of potential business if a city can become "Chinese Friendly" and tempt them over.

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