

COSTA DEL SOL PROMOTING ITS SPORTS TOURISM



Costa del Sol, the popular holiday spot in the southern Spain, plans to boost its sport tourism sector and thus to diversify the offer of the destination especially in winter.

Costa del Sol has created a Sport Destination brand with a view to promote its sports tourism. The new campaign brings together all existing initiatives in this segment. **Through sports tourism the authorities plan to boost local tourism especially during the weak months in winter.**

According to the president of Costa del Sol Tourism, Elías Bendodo, the region has a good chance to succeed on the sports tourism market.

The tourism board will draw on the experience of tourism asset management and the golf and sailing segments, and plans to add initiatives related to football, swimming and other sports.

The climate and the facilities available in Costa del Sol should facilitate the promotion of the province as an attractive place for football events or pre-game meetings of international teams.

"Many sport clubs are already coming to Costa del Sol but we want to improve our position on the market," Bendodo declared, while noting that besides the sport facilities the region provides a wide variety of hotels and leisure services.

He also said that the prestige of the brand "Spain" will be exploited: "If there is anything at which Spain is good, it is sports," said Bendodo.

Last winter, Costa del Sol recorded 11.7% growth in domestic and international tourists and 12.3% in overnight stays compared to the same period last year.

According to Bendodo, the region ended 2015 as the all-time best year, with 10.6 million tourists, and he expects to exceed that figure in 2016. The aim is to boost the first-time visits to the province. The authorities expect an increase in tourist numbers also due to the instability of other competing destinations such as Tunisia and Egypt.

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