

Scotland's Tourism – 10% Increase of Intl Visits

Scotland is known worldwide for its beautiful scenery, spectacular heritage, vibrant culture and friendly people. It is a land packed with great moments, experiences and sounds that can make your trip or vacation truly memorable.

This is the reason why more and more tourists from all over the world have been visiting Scotland. According to a report, the tourism industry in Scotland is set to increase with the number of overseas visitors increasing faster than the entire UK on average. This simply shows that there is more to come as far as the Scottish tourism industry is concerned.



Last year, Scotland's tourism industry experienced a 10 percent increase in overseas visits and this was coupled with a 20 percent increase in spending. According to the data collected by the office for National Statistics, overseas visits increased from approximately 2.2 million in 2012 to over 2.4 million in 2013. Additionally, spending by foreign tourists also increased from 1.4 billion pounds sterling in 2012 to 1.7 billion pounds sterling in 2013. This is very encouraging for the tourism industry and the Scotland's economy as a whole.

Mike Cantlay, who is the chairman of tourism agency VisitScotland, describes this as very encouraging and it is expected to become even better in the years to come. It also shows growing confidence within global markets. On the other hand, a report called the Great Britain Tourism Survey showed a 4.9 decrease in domestic visits in the year 2013. It also showed that there was a slight decrease of 0.1 percent in spending.

Tourism Outlook for 2014 and Beyond

This year, the tourism industry in Scotland is expected to be better than the years before. For instance the Barclays study predicted an increase in spending of 40 percent by overseas tourists by 2017. And, Scotland is expected to earn a total of 2.3 billion pounds sterling solely from overseas tourists by 2017. The study goes ahead to predict that there will be an average increase of 34 percent in the local tourism (across the UK). However, tourists from the United States are expected to continue being the biggest spenders ahead of their French and German counterparts.



This year, the Scotland tourism industry is set to boom with this year's programme of global events which includes the Ryder Cup and the Commonwealth Games. This means that there will be an influx of tourists and visitors from all over the world for these events. On top of being a host of these important events, loosening visa restrictions will also work to their advantage as more and more people will take advantage of this.

For long term growth and appeal, the Scotland's tourism sector is designing a rich pipeline of innovation and development that will ensure a constant flow of overseas tourists in Scotland. For example the forthcoming opening of the V & A Museum of Design, the regeneration of the Dundee Waterfront and the securing of the Speyside whisky industry are among some of the steps being taken by the government of Scotland to ensure that the tourism industry becomes a major source of revenue.

Who Will Benefit from This Boom?

Apart from the Scotland government, there are a number of sectors that will benefit immensely from this rise in tourism visits and spending including the leisure and hospitality sector as well as the retail sector. By 2017, the retail sector is expected to generate 592 million pounds sterling from overseas tourists alone. This will be a 40 percent increase from 2013. Additionally, the home retail is expected to experience the largest percentage increase of 46 percent to 59 million pounds sterling followed by fashion with an increase of 41 percent to 337 million pounds sterling.



According to the Barclays study report, spending on hotels, eating out and various attractions will increase by 41 percent to 1.4 billion pounds sterling by 2017. This is due to the expected spending by overseas visitors which is predicted to increase by 42 percent (396 million pounds sterling) on eating out, 46 percent (119 million pounds sterling) on leisure attractions for example the Scotland's golf courses and 897 million pounds sterling on hotel accommodation by 2017.

In summary, according to Fergus Ewing, the Tourism Minister of Scotland, Scotland is a leading tourist destination in the world and tourism is a very important sector of the Scottish economy providing a

source of income to 185,900 individuals.

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