

SPAIN REPORTS 9.2 MILLION CRUISE PASSENGERS IN 2017



Spanish ports registered 9.2 million cruise passengers in 2017, which is 6.68% more than the previous year, with the arrival of 4,248 vessels for this purpose, representing an 8.37% increase.

In Spain, the cruise passengers' estimate was almost 27.26% of the total passengers registered in 2017, which amounted to 34.02 million, an increase of 4.69%, following the latest data submitted by Puertos del Estado.

The cruise industry sector's seasonality has a negative impact on traffic during the winter season, while an increase is reported between the months of June and September in the whole season.

The figures reported in 2017 exceeded the forecasts of the Port Authorities. The entities predicted a historic maximum of 8.8 million cruise passengers for last year, while projecting over 9.5 million cruise passengers by the year 2020.

In the last 25 years, the number of passengers has multiplied by 18, registering over 480,000 visitors in 1992 in the Spanish ports, to the aforementioned 9.2 million in 2017. In this sense, Spain is now the second European power in number of cruise passengers.

Barcelona Cruise Port No Longer Leading Ranks

Barcelona has been replaced by the Balearic Islands in terms of cruise arrivals, in a year that has been heavily affected by Catalonia's 'procés'. With 775 cruise ships, a 11% more than the number reported back in 2016, Barcelona has seen the arrival of 50 fewer ships than the number reported for the Balearic ports, which registered 825 vessels, an increase of 11.34%.

However, taking into account the number of cruise passengers, Barcelona is still leading the ranking of Spanish ports with 2.72 million passengers (+1.27%), followed by the Balearic Islands with 2.13 million cruise passengers (+8.56%). Both ports still lead the top ten most visited ports in Europe.

They are followed by the Canary Islands cruise ports of Las Palmas and Santa Cruz de Tenerife, which reported increases of 11.65% and 9.17%, with 1.23 million and 964,300 cruise passengers, respectively.

Mediterranean Ports and Islands Attract 90% of Tourists

Among the most popular ports are Malaga, which exceeded 509,600 passengers, with an increase of 14.74%, and 299 cruise ships, 49 more than 2016's figures.

For its part, Valencia's was the fifth largest port destination in 2017, with a total of 400,069 cruise passengers, a rise of 1.2%, and 203 ships, a total increase of 12.15%.

However, the largest growth was reported in the Santander port, with the arrival of nearly 15,000 cruise passengers, five times more than last year's numbers.

In total, out of 9.2 million cruise passengers who passed through the Spanish ports, more than 8.3 million did so through ports located in the Mediterranean coast, or the Canary and Balearic Islands.

Despite that, the average number of arrivals through ports located in the Atlantic coasts continues to grow, although at a less alarming rate, a 2.3% increase with remarkable data registered in the port of A Coruña, with an increase of 45% cruise passengers and 31% more vessels in 2017.

The worst figures were reported in the port of Melilla, which sadly didn't receive any cruises in its harbor. Finally, the port of Huelva lost in 2017 more than 13,200 cruise passengers compared to the previous year, with the arrival of only 6,350, a decrease of about 67% passengers. Only 6 vessels docked in the port of Huelva, compared to the 17 vessels registered in 2016.

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