

# MOROCCO TOURISM BOOSTED BY CHINESE AND RUSSIAN ARRIVALS



A total of 8.1 million tourists visited Morocco during the first nine months of 2016, a slight increase of 0.3% compared to the same period in 2015. The North African country has been politically stable for many years which helped the Morocco tourism develop. Most of the visitors come for the culture and history of the country as well as the beaches on the coast.

The number of foreign tourists over the nine months decreased by 3.6%, while arrivals of Moroccans living abroad increased by 3.8%. These data were provided by the Tourism Observatory, a publication of statistics on Morocco tourism published at the end of September 2016.

**Tourist arrivals from the United Kingdom, Germany, and France decreased by 7%, 3%, and 2%, respectively.** The number of tourists from the Netherlands, Belgium, and Spain grew by 2%, 1%, and 1% respectively.

On the other hand, the Morocco tourism authorities reported that the Russian market grew significantly by 102%. The amount of Chinese visitors increased even more - by 184% - which is positive news for the state budget, since Chinese tourists are known to spend more others.

In terms of total overnight stays in tourist accommodation establishments, there was an increase of 2% compared to the end of September 2015 (-2% for non-resident tourists and +11% for residents), according to the statistics.

The two tourist centers, Agadir and Marrakesh, which is home to one of the nine UNESCO sites in the country, accounted for 60% of total overnight stays in the first nine months of 2016, with increases of 2% and 3% respectively. Other destinations showed contrasting results.

Fès recorded a decline of 12%, followed by Rabat (-2%), while Casablanca and Tanger saw increases of +5% and +7%, respectively.

**The occupancy rate up to the end of September 2016 was 40%**, down one percentage point from the same period in 2015. During the first nine months of 2016, the revenues generated by the tourist activity of non-residents in Morocco rose to 50.77 billion DH, compared to 47.85 billion in 2015—an increase of 6.1%.

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