

THE UPCOMING TOURISM INDUSTRY TRENDS IN 2016



Another new year is here, and it seems 2016 will perhaps become one of the most exciting tourism years if not the most thrilling. Going by the projected trends, vacationers will have a plethora of options while tourism industry in general will have to deal with certain technological changes and advancements.

While there is a wide agreement that South America and some short urban getaways such as Copenhagen will continue to rake a big number of tourists in 2016 and beyond, **Iceland is steadfastly becoming a force to reckon with as a popular tourist destination.** This is at the backdrop of the fact that the people of Iceland have creatively reinvented themselves after the devastating volcanic eruptions and financial crisis that hit the northern hemisphere nation. According to Susanne Eckes, a consultant at Zukunftsinstitut GmbH, a German think tank that examines future trends, Iceland is to welcome greater amounts of tourists this year.

“Iceland is a modern country with inhabitants who are ‘digital natives’ and have drawn upon their creativity and design skills to refashion the country.” The country’s hospitality culture is also helping the situation with Icelanders tremendously marketing their beautiful country in every front. For instance, the country has a larger number of Airbnb lodgings than hotel rooms available via booking.com.

Ms. Eckes mentioned another trend of the tourism industry - normtrotters. The term is derived from the combination of ‘norm’ (average) and ‘trotter’ (from the word globetrotter). “This new phenomenon follows the idea that many modern tourists are looking to have a personalized experience at their destination and have personalized services instead of being part of one large group that tour together or are treated in one general way. In this case, this is a trend that is massively picking up with tourists in need of a simplified way of enjoying a personalized experience while on holiday.”

As to the most popular travel destination Asia is clearly the biggest winner in 2016. This is influenced by a number of reasons with the increased economic prosperity and development particularly helping the region. Additionally, Europeans discovered Asia as an exciting destination, especially during the winter seasons in the Old Continent. On the same note, Asians themselves seem to travel within their own region with the notably economic prosperity aiding to the growth of the middle class who are ready and well-suited to experience various amazing places within their country.

Another thing growing in popularity within the travel industry relates to the development of technology. “Drones will have a major role to play in tourism just in the same way the selfie stick craze took selfie idea to a whole new level,” said Susanne Eckes. **In the near future, it will not be a surprise when drones fly all over to tourists engaging in various activities during their vacations.** They will definitely be used to visit or have a look at places or regions that were deemed inaccessible; thereby playing a major role in enhancing the tourism industry in the future.

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