

# MOROCCO'S TOURISM INDUSTRY RECORDED GROWTH IN 2009



The number of tourists who visited Morocco in 2009 increased by 6%. In total the country welcomed over 8 million tourists.

Despite the economic downturn affecting tourism industry in 2009, the latest statistics show that Morocco managed to resist the crisis. While tourism around the world declined on average by 4.3% last year (UNWTO), **Morocco reported an increase of 6% in the number of arrivals at the border** (+ 460,000 tourists) when compared to 2008.

The latest statistics released by the Ministry of Tourism and Handicraft reported that in total 8.34 million tourists visited the country in 2009 (7.88 million a year earlier), reported Fmdt.ma.

With respect to the total overnight stays in hotels Morocco however recorded a decrease of 1%. The decline was caused primarily by the drop in overnight stays of non-residents (-4%) which was partly offset by the increase of overnight stays of residents (10%).

The hospitality industry recorded increased numbers of guests especially at the end of the last year. For instance **Marrakech, where 38% of all overnight stays were registered, announced an increase of 26%, surpassing its historical peak of +6% in 2006.** Casablanca and Fès also performed well with the increase of the guest nights of 21% and 28% respectively.

Surprisingly however the second largest tourist destination in the country, the city of Agadir, seems not to benefit much from the recent recovery. The city recorded a decline of 2% in the number of guest nights.

As to the source markets, **Morocco is increasingly popular especially among tourists from Spain** (36% more guest nights), Arab countries (29%), Italy (11%), France (4%) and Belgium (6%). On the other hand, the number of visitors from Germany declined by 5%.

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