

SPAIN TO PLOUGH MORE MONEY AND IDEAS INTO TOURISM



One of the most popular countries hit by the crisis in tourism. New innovative ideas to make up for losses.

The figures relating to Spain's tourism industry are simply astounding: 2008 saw **57 million foreign visitors in Spain**, which is actually 11 million more than the population of the country itself. This is not the most astonishing thing. The 2008 figures were, in the most part, actually **down 12%** in 2007. For Spain, this is not good news at all. Most people blame the losses on the global economic crisis and on Spain's overbuilt coastline. Tourists now tend to look for more than the Costa del Sol or other overpopulated resorts.

The Spanish government is attempting to solve the problems in Spanish tourism by unearthing the treasures, about which not many foreigners are aware of. It is true that the government puts around **90 million EUR into tourism** every year. Some local governments put even more money into the sector, such as Andalusia, which puts around 15 million EUR into its own tourism industry. However, it has been generally agreed that brainpower as well as money is needed.

For example, Spain has been producing wines for around 3000 years, yet the thought of tourists coming to Spain on **wine tours** is not well known. This could change rapidly if Spanish wines are marketed in a better manner and tours are arranged in Spain. This has already started in some regions yet wine certainly provides an area for improvement. Bilbao, in the Basque Country, is another example of the Spanish somewhat neglecting their treasures. Ever since a part of the New York museum, Guggenheim, was introduced there, the town has never been so popular amongst foreigners. It is hoped that the areas of Spain away from the coasts can match the coast's success to combat the current crisis.

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