

NUMBER OF VISITORS BEATS RECORDS IN NYC



The number of visitors in New York City exceeded all expectations last year, despite concerns about the presidential election of Donald Trump.

New York tourism broke its records in 2017, with 62.8 million visitors, according to figures published by NYC & Company, the city's tourism promotion organization. **This represents an increase of 3.8% over 2016 and the eighth consecutive year that NYC has broken its own record.** It is also clearly higher – by one million – than the most recent forecasts, whereas a year ago, the authorities expected a drop of 300,000 visitors.

The increase in the number of visitors concerns both American and foreign tourists. Last year, 13.1 million people visited the city, representing 20.8 per cent of the total (but 50 per cent of expenditures). The first contingent of tourists comes from the United Kingdom (1.2 million). But the Chinese are just behind, surpassing the million mark for the first time, followed by Canadians.

Professionals feared a "Trump effect". His election in November 2016 could have deterred foreign tourists from choosing the United States as their destination, especially since he imposed an entry ban on several nations.

This was not the case, even though the situation in NYC differs from the rest of the country. According to Department of Commerce figures, the total number of tourists from abroad declined by 3.8% to 55 million in the first nine months of 2017.

New York's appeal is expected to continue: the city is served by an increasing number of routes, including low-cost flights. The hotel offer continues to develop: last year, 36 new hotels opened their doors and a hundred others are under construction.

The city offers more and more attractions, such as VR World NYC, a center dedicated to virtual reality, National Geographic Encounter which allows travel across the oceans, or a ferry system linking certain districts. Finally, New York tourism authorities have launched two major promotional campaigns in recent months, the first estimated at \$3.2 million and the second at \$15.6 million. **The city has placed particular emphasis on Asia and Mexico.**

The forecasts for 2018 are therefore optimistic: according to NYC & Company, a new record should be

broken, with 65.1 million tourists. "After the election, when we started talking about the anti-immigration decree, we felt an immediate effect on people's feelings," said Fred Dixon, CEO of NYC & Company. But we have learned one thing: for foreign tourists, travel is almost a right. They ignore politics.

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