

ARAB TOURISTS ARE FLOODING BAVARIA



Tourism in Bavaria is booming One of the reasons are the increasing numbers of Arab tourists. The German state seems to benefit from the burka ban introduced in some other countries since the Muslim travelers now look for different holiday destination.

German hoteliers and other service providers are pleased with the rising numbers of guests from the Middle East, since they spend more money than domestic tourists. Arab tourists also usually travel in larger groups.

While these visitors may be the subject of various controversial debates in the media, the retailers in Munich are pleased with their rising revenue. According to a survey conducted by the trade association of Bavaria, Arab customers spend almost 400 euros per day. This is much more than, for example, German visitors from Lower Saxony. And this is not just the case of luxury shopping streets like Maximilianstraße, says Ernst Läger, president of the trade association.

“Meanwhile it has become common that the middle class of the Middle East traveling to our country are frequented in all locations in the city. Whether Kaufingerstraße, a shopping mall like the OEZ or the Maxmillianstraße. Even in neighborhood districts like Rotkreuzplatz you are likely to encounter Arab tourists,” Läger added.

According to him, as customers they are mostly pleasant and almost always someone in the group speaks English. This eases the communication with the salesmen. More prominent stores have Arabic-speaking staff, but this is rather a polite concession.

Besides eating vegetarian burgers and enjoying soft drinks on the beach, Arab tourists like to make shopping breaks. As studies have shown, shopping is high on the list of holiday activities of Arab visitors, even higher than sightseeing.

They are different from other exotic travelers like the Chinese. For them extensive sightseeing programs are an important part of a holiday trip. It is prestigious in China to show relevant photographs from holidays to the family and friends.

As customers, Chinese guests are somewhat more complicated than Arab buyers, says Sven Zahn, the director of Eurotrade, the retail subsidiary of the Munich airport.

“For the Chinese, it is very important to be able to communicate in their language, because of the sense of security. There are only few Chinese speaking German and they also speak only limited English. Therefore, they feel in good hands when they meet native speakers in our shop. **As to the product ranges, the Chinese buy products “Made in Germany”, as well as luxury products. Arab customers purchase beauty assortments and cosmetics,**” Sven Zahn noted.

One more thing makes the Arab tourists popular among hoteliers and retailers in Munich - many of them return to Bavaria for several weeks at a time. According to the study conducted by the trade association of Bavaria, the number of Arabs is increasing rapidly and they keep coming back.

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