

BAVARIAN TOURISM DESTINATIONS BENEFIT FROM INCREASED OVERNIGHT STAYS



The German state of Bavaria is more attractive than ever for tourists. For the seventh time in a row, the number of overnight stays has increased, reaching 98.7 million last year. This is almost five percent more than in 2017. The region also recorded an increase in guest arrivals in 2018, at just under five percent to 39.1 million.

The largest number of visitors arrived in Munich (17.1 million overnight stays) and Nuremberg (3.6 million). **Bavarian tourism destinations were also popular for nature holidays: Bad Fussing (2.3 million) ranks third among the most popular destinations in 2018.** It is followed by Oberstdorf (2), Bad Kissingen (1.5), Fussen (1.3), Garmisch–Partenkirchen (1.2) and Regensburg (1.1).

More US tourists

The state is increasingly able to score points with guests from its own country. Nearly 30 million visitors from all over Germany travelled to the southernmost state last year. Almost 10 million guests came from abroad.

Among the foreign guests in Bavaria, the US led the list with 950,000 tourists. Thus, just under one in ten foreign tourists came to Bavaria from the USA, followed by Austria, the Netherlands, Switzerland, and Italy. The Arab Gulf States are in eighth place, while Russian arrivals are tenth.

The Pillars of the Success

Bavarian tourism offers a lot of diversity and interesting opportunities for people of different preferences. Recently, the trend of spending holidays in nature has increased. In this topic, Bavaria is the number one destination throughout Germany for nature tourism, which is why tourism agencies want to focus on this part of the sector even more.

In addition, with a pinch of salt, it can be said that Bavaria's industry is based on spirituality. Pilgrim routes, meditation paths, forest bathing and much more is becoming increasingly popular in the current hectic and stressful society.

The Protestant and Catholic Church have been partners of Bayern Tourismus Marketing for several years. Monasteries have been booming for some time now but now there is a new phenomenon – the so-called Protestant guesthouses. These come under the label “Silent Experience”. Examples of these are the castle of Craheim, the guesthouse Puschendorf, the communion Christubruderschaft in Selbitz and many more which offer a quiet environment.

Another popular attraction of Bavarian tourism is the local wine. According to experts, wine and vineyards attract five million tourists per year to Bavaria, especially day-trippers. According to a study, wine-growers spend 700 million annually in the Bavarian wine region of Franconia. In doing so, they support 10 thousand jobs. Wine tourism includes tastings, wine cellar tours, and vineyard walks.

More to come but in a sustainable manner

Despite the fantastic numbers, officials do not lack ambition and expect further growth. “I am convinced there is still more potential in tourism, which is and will remain our goal. We create the conditions for the positive development to continue because tourism is an important economic factor, ensuring work and income for up to 600 thousand people – especially in rural areas,” said Economics Minister Hubert Aiwanger.

Mr. Aiwanger also announced that more support to the industry would be provided. The current expenditure of 64 million euros per year are expected to rise by about 30%. Specifically, the Minister wants to expand Bavarian tourism advertising, promote digitalization, financially support the hotel and restaurant industry in its investments and end the creeping decline of village farms with a special modernization program.

The Free State plans to develop in a sustainable manner, despite some claims that the phenomenon of over-tourism is spreading even in Bavaria, besides other more famous cases like Venice or Barcelona. Aiwanger considers these claims ‘exaggerated’ but is aware that some hotspots need to be taken care of more. He pointed out that one must “preserve the identity of the homeland” and that the goal is for Bavaria to grow sustainably so as it “does not become Disneyland”.

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