

BULGARIA BOOSTS TOURISM WITH NEW ATTRACTIONS AND HOTELS



Bulgaria massively focuses on expanding its tourism industry in hopes of winning more tourists from Western Europe. Until 2020, the number of total tourists is expected to reach approximately 10 million annually. In order to reach this goal, new hotels are already being planned.

Bulgaria's capital Sofia will receive a new Swissotel with 281 rooms, Serviced Apartments and a private eye clinic. This complex is expected to open in 2018. **TUI's hotel brand Riu is also going to open an especially large hotel with 600 rooms at the popular Black Sea coast.** This resort features an aqua park for children, several pools and restaurants as well as sporting fields and playgrounds.

In the city of Plovdiv, which will be Europe's cultural capital of 2019, a new Holiday Inn Hotel with 68 rooms is being built. Its opening is scheduled for this year's autumn.

Bulgaria's tourism industry is in dire need of new impulses. Recently, the number of overnight stays with purchasing power sank to about 4.5 million, due to the lack of the usual tourism from Ukraine and Russia in the wake of the Crimea-crisis. Last year, Bulgaria's tourism sector made roughly 510 million Euros. As of now, there are 3,162 hotels and resorts with 314,000 beds in total.

Next to the previous focus on summer tourism and winter sports, Bulgaria plans to develop its culture and spa tourism. In line with that, Bulgaria's newly opened ministry of tourism launched two transnational tours - «The Line of Wine» and «In the Footsteps of Roman Emperors » - which go from Bulgaria to Romania, Serbia and Croatia.

Another project developed by the ministry is a new «One-Stop-Shop»-card for hotel and tourism investors, which displays especially interesting destinations. This includes the expansion of ski areas and ski lifts. For spa-tourists, Bulgaria offers several historic baths with mineral springs spread all over the country. Furthermore, a theme park which is going to highlight the rich history of this European country is being built as well.

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