

STUDY: CARIBBEAN TOURISM NEEDS TO OFFER MORE THAN BEACHES



As travelers to the Caribbean indicate a desire for more than "sun, sand and sea" vacation experiences, travel stakeholders are having to sit up and take notice. A study conducted by TCI Research, a travel research company, has collected statistics that bear this out.

With competition increasing from rivals such as Latin America, the Indian Ocean and the Mediterranean, **20 million global travelers the Caribbean has enjoyed hosting in the past is under threat.**

While there are plenty of great places to shop, leisure activities and wonderful local food, there are a number of areas in which the Caribbean could make improvements, according to TCI.

Olivier Henry-Biabaud, CEO of TCI Research advises that the Caribbean is good at providing beautiful beaches, comfortable accommodations and a great variety of quality foods, but fails to compete adequately in other areas, such as providing a feeling of security, the hospitality of the people, and a pleasing environment to name a few. He went on to say that he believes attention needs to be paid to those areas that are lacking in order to become more competitive and maintain tourism sustainability.

Travelers to the Caribbean are highly satisfied with the quality of the beaches, leisure activities, shopping and local foods. However other travel destinations such as Asia, Latin America and the Indian Ocean received even higher levels of satisfaction for the same categories. In fact Latin America in particular was providing a higher level of satisfaction in the areas of local people, local food and leisure activities than that provided by the Caribbean.

The five areas that were identified in the report as lacking in competitiveness were the poor transportation infrastructure, a lack of feeling of security, digital services, architecture and urbanization development, and the lack of cleanliness both within the cities and outside of them.

More than 30,000 interviews were conducted globally to provide the study results.

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