

CHINESE TOURISTS ARE ARGENTINIAN PRIORITY



Visitors from China are a priority for tourism in Argentina. Therefore, a tourism introduction seminar was launched last week so that the members of the Chinese community living in Argentina get some training and learn how to welcome the Chinese tourists in the best way.

The lecture was carried out at the Foundation of the Argentine Business University (UADE) headed by Argentina's Tourism Minister, Gustavo Santos, China's Ambassador to Argentina, Yang Wanming, and the university's rector, Ricardo Orosco.

"China has become the main tourism source market in the world, **Chinese tourists spend the largest amount on the planet and its growing exponentially**," said Santos highlighting the "fundamental concern" of Argentinian President Mauricio Macri to reinforce the increasingly stronger relations between Argentina and China.

"There is a special affection and understanding of the role that this magnificent, gigantic country plays in today's world, a strategic role not only because of what represents China within the global market thanks to its industrial strength and extraordinary growth, but also because of the balance it represents in a world in crisis," added the Argentinian official.

"This year the number of Chinese tourists has grown by 15 to 20 percent reaching 50,000 tourists, and although these data are absolutely low, the growth rate is very high. It is very positive for tourism in Argentina," he explained.

On the other hand, Yang said that Argentina is in the international focus. He stated that thanks to the bilateral cooperation in the tourism sector the flow of Chinese tourists increased five times over the last decade.

"There is still a distance but not as big as it was in the past thanks to the implementation of new technologies, efforts, and policies making things easier such as visas and connecting flights which help to reduce the distance," said Yang.

Last June, the 10-year visa system was launched for Chinese citizens who travel to Argentina for tourism or business reasons.

"In 2015 and 2016 there were more than 100 million Chinese tourists traveling around the world, but the **fraction of Chinese visitors traveling to Argentina was almost insignificant in relative terms**. The simplification of the visa procedure is a very important first step in order to reverse this trend" the country's ambassador to Beijing, Diego Guelar said.

The regulation is valid for 10 years and provides multiple entries to the country of 90 days each, for business and/or individual tourism.

In 2015, 35,675 Chinese tourists arrived to Argentina; such numbers are expected to multiply 10 times by 2019.

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