

PYRENEAN TOURISM BODY INVESTED EUR 15 MILLION MARKING ITS 100TH ANNIVERSARY



The Pyrenean Tourism Confederation, an organization that brings together 38 ski resorts and 16 thermal baths and hydrotherapy centers in the French Pyrenees, has invested 15 million euros in this season, marking its 100th anniversary, a celebration in which they plan to offer more than 500 snow-related activities.

Last winter season, the organization reported 5 million ski sessions, 9.4% more than in the previous one when it reached 4.57 million sessions. **For most of the resorts adhered to the Pyrenean Tourism Confederation, last season's data marked "the best season of all times".**

10% of these skiers in their resorts were European, with 80% of them being Spanish. The goal of the Confederation is to diversify and increase the number of skiers, targeting their future promotions to other segments, such as the Norwegian or Polish markets.

"The fact that we are a single voice gives us greater strength compared to other ski destinations. The planned investments will strengthen the destination and increase bookings over last year," said the president of the Confederation, who showed interest in improving the facilities and "creating destinations".

827 million euros revenue for last year

According to data released by the Confederation, tourist expenses related to snow activities during last season were equivalent to 827 million euros. In comparison, the turnover in Nordic ski resorts was 1.5 million euros (1.13 during the previous season).

Last winter, global turnover for ski lifts was 118 million euros, a 14.5% more compared to the 103 million of the previous year. For its part, thermal and hydrotherapy centers generated a total of 13.8 million euros, compared to 13.21 during the previous year, showing a 4.4% increase.

This season, the Pyrenean Tourism Confederation will celebrate its 100th anniversary. Established in 1918 by tourism representatives in the French Pyrenees, it is the largest association in the Pyrenees. It also has 3 notable summits, as well as 4 ski centers approved with a quality seal.

After the snowfall of recent days, which allowed the region to reach 20 to 30 centimeters of snow, the next course of action is to begin the winter season soon, probably in the days before Spain's long holiday weekend (from December 6 to 8). This year, the increase in prices for all ski centers will be around 2%, following the increase in the French CPI (Consumer Price Index).

Investments in all resorts

This year's investment is significantly lower than the one recorded last season, in which a total of 23.2 million euros were used for modernization of several facilities in different ski areas, with the goal of making them more eco-friendly.

At the Confederation, representatives explain that investments have been made over different seasons, so there are a few years where investments are larger than others without diminishing the value of million-worth investments that have been made in recent years, for all resorts and centers of the Pyrenean tourism association.

In this sense, in Ax-3 Domaines, the second phase of renovation of the sector involves replacement of two ski lifts for three last-generation lifts. Investment this season will reach 4.16 million euros. **On the other hand, redevelopment of the Gourette ski area has an estimated value of 30 million, which will be completed in the following years.**

Another project underway is the 'Tourmalet 360', a plan to remodel and increase the ski area with a total budget of 50 million euros in the coming years.

This summer, another joint association has been established under the name Haute-Garonne Mountain, with an investment plan until 2021, valued at 20 to 23 million euros. Meanwhile, at Pic du Midi, a 7 million project has been finished, which involved the creation of an interactive ascent to the summit.

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