

Istanbul Ranked #7 Worldwide for International Congresses



Istanbul shot up 10 places in the International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA) rankings from 17th in 2009 to 7th in 2010, thanks to a combination of effective destination marketing, expanded facilities and widespread recognition of Istanbul as one of the world's trendiest and most exciting cities.

Hosting 109 international congresses in 2010, Istanbul made its way into the world's Top 10 Congress Destinations according to data recently released by the International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA). In Europe, Istanbul ranked 6th, and the nearly 40% increase in number of congresses from 2009 to 2010 shows the impact that effective destination marketing and a growing selection of state-of-the-art facilities can have.

Istanbul has a remarkable seven purpose-built convention centers and three exhibition centers large enough to accommodate even the biggest international fairs. With over 70,000 total guestrooms and 74 five-star and deluxe hotels, Istanbul offers meeting planners a variety of options, including top international and domestic hotel brands, at a variety of price points. These extensive accommodations mean that Istanbul is increasingly under consideration to host the largest and most prestigious international events, including the World AIDS Conference and Rotary International.

Moreover, Istanbul offers three separate but integratable meeting and exhibition clusters in the Airport District, the Conference Valley and the Golden Horn, augmented by a growing range of meeting facilities on the Asian side of the city. This provides planners with unrivalled flexibility and the confidence of knowing that all facilities are new and offer the latest audiovisual and event technology.

Another factor in the city's outstanding performance is its easy accessibility from anywhere in the world. Turkish Airlines, Turkey's flag carrier and a member of the Star Alliance, offers daily direct flights between Istanbul and more than 170 cities worldwide. With two airports, one on the Asian side of the city and the other on the European side, Istanbul is served by nearly 300 international airlines.

The Istanbul Convention & Visitors Bureau (ICVB) has been the architect of the strategy integrating tourism sector participation, effective destination branding and face-to-face marketing that has helped Istanbul climb from 46th in the ICCA rankings less than a decade ago, to its current position in the Top 10. ICVB's General Manager, Mrs. Elif Balcı Fisunoğlu, says, "We are pleased with Istanbul's 2010 performance, and we also see the potential for even better years in the future. Istanbul is on the short list of virtually every major event, and that naturally shows up in the results. Now our mission is to continue communicating the message that Istanbul delivers full-spectrum delegate satisfaction. Today, we are focused on solidifying our place in the Top 10, and over the next three to five years, our objective is to move into the Top 5 worldwide."

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Date: 2011-09-05

Article link:

<http://www.tourism-review.com/istanbul-ranked-number-7-worldwide-for-international-congresses-news2910>