

EXPO 2015 TO BOOST TOURISM IN MILAN AND LOMBARDY



In 1861 the first World Expo was held in London. It was a landmark event which showcased to the world the technological wonders of the modern age. The expo was quite critical in the development of international trade, tourism and art & design education. In 2015 it is Milan's time to host one of the most important events on the international calendar. The impact of Expo 2015 on the tourism

industry in the Lombardy region is expected to be significant.

The theme of the 2015 Expo will be "Feeding the Planet, Energy for Life". It is a topic that addresses one of the most important questions we face in the 21st century – how to provide nutrition for all of the Earth's inhabitants. 142 nations will showcase their answers to this vital question at the Expo in Milan lasting six months (May 1st – October 31st).

Official estimates from the Milan tourism board state that at least 20 million visitors will attend the Expo. Of these 30% are predicted to come from outside of Italy. On average 56,000 to 60,000 people are expected to visit the exhibition daily, with the peak between 200,000 and 250,000 during the inaugural days. The numbers of visitors are expected to rise during the holiday period as well when 130,000 people are estimated to come daily on average.

Tourism is already an integral part of Milan's economy, consisting of 18,000 companies and 123,000 people. These numbers will increase during the Expo as roughly 200,000 people will be employed either directly or indirectly by the event organizers. The number of tourism businesses in Milan is also expected to grow by 800 companies.

Milan has a diverse tourism industry which produces about EUR 8 billion a year in revenue. Restaurants are the biggest employers with 16,116 businesses and more than 100,000 people employed. This is followed by travel agencies with 1,115 businesses and hotels with 981 establishments.

Expo 2015 will consist of more than 2000 events. Included among these will be gastronomic and culture events, conventions, policy meetings and world debates. 60 self-exhibition spaces will be constructed over a space of 1.1 million square meters. The 142 countries involved with the event will invest approximately EUR 1.1 billion. This will be matched by EUR 1.3 billion of public investment and further EUR 0.3 billion from private investors.

Milan is regarded as Italy's hub for Italian music, media, culture and perhaps most importantly food. It will serve as a perfect backdrop to this key international event on a very serious topic. The impact of holding the World Expo will inevitably boost Milan's economy, both for those directly involved in tourism and the city as a whole.

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