

URUGUAY REPORTED 8.9% MORE TOURISTS



Uruguay forecasts to welcome 2.8 million visitors until the end of this year. The data so far show positive trend.

Uruguay's Undersecretary of Tourism, Benjamin Liberoff, said the country expects to close 2015 with over 2.8 million tourists, and he announced that from January to August, they received more than 1.9 million tourists, up 8.9% over the same period in 2014.

Tourism revenue in the first eight months of the year was 6.9% higher, reaching 1.152 billion euros, according to Liberoff. He specifically mentioned the increase of the number of Argentinian tourists, with 14% more arrivals, while 13% more Uruguayans living abroad visited their home country as well.

There was an overall increase of 10% in the number of European tourists, while the number of Brazilians decreased by 2% but remained above the level of six years ago.

Liberoff noted that starting in October, a "major promotional campaign" will be conducted in southern Brazil, a country which is causing concerns because of the sharp decline in the value of the real. Argentina is another country where a marketing campaign is to be launched to attract more visitors.

According the Liberoff, **Uruguay will also incentivize tax benefits that contribute to the competitiveness of the country**. Currently, Uruguay does not charge VAT for accommodation.

Uruguay's National System of Social Tourism, which was created in 2009, includes a public-private network of more than 50 hotels, 40 restaurants, 30 travel agencies and 14 transportation companies for visits to 40 destinations across the country.

Figures for the first half of the year show that the organization has arranged 40 social tourism trips, 32 of them involving seniors, and it is expected that a similar figure will be reached in September.

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