

TURKISH TOURISM IS GROWING RAPIDLY



Tourism in Turkey is on the up and despite the big freeze tourists are flocking to the country from all over the globe.

The Turkish tourism industry enjoyed a boost of \$23 billion dollars last year, by far exceeding the growth in pre-recession times and, indeed, representing a massive increase of 10.6% on 2010.

Istanbul welcomed 30% more visitors from the Arab world and even the big freeze has failed to put the dampeners on peoples' enthusiasm for visiting Turkey. The country has the massive advantage of being able to offer a huge array of attractions, from cultural interests to a huge coastline.

According to TurkSat, revenue jumped from \$20.8 billion in 2010 to \$23 billion in 2011 with 36 million foreign nationals having visited Turkey last year.

Most foreign tourists in Turkey come from Germany, Russia, USA, Italy and France, whilst there is a growing interest from Arab countries. Turkey is able to cater for fellow Muslims whilst being able to offer the comfort of many fully developed European and North American states.

Iranians have been known to be keen visitors though problems with their currency, the Rial, have proven to be an obstacle. There is, of course, a greater tendency for Europeans to visit Istanbul, which manages to encapsulate Europe and Asia in one capital city.

The rise in popularity of Turkey has been put down to a number of reasons. Amongst them: **improved visa conditions for foreign visitors** and relative peace and calm in Turkey in comparison to many nearby states.

However, one fact stands out more than others: in 2003 Turkey had a mere 23 000 Internet users, now it has a huge amount more. The Internet boom, which came late to Turkey, has played a role in advertising the country; bringing expats back to visit and has massively boosted Turkey's reputation.

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