

MEXICO'S DARK SIDE - A FLOURISHING BLACK TOURISM



While many countries still feel the burden of the financial crisis as tourists spend less on their holidays, Mexico is now experiencing a boom. Black Tourism seems to be at the top of the menu these days.

White sunny beaches, cocktails with little umbrellas - that is what most tourists used to go to Mexico for. However, recent years have brought a little twist to the most popular pastimes; **Black Tourism has become a very sought-after 'adrenalin' experience** which is luring adventurers from all over the place. Black tourism here means paying for a 'fun package' to experience what it feels like to illegally cross the U.S. border and be 'hunted' by the border patrol, or visit a crime-ridden quarter of a major city.

After paying 200 pesos (\$15) **travelers embark upon a journey in the dark chasing after their 'pollero', or rather a guide who pretends to be a trafficker.** They crawl through bushes and wade through rivers without a chance to eat or drink anything. Being quick is crucial, those who run slow, end up thrown back in a patrol truck. That is a reality check aimed to raise awareness about the rough experience of being a migrant.

A slightly different adventure is a visit to Tepito, a highly dangerous market area in Mexico City, which is famous for its constant issues with drugs, underage prostitution and crime in general. Even if scary, it is a proper eye-opener.

Airlines are now starting to offer more frequent flights and open up to new destinations to satisfy the demand for Mexico. Hotels are expanding as well to make sure everyone is prepared for the wave of tourists who look for all but a peaceful holiday.

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