

MALLORCA FIGHTS OVER TOURISM AND ILLEGAL VACATION RENTS



Property prices in Mallorca are rising extensively mainly thanks to over tourism. Local authorities plan to limit the number of tourists and fight illegal vacation rents.

The Spanish holiday paradise has pulled the emergency brake. From now on **the island will limit the number of holidaymakers who can be on the island at the same time**. This is intended to prevent over tourism on the most popular holiday island in Europe, which has recently become a serious problem.

“We cannot grow any further,” said the Minister of Tourism of the Balearic Islands, Biel Barcelo. “Now comes the end of the boundless increase in tourism.”

In 2016, almost eleven million people visited Mallorca. This year a new record was expected again. But this is not the case anymore – at least in the high season. The constant increases are causing huge environmental problems such as traffic jams and drinking water shortages. Moreover, the local population is in discomfort because of the overcrowding and has protested against it on numerous occasions.

Since nobody can be forbidden to travel to the island, the tourist ceiling will be controlled by a “bed brake”. In concrete terms, this means that the quantity of guest beds in hotels and private accommodation is no longer to be increased. Currently, the number is estimated to be more than 400,000. In medium term, up to 100,000 tourist beds could be dismantled in Mallorca, said Tourism Minister Barcelo.

The new Tourism Act, adopted by the progressive Balearic regional government of socialists and the left eco-island party Més also applies to neighboring islands such as Ibiza, Menorca and Formentera. The Act is also called to fight popular illegal vacation rents. Private tenants who rent apartments, villas etc. without the necessary licenses will have to pay a 40 thousand euro fine and will be forced to close their rental business.

The punishment for renting platforms on the internet such as Airbnb are even higher. The fines could reach up to 400 thousand euros if they do not help now to dry the black market on rentals. In all rental advertisements in these portals, the official license number must be recognizable in the future. If not, there will be sanctions.

The number of private holiday homes in the Balearic Islands as in the whole of Spain has increased exorbitantly in recent years. These offers, which are often cheaper for families and groups of friends than in hotels, are growing in popularity. Almost a third of all Mallorca visitors are no longer accommodated in hotels. Many of these accommodations are rented under the hand and the revenues are passed by the tax office. It is estimated that in addition to the 350 thousand or more official beds on Mallorca, there are at least 100,000 illegal beds offered.

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