

THE 'WORLD'S WORST' ENTRY PROCESS



Since the most famous terrorist attack of modern times on Sep. 11 2001, the American tourism industry has suffered greatly. Just a handful of cities have shown any sort of improvement in terms of tourism since 2001 and the whole nation has suffered a general 17% decline, accounting for financial damage of around \$94 billion and \$16 billion in tax revenue. Is this because people are scared of further attacks and brutal crime? Actually, this is not the case. Recent surveys have revealed that most foreigners, including neighboring Canadians, fear the officials at airports and borders more than anything else. America's entry process has been described as the 'world's worst' and ranks alongside similar systems from Africa and the Middle East.

Two thirds of foreign visitors have admitted to being scared of being detained at an American border due to some stupid missing detail or mistake. The bottom line is that those in charge do not feel the need to cooperate with foreign tourists and completely take the tourism industry for granted. Few realize that tourism is the world's number one industry.

An astonishing 54% of the 2000 travellers involved in the survey claimed that the US entry process and visa application system is downright 'rude' and 'arrogant'. This is doing no favours whatsoever for America's worldwide reputation. Travellers are choosing to visit Canada instead in order not to come across a potential nightmare entering the country. A further problem is that travellers are unsure as to which papers and materials they require to enter the United States as so many come back to their native countries with differing stories.

The result of this is that the USA is, by deterring visitors, missing out on enormous diplomatic and economic opportunities. The excuse is that security is the highest priority. This excuse is ridiculed by the fact that 60% of undercover agents employed in testing the security system managed to smuggle fake bombs into Chicago and 75% of them were successful in Los Angeles. Once again, the Americans are utterly oblivious to the importance of the world's number one money-making industry.

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