

BOLIVIA: IN SEARCH FOR TOURIST RECOGNITION



According to a recent study, Bolivia is not among the five most attractive destinations in the continent. The country plans to change it to achieve some tourist recognition.

A recent survey conducted by the company Ipsos, listed the Latin American countries with the highest tourism popularity. **The study took into account different variables to determine which countries were the most attractive for tourists.** Among the variables that were studied were the historical, natural and cultural attractions, gastronomy, music, kindness of people, and appeal to live in the country.

In terms of historical attractions, Bolivia ranks fifth with a preference of 17%, while the most attractive countries in this section are Mexico (82%), Peru (74%), and Colombia (19%).

Natural attractions show similar results since Bolivia is in eighth place, far from Brazil, which leads with 69%, Colombia (34%) and Mexico (33%). Cultural attractions of other countries also seem to be more remarkable, as Bolivia occupies the seventh place with 9%, far from countries such as Argentina (69%), and Mexico (66%).

Regarding the musical heritage, Bolivia ranks fifth with 7% after Brazil (62%), Argentina (53%), Mexico (50%) and Colombia (46%).

As for preference in gastronomy, Bolivia falls again to the eighth place with 6%, and still far from the leading countries: Peru (77%), Mexico (55%) and Argentina (43%). The most attractive country for the kindness of its people is Colombia, which according to the survey was preferred by 61%. Here, Bolivia is in the sixth place, with 18%. Lastly, the study's data show that the best country to live in Latin America is Chile (56%), while Argentina (36%) and Colombia (30%) are next on the list. Bolivia, once again, was pushed to eighth place, with only 8%

The Government of Bolivia, in an effort to promote tourism and achieve some tourist recognition, and thanks to the support of local communities of the Qhapaq Ñan route that inhabit this country, signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) that aims to develop local capacities to encourage cultural heritage tourism, and in this way, generate more income for communities that populate this area. It should be noted that the Qhapaq Ñan, the great road in Quechua, was kilometers-long road system that the Incas built in the Andes.

Wilma Alanoca, Minister of Culture and Tourism of Bolivia, explained that the main objectives of this non-binding agreement are **"to safeguard, preserve and add value the cultural heritage of rural communities, in order to create a sustainable economic alternative that contributes to poverty reduction"**. It's also worth mentioning that this road is a common heritage of Bolivia, Peru and Ecuador.

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