

TIROL TOURISM: NEW GUEST RECORD IN SUMMER



is also optimistic.

Over this year's summer season, from May to September, the Tirol tourism set a new record with 4.8 million guest arrivals. This represents an increase of 9.5% compared to previous year's season, and the expectation for the upcoming winter season in the Austrian

state is also optimistic. In overall stays, Tirol reached an increase of 4.6% compared to last year, with 17.8 million in total. According to Josef Margreiter, CEO of Tirol Werbung, the numbers were not so high since 1994.

"Of course, we greatly benefitted from the excellent weather. The strong Swiss Franc also played a significant role," Margreiter explained the main reasons for this summer's positive results. What's more, **the mountainside summer vacation experienced a boom on almost all relevant markets.**

The biggest increase regarding the summer season was recorded for the German visitors. Their overnight stays in Tirol increased by 293,000 to 9.21 million (+3.3 %), and their arrivals grew by 153,000 to 2.2 million (+7.5 %). There were also significant increases among guests from the Netherlands, Switzerland and Italy. Domestic tourism succeeded as well.

The source country, which Margreiter specifically emphasized as highly important for Tirol tourism, was China. The overnight stays of the Chinese visitors grew by 84,000 (+72.3 %), and their arrivals increased by 79,000 (+73.4 %) to a new total of 188,000.

However, the data show that the duration of stay is steadily declining. This summer season, the average vacation reached a new overall low of 3.7 days, which is also the reason why the market "was not able to reach an adequate added value" in spite of an increase in revenue to roughly 2.84 billion Euro.

Regarding the coming months, Tirol tourism experts expect a positive winter season. With the exception of Russia, all markets display "good or better booking situation" compared to last year. **With Russian guests, Margreiter expects a further decline of 30 to 40 percent in arrivals and overnight stays.** The main cause can be found in the weekend Ruble and an increasing demand for domestic tourism among Russians. Overall, the CEO was confident that last winter's numbers could be reached again this year.

The Tirol tourism industry made a positive assessment as well. According to the seasonal tourism barometer, 83 % of all hotels are currently happy or extremely pleased with their booking situation.

Günther Platter, governor of Tirol (ÖVP), saw great circumstances for the upcoming winter season with the world cup opening in Sölden. During the press conference, Platter announced the plans to expand and diversify the brand of Tirol. In an interview, the governor denied any rumors of supposed reductions for Tirol advertisements as part of the currently work-in-progress administrative reform, stating that it was going to be increased by another million for 2015 and 2016 each.

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