

ROMANIA AIMS TO ATTRACT THOUSANDS OF RUSSIAN TOURISTS THIS YEAR



year.

The relationship between Turkey and Russia is not what you would call "rosy" lately. The multiple incidents involving Russian military airplanes allegedly violating Turkish airspace have increased the tension between the two countries. Besides, tourism was also badly hit by regional uncertainties and the Russian crisis, which might lead to Turkey losing as many as 4.5 million Russian tourists this

year. But one country's loss is another's opportunity, as it seems. The Romanian National Authority for Tourism seeks to attract at least a small part of the above mentioned tourists to Romania. Romania could take advantage of the tension between Moscow and Ankara to attract more tourists, Anca Pavel-Nedeia, president of the National Authority for Tourism (ANT) in Romania, told local news agency Agerpress.

Egypt was another popular destinations among tourists, but the recent terrorist attacks have caused Russians to lose interest in this destination, too. To make the most of the situation, the ANT plans to launch a program called "Seaside for Russians". The program will see seaside hotels in Romania offer very friendly rates for Russian visitors in the program, probably around EUR10 per person per night, for a seven-night stay. The rates are very low compared to what hotels normally charge, but they also take into account the fact that Russian tourists are keen to consume optional services.

As a first step toward the launch of the program, the representatives of ANT, along with others from the National Association of Travel Agencies (FAPT), the Seaside - Danube Delta Association (ALDD) and about 20 tour operators, have visited Moscow between the 27th and 29th of January. Their goal was to present this new program to local tour operators. "We have discussed, in general, of the need of choosing very good hotels, with high quality services," State Secretary for Tourism Corina Martin said in a press conference. "We're talking 4 and 5 star hotels, we're talking all-inclusive packages, but we're also talking a high budget tourist niche, luxury vacations, individual tourists. And we're not talking the seaside and the Danube Delta only. We're talking Bucharest, Transylvania, Brasov, Sibiu and Sighisoara, too." Vladimir Nechaev, Attaché to the General Consulate of the Russian Federation in Constanta, Romania, said that he thinks the Romanian seaside can be a preferred destination for Russian tourists as long as they get certain services. "The Romanian seaside is very attractive for Russians, but they also want high quality services. They want all materials, books, menus to be translated to Russian and, of course, guides that speak Russian. Romania was not very well promoted on the Russian market", he said.

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