

TOURISM IN EGYPT IS BACK TO ITS SUNNY DAYS

The Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities reported that Egypt welcomed 7 million visitors in the first half of this year, marking a 30% increase from the 5 million visitors in 2022. This record-breaking figure signals the revival of Egypt's tourism industry, which was severely impacted by Covid-19 travel restrictions.

In 2020, the number of tourists plummeted from 13.9 million in 2019 to just 3 million. However, the industry has gradually recovered, with 8 million tourists arriving in 2021 and 11.7 million in 2022.

Tourism in Egypt will have a prosperous year ahead. There are high expectations of breaking the 14.7 million arrivals set in 2010. Positive news about tourism and hotel bookings show the industry is recovering. The main tourist source markets are Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, the Czech Republic, Belgium, and Poland.

Positive Numbers and Expectations

According to data provided by the Central Bank of Egypt (ECB), the tourism sector experienced a significant increase in revenue during the first half of the current fiscal year, with a surge of approximately 25% compared to the previous year, amounting to \$7.3 billion. Predictions indicate that revenue may reach \$14 billion by the end of 2023.

The Prime Minister of Egypt, Moustapha Madbouli, has emphasized the country's aim to raise the earnings of tourism in Egypt to \$30 billion annually within the next three years, as opposed to the current \$11 billion to \$12 billion.

The Minister of Tourism and Antiquities believes Egypt deserves more of the global tourism industry. The Minister stated that they are anticipating 15 million tourists to visit Egypt this year, and the impressive numbers achieved in the first half of the year have strengthened their confidence in achieving this goal.

Devaluation of the Pound and Easier Visas

Experts credit the recent surge in tourist arrivals to several factors. The main reason for the increase is the drop in the value of the Egyptian pound compared to foreign currencies. This has made tourism in Egypt more affordable and competitive. The Egyptian Ministry of Tourism has also expanded its reach to different markets and streamlined airport visa application processes. These efforts have led to a positive result, with more travelers selecting Egypt as their preferred destination. In March 2023, the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities announced further measures to simplify the visa application process, including introducing a multi-entry visa valid for five years and costing \$700. Tourists from China, Turkey, India, and Iran can also obtain permits upon arrival at South Sinai airports. These changes and Egypt's solid diplomatic ties have contributed to the significant rise in tourism.

New Strategy for Tourism in Egypt

Egypt plans to revive its tourism industry as part of its "Egypt 2030" sustainable development vision. To achieve this, the country is launching a new tourism strategy focusing on synergy between the tourism and antiques sectors. The strategy aims to utilize natural, archaeological, and human

tourism resources to ensure the long-term sustainability of this vital industry for the country's economy.

The strategy's primary goal is to attract more tourists by enhancing the quality of their services, thereby providing an exceptional tourist experience. The development of tourism infrastructure is crucial to this objective. Therefore, the government plans to increase the hotel capacity to 500,000 rooms and improve airflow and airport capacity - both of which are critical factors for the growth of the tourism industry.

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