

OVERNIGHT STAYS IN GERMANY ARE INCREASING, BUT NOT EVERYWHERE



Germany has plenty of attractions for any tourist type - culture lovers, adventurous souls, or even the history buffs. However, not all regions benefit from the increasing numbers of guests and overnight stays.

The German coast on the Baltic and North Seas is traditionally quite popular among domestic as well as international tourists. **In Schleswig-Holstein, the Baltic Sea coast recorded 4.97 million overnight stays in the first half of 2016, which is 6.5 percent more than last year.** North Sea recorded an increase of 3.8 percent to 3.7 million overnight stays.

Also Mecklenburg-Vorpommern - otherwise rather one of the economically weaker regions - benefits from the booming tourism. Until the end of this year, a record of 30.5 million overnight stays is expected to be reached.

The East

The number of overnight stays in the state of Brandenburg rose in the first half 2016 compared to the same period last year by about 11 percent, as the Tourism Spreewald announced. Many Berliners like taking a trip to the region contributing to the growing tourism numbers. The southern part of the region bordering Poland however does not participate in the current boom.

The Ruhr Region

Since 2001, the largest metropolitan area in Germany, the Ruhr region, comes up with a UNESCO World Heritage Site: colliery and coking plant. Every year 1.5 million people come to explore the vast industrial monument. The statistics show that visitors usually come for short trips here - on average the guests stay for two days. In the first half of 2016, statisticians counted more than 3.1 million overnight stays, 3.3 percent more than in the same period last year.

The Mountains

Harz, Rhön, Ore: in the low mountain ranges of Germany, things are different. The Sauerland was able to record a strong growth in visitor numbers of 5.5 percent to 2.4 million last year. More than 450,000 of them came from abroad, mainly from the Netherlands and Belgium. The trend towards short trips continued: on average, tourists stayed for 3.1 days. Especially guests from the metropolitan areas of the Rhine and Ruhr would come during the Bank holidays and long weekends, to quickly get to the countryside.

In other regions, the development is steady. The tourism authorities in the towns of Lower Saxony are so far very satisfied with the tourism numbers this year. "We have seen an increase in the number of overnight stays between two and three percent," says the managing director of the Harz Tourism Association HVV, Carola Schmidt.

Several of the towns report increasing numbers of visitors from the Netherlands and Denmark. In Weserbergland the tourism numbers are going up. "But our growth is not such that we could speak

of a boom," says the managing director of the Weserbergland tourism, Petra Less. This year, the amount of overnight stays increased by two per cent. "We are satisfied, but not euphoric."

The Cities

Leipzig is growing with regards to the city's population and its number of visitors has been also going up for several years. The tourist buses run through the streets, the hotels are full of business travelers and congresses. According to the Leipzig Tourismus und Marketing GmbH, LTM, in 2015 there were 2.83 million overnight stays registered which represented the tenth consecutive record. Even the first half of 2016 went well, LTM boss Volker Bremer already expects the 3 million mark which would be double the amount of nights over the last decade.

In Hessen in the first half of this year, the hotels recorded around 15.5 million, according to the State Statistical Office. The reason for the increasing numbers are mainly the business travelers in Frankfurt and the Rhine-Main area. "The cities are booming, the growth in the country is less strong though," says Herbert Lang, director of tourism marketing of Hessen Agentur.

The South

Bavaria reported almost 16 million tourist arrivals and 41 million overnight stays in the first six months of 2016 which is about five percent more than over the same period last year. The most popular holiday destinations is Upper Bavaria, Munich and Swabia and Lower Bavaria with the Bavarian Forest. Here the holidaymakers usually book their hotels for longer stays according to the spokeswoman for the Bayern Tourismus Marketing GmbH. Bavaria is attractive especially to travelers from the United States, the Netherlands and Switzerland.

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