

# GERMANY: TOURISM 2007 OUTSTRIPPED THE WORLD CUP YEAR



Germany was already on a good way becoming increasingly popular as a travel destination, but the sensational World Cup year of 2006 brought a big boost about the German tourism sector. The Germans were characterized as very hospitable and well organized during the World Cup which enhanced Germany's image as an international travel destination. This had a long-term effect on inbound tourism in Germany. In 2007 the growth rate increased further on and the levels of 2006 have even been exceeded by 3 per cent. And all without having another big event in the country like the World Cup in 2006. Today Germany is perceived as an all-year-round destination which contributes positively to the German economy. In 2007 the tourism sector generated 26.3 billion euros and is expected to increase revenues in the next years. Experts forecast an annual growth rate of round about 4% in overnight stays which may bring 400 million domestic and international overnight stays in 2015.

The marketing campaign launched in the summer of 2007, which portrayed Germany as an attractive and diverse holiday destination for short breaks lead to a boost in domestic overnight stays. Also the international tourists, mainly from Europe and especially from the neighbour countries like Poland and Austria, increased the numbers in overnight stays, which resulted in a total of 35.6 million trips to Germany from other European countries in 2007. Last year 9 per cent of the European travellers visited Germany, which put the country in the third position of the European travel market, with only France and Spain in front of it.

Besides the most popular region Bavaria, city destinations like Berlin are amongst international tourists' favourites. Visitors from the Arabian countries appreciate the offering of Arabic speaking personnel and Arabian food in hotels situated in major cities like Munich. This shows, that the German tourism industry is aware of the importance, that many people, although they come to a foreign country to experience something new and different, enjoy homelike food and feel confident having some familiar surrounding.

To be competitive against the Asian countries' tourism offers, the German tourism industry promotes Germany's most attractive sights. The focus for 2008 lies on the theme "Palaces, Parks and Gardens" which is intended to show the country's romantic side. Furthermore Germany is strongly promoting its health related travel sector, which is becoming increasingly popular and is also focusing on the current trend of culture travel.

Germany's tourism sector developed tremendous growth potential partially based on the World Cup 2006. Future goals will be to further improve and build on the positive image established during this important event.

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