

ICCA: MOST POPULAR MEETING DESTINATIONS ANNOUNCED



The ICCA has recently announced the most popular meeting destinations. The results threw up few surprises as the US and Germany came out in the leading positions once again.

Germany thanks to its numerous castles and fairy tale chateaux is for many a synonym for romantic holiday destination. However, the country thrives in tourism also thanks to its image of supreme organization, cleanliness and “down to business” attitude. This is why **according to ICCA (International Congress and Convention Association) and its rankings of the world's most popular association meeting destinations Germany is once again the number one in Europe**, and is way ahead of Spain in second place.

One of the advantages of the country as a first rate MICE destination is its central location, which suits international companies. Moreover, German hosts are mostly capable of speaking good English if their mother tongue does not suffice, which might be a problem in some other European countries. As a result, Germany held 458 meetings last year, along with a massive amount of private unregistered conferences.

On the other side of the Atlantic, the US is the absolute king of meetings - not only within the continent but worldwide shifting Germany to the second place on a global level. Actually, **USA and Germany has been the number one and two countries respectively since 2004 measured by the number of international meetings.**

The reasons for the success of USA as a MICE destination are quite clear - there are many US event providers, which creates fruitful competition, and the infrastructure is absolutely ideal. We must also not forget that the Americas have nothing like the international level of competition Europeans do. The size of America swallows Europe whole, whereas a meeting in Hamburg could be switched to neighboring Holland without too much hassle.

According to ICCA's rankings, globally Vienna and Barcelona were the champion cities for hosting international association meetings in 2009. Vienna is a popular meetings destination thanks to its absolute central location, professional organization and long history of event providing.

In the coming years, it is expected that certain cities from the EU ascension countries will rise to prominence and start to host meetings. The popularity of Prague, Warsaw and Budapest seems to be certain to rise in this field.

ICCA based its rankings on a survey of 8,294 events that took place in 2009. The criteria for the events were that the meetings are organized by international associations, take place on a regular basis and rotate between at least three different countries.

The top 10 countries for international association meetings 2009:

1. United States (595 meetings)
2. Germany (458 meetings)
3. Spain (360 meetings)
4. Italy (350 meetings)
5. United Kingdom (345 meetings)
6. France (341 meetings)
7. Brazil (293 meetings)
8. Japan (257 meetings)
9. China (245 meetings)
10. Austria (236 meetings)

The top 10 cities for international association meetings 2009:

1. Vienna (160 meetings)
2. Barcelona (135 meetings)
3. Paris (131 meeting)
4. Berlin (129 meetings)
5. Singapore (119 meetings)
6. Copenhagen (103 meetings)
7. Stockholm (102 meetings)
8. Amsterdam (98 meetings)
9. Lisbon (98 meetings)
10. Beijing (96 meetings)

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