

SPAIN SET TO PUMP MONEY INTO ITS SUSTAINABLE TOURISM SECTOR



Spain, the world's third biggest tourism market behind France and the USA, is set to throw 1 billion Euros at maintaining its sustainable tourism industry and even adding to it. Tourism accounts for 11% of the Spanish GDP and employs 2 million people.

Spain has always had a thriving tourism industry, mostly thanks to its glorious coasts and reasonable prices. However, the reputation of being a haven of sun, sea and sand is now actually becoming a problem. It was suggested during a meeting in Mallorca of the Spanish tourist board that Spain needs to move away from the glorious sandy beaches image and focus on promoting other aspects of the country, which are far too often ignored.

Indeed, **€9 million are to be invested in promoting 'A Taste of Spain'**, with the intention of attracting people to the Spanish inland. **The campaign will promote the colourful Spanish cuisine and the underrated wines.** Mr. Zapatero, the current Spanish prime minister, has stated that he is deeply interested in tourism modernization and its adaptation toward sustainable tourism. The tourist board thus plans to emphasize rural, cultural and entertainment tourism.

Similarly, there will be a €500 million credit package available to companies for improving their performance in tourism along the lines of environmental sustainability. This shall be part of the total package of 1 billion Euros, which shall be plunged into not only maintaining, yet also improving and developing one of the world's most renowned tourist countries.

Mr. Zapatero put a lot of stress on improving the image of Spain's inland and the economical differences between inland areas and coastal tourist traps. In an ideal world, the Spanish would like to close this gap as much as possible. The vast amount of cash should help to realise this ambition.

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