

CRUISE PASSENGERS SPEND MUCH LESS WHEN VISITING MEXICO



Despite the fact that the number of cruise ships arriving to Mexico reached a new record high in 2016, the average amount of money spent by the cruise passengers is dropping sharply.

The tourism which arrives in Mexico via the maritime route, that is to say, by cruise ships, was reported to have increased by 9.5% during 2016, according to the data put forward by Francisco Madrid, Director of the Faculty of Tourism and Gastronomy at the University of Anáhuac.

However, **the amount of money spent by the cruise passengers has been in sharp decline ever since 2010, reaching the level of 59.9 dollars per person last year, which represents an 8.3% decrease relative to 2015.**

These statistics are somewhat bizarre since 2016 was historically the best year in terms of the number of cruise ship arrivals - a total of 2 262, a 3.8% increase compared to the same period during the previous year. This increase in the number of arrivals translates into 82 additional vessels arriving at Mexican ports.

The graph reveals that in 2012, when few more than 5 000 people were arriving via the maritime route, the cruise passengers were spending 84.7 dollars per person, almost 25 dollars more than in 2016.

This raises the question of what is required in order to achieve the goal of getting cruise ship tourists to spend more in Mexico.

The authorities have recognized the fact that it is necessary to promote the Mexican tourist destinations which are ports of arrival for cruise ships, in order to attract their attention and increase revenues.

As commented by Pablo Azcárraga, President of the National Tourist Business Council (CNET), during a press conference, entrepreneurs are proposing a serious investment scheme which will allow tourist destinations such as those which receive cruise ships to develop, and in so doing encourage tourist spending in those locations.

Cozumel continues to be the Mexican port with the most recorded arrivals, with 1 114 - or 3.2% more thanks to the 35 additional arrivals in 2016. The contrast is enormous with the port on the "Riviera Maya", where Ensenada - which is second on the list - is located.

Despite having seen a 6.9% decrease in its number of arrivals in 2016, the port of "Baja California" continues to be second in terms of the number of cruise ships welcomed - with a total of 258. In contrast, the port of "La Paz" saw a 60% increase in its arrivals - going from 25 in 2015 to 40 in 2016.

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