

29.1 MILLION INTL TOURISTS - GREAT SUCCESS FOR MEXICO'S TOURISM



Mexican tourism report reveals a 20.3% increase in the amount of foreign visitors in 2014. Tourism in Mexico climbed five places in the amount of international tourists and the country is among the top 10 major tourist destinations in the world.

The total amount of foreign visitors coming to explore Mexico in 2014 was 29.1 million. The “Economic Observatory Mexico” report shows that **the figure represented a 20.3% increase over 2013 and is the highest increase of the 10 countries topping the list of arrivals worldwide.**

In terms of revenue, on the top 10 list two changes were recorded: China and the UK moved up two places to occupy the third and the seventh positions respectively. As a result, France and Macao (China) fell one place, ranking fourth and fifth, respectively, while Thailand fell two places to number nine. In terms of total income from international tourism, Mexico ranked 22nd in the world standings in 2014.

The report states that although Mexico consolidated its position last year as one of the top 10 tourist destinations worldwide, quality tourist attractions in the country are concentrated in a few regions geared towards providing sun and beach tourism.

It is believed that this makes it highly vulnerable to competitive destinations such as the Caribbean (Dominican Republic, Jamaica, the Bahamas and Cuba) and others a little further afield, such as Hawaii and Thailand.

On the other hand, the report states that the tendency to make short trips helps to attract North American tourists, but is also an obstacle to attracting tourists from further afield, such as the Asia-Pacific region.

Given these preferences, the report notes, the prospects for attracting tourists are not very encouraging unless the Mexico tourism offer is diversified to include the tourism experience, as international visitors are looking for contact with the community and nature, and not just for a comfortable room.

Also, tourists have become more aware of their impact on the destinations they visit, particularly on the environment, which means that an area of opportunity for Mexico is cultural tourism (Cuba and Peru are its main competitors), ecotourism and sustainable tourism.

As it relates to indicators of foreign tourists arrivals, the report reveals that these show positive development from 2014 until the first half of 2015, a performance that was due to a growing amount of American visitors among whom the Mexico tourism attractions have always been very popular.

In the first half of this year, foreign tourist arrivals in Mexico grew 7.6%, a figure higher than the rate of 4.4% seen worldwide, while revenue for the same period grew 9%.

In the first six months, the average spending by overnight foreign tourists was \$865, a small amount

compared to \$1,200 for the Caribbean, \$910 for South America or \$2,000 for the United States.

With regard to cruise tourists arriving at Mexican ports, after a long period of decline, the report suggests a significant recovery of 28% in 2014 and 9% in the first half of this year.

Regarding the number of air arrivals, from January to June 2015 the positive trend continued, recording an increase of 10.7%, after a 10.6% increase during the same period in 2014.

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