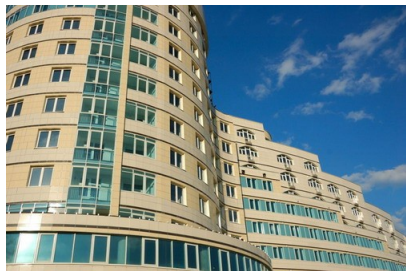


NEW HOTEL CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM INTRODUCED IN TUNISIA



New hotel classification system was launched in Tunisia by the local federation of hotels. Already, more than half of the hotels achieved their stars under the new system.

Over three hundred of Tunisian hotels achieved their classification under a recently launched new system of standards.

“Three hundred and thirteen hotels have been classified so far according to the new standards issued by the Tunisian Federation of Hotels and the supervisory authority,” said Slim Tlatli, Minister of Tourism, quoted by Tourmag.com. The new standards as well as other plans for the coming tourist season were discussed at a recent meeting of the ministry of tourism representatives and regional travel service providers.

The hotels classified according to the new system represent a total capacity of over 125,000 beds, which is 55 per cent of all hotels in Tunisia. The main changes in the criteria for hotel classification include not only the equipment and facilities but also greater emphasis on safety issues, food hygiene as well as the accessibility for disabled guests. Thus all hotels with at least one star are now required at minimum to be able to provide specially adapted rooms accessible for people on wheelchairs.

As to the new standards related to the equipment all hotels with 3, 4 and 5 stars are now required to have luggage lockers. 4 and 5 star hotels need to be equipped with a lift and 3-star hotels have to offer at least one restaurant to the guests. **All hotels also have to provide a non-smoking area in their building and 4 and 5 star establishment need to reserve a whole wing or a floor for non-smokers if the hotel is located in a city.**

The Federation of Hotels also stated the required minimum number of staff with academic training or experience in the hospitality industry which should ensure increasing quality of the provided services.

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