

GROWING TOURISM IN MEXICO SECURES 8TH PLACE FOR THE COUNTRY



Mexico will close 2016 climbing up one place in a ranking of countries attractive to tourists. It moved from ninth to eighth place, with a 10% growth in international visitor arrivals (35.3 million tourists), according to predictions of the study "Overview of Tourism in Mexico" by the National Tourism Business Council (CNET) and Anáhuac University.

"Mexico is becoming more attractive for tourism investment; we are coming up with plans and mechanisms and we must move away from ad hoc decisions. **In 2016, tourism in Mexico was driven mainly by growth in the US economy**, the exchange rate of the peso against the dollar and other currencies, and political and security factors such as those being experienced in Europe," said CNET president Pablo Azcarraga.

Mexico, with 34.1 million arrivals in 2015, ranked ninth among the countries receiving international tourists and seventeenth in foreign exchange earnings with 17.457 billion dollars. 2016 is expected to close with 35.5 million foreign tourist arrivals, an annual growth of 10%, and international tourist revenues are expected to reach 19.3 billion dollars, an annual increase of 9%.

"Today more than ever, constructive meetings have to be held periodically between the Ministry and Private Enterprise to find tools and mechanisms that allow us to make good decisions in tourism when the environment changes, when the political situation is different, and when there are decisions that could affect the view of security," said Azcárraga. For this reason, he declared that "in Mexico we must question the drug war, treat it as a health and education problem, involving society in the effort to pressure governors to have more competent policing."

Azcárraga acknowledged that there is some nervousness after the election results in the United States, with 54.2% of the businessmen surveyed believing that with Donald Trump in the White House they would be negatively impacted. "I don't think it's as bad as it looks at the moment, but things are definitely changing and there will be a difference in the benefit that a growth in the American economy will bring. According to statements by the President-elect, it will be good for tourism in Mexico, at least in years one and two. I would recommend that the Mexican government remain prudent and not get hooked."

Francisco Madrid, head of the Faculty of Tourism and Gastronomy at Anáhuac University, noted: **"The number of people traveling by air from the United States to Mexico between January and October grew 12%, three times more than international tourist arrivals worldwide"**.

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