

TOURISM IN VIETNAM BENEFITS FROM E-VISA



In the first half of the year, Vietnam welcomed 6.2 million foreign tourists, an increase of 30.2% over the previous year. The number of domestic visitors reached more than 40 million people. The total turnover of tourism in Vietnam is estimated at 262 000 billion dong, some 11.4 billion dollars.

According to the Director General of the National Tourism Administration, Nguyễn Văn Tuấn, the positive results of tourism in Vietnam are due to the **adoption of several favorable policies for the development of tourism with the goal of making it a leading sector**. Further development is expected with the new Law on Tourism which, adopted in June by the National Assembly, will come into effect on the 1st of January 2018, and will continue to favor the sector.

Vietnamese tourism stakeholders have been focusing mainly on the quality of services. Several new quality projects have been put into operation, thus improving the capacity of different segments to welcome vacationers.

In particular, the Director General stressed the impact that policies concerning tourist visas have had. **In February, the government decided to apply an electronic visa to 40 countries and territories to boost tourism in Vietnam**. It also approved the extension of the visa exemption for British, French, German, Spanish, Italian and Belarusian citizens until the 30th of June, 2018.

In effect since 2015, this exemption has made it possible to increase the number of arrivals of foreign visitors. In order to maintain this growth, Nguyễn Văn Tuấn called on the government to apply the prorogation of the visa exemption and to extend it to 30 days instead of the current 15 days.

"With 30% growth in the first half of the year, the tourism sector could conceivably welcome 12.5 to 13 million tourists over the whole year," Nguyễn Văn Tuấn said.

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