

TOURISM BOARD: SPAIN IS NOT JUST A SUN AND BEACH DESTINATION



Spain aims to change its image of sun and beach destination. The tourism board plans to attract tourists interested in the country's culture, heritage and cuisine.

For years, Spain has been promoted around Europe as a sun and beach destination luring tourists for stress free vacations by the sea. **The Spanish tourism board now wants to change the image of the country and rather stress its cultural heritage.**

According to the board more and more travelers are attracted by Spanish museums and architecture. Wine and food tasting is also very popular as well as luxury residences and boutique hotels. Starting this year the board wants to highlight the country's diversity and thus lure other groups of travelers like history lovers and culinary tourists. According to the director of the tourism board, it is not necessary to build new hotels and resorts, but rather to promote the existing quality products.

City breaks in the major Spanish cities like Madrid, Malaga, Barcelona and Valencia are now becoming more popular especially among French travelers who favor especially Barcelona. Madrid, the capital city, was the only region that recorded an increase in the tourist numbers in 2009 (+3%). Barcelona on the other hand is the number one for MICE tourism. It retains its position as the second city for congresses in the world after Paris.

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