

TERRORISM: INSECURITY DOES NOT DETER TOURISTS



For a long time, terror has been a worldwide threat. This year however, terrorists have targeted the most popular tourist destinations creating an atmosphere of insecurity. The question is whether tourism is in a critical state.

According to tourism industry experts, terrorism has naturally affected tourism - negatively for that matter. However, the effects are expected to be short-lived.

After the terrorist attacks in Paris there was a decline in the number of bookings to the city. However the decrease lasted only one week. Right now, the number of bookings in Paris equals what was recorded in the similar period last year.

Despite there being an offer to cancel or rebook their trips to Paris, free of charge, Thomas Cook mentions that a very modest percentage of tour enthusiasts took advantage of the offer that lasted up to November 30.

According to DER Touristik, there was an increase in the number of inquiries by customers who had booked for a Paris vacation. While some canceled or rebooked their holiday due to insecurity concerns, most vacationers still plan to travel. TUI reports decreased bookings to Paris, but records show that at this time of the year, trips to Paris have never been in high demand.

Terror has always resulted in vacationers opting for alternative destinations. In Egypt, the recent Sinai Peninsula plane crash that claimed 224 people and was assumed to be due to IS terror attack, caused a ban on flights from Russia. **Egypt was a favorite destination for Russian tourists with about 3 million Russians visiting the country in 2014.** The tourists have now shown increased interest in the Canary Isles instead.

According to Martin Lohmann, the director of the Institute for Tourism Research in Northern Europe, Tunisia tourism is still crippled by the June attack in Sousse that claimed 38 people. He adds that while natural disasters, terror attacks, or war cause concerns about the insecurity at the given destination, they still do not dissuade people from traveling. He gives the example of Turkey which neighbors Syria but has basked in a tourist boom.

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