

MACAU TOURISM ATTRACTIONS INCLUDE MORE THAN GAMBLING



The former Portuguese colony, Macau is China's autonomous region planning to diversify its offer and attract more visitors. In 2017, Macau tourism authorities reported 32 million visitors. This is an increase of 5.4% compared to 2016. Considering the city's population of 600,000, this is a significant success that proves the possibilities of the sector.

Macau has gained a lot of recognition in recent years. Its architecture is a great example of the combination of Chinese and Western cultures. As a matter of fact, Macau's historic center is also on the UNESCO World Heritage List.

However, for most tourists, cultural heritage is not exactly the main motive of their visit. **The most densely populated region in the world heavily relies on the popularity of a gambling destination.** 40% of Macau GDP comes from this industry and more than 70% of tax revenues are collected from casinos. Last year, Macau reached another milestone, as it overtook Las Vegas' weekly revenues.

While gambling remains on top of the "Macau wish-list", the region is working with the Chinese government on other solutions and tourism developments.

One of the hopes is that the One Belt One Road Initiative, linking China with numerous countries and regions, will help Macau tourism enter new markets and diversify its offer. Another agreement signed to boost the tourism was signed in 2015 with the Chinese National Tourism Administration. As a result, the central government set up a committee in the region to assist the locals.

While Macau is prospering as a result of its industry focus, China could soon go in the same direction. The country is looking to use the Hainan island as a potential gambling destination towards the future. So far it is a hypothesis, but talks are ongoing and top casino brands could give a big hand in development and propagation.

There is slight concern from Macau regarding this, as they attempt to keep their current monopoly in terms of Chinese gambling. The aim of the central government is to generate more revenues instead of taxing profits from Macau's industry.

As a result, China could boost their already rapidly growing tourism. As already elaborated on, casinos are a huge attraction. The Venetian casino in Macau, for example, is one of Asia's biggest attractions.

The rise of the industry would have a great impact on the tourism industry as a whole. It is still soon to talk, but with the successful Macau example just around the corner, China is surely ready to take steps in this direction.

Date: 2018-04-02

Article link: <https://www.tourism-review.com/macau-tourism-develops-more-options-news10536>