

DOMESTIC TOURISM FALLS BY 3.6% IN BARCELONA



The Catalan capital offsets the decline in domestic tourism with more international arrivals.

During the first eight months of 2019, Barcelona welcomed 8.1 million tourists who have accounted for a total of 22 million overnight stays. The numbers are the highest in the record. In fact, this year, Barcelona has had eight consecutive months of positive figures. **Last summer, the data was also positive and, during the summer months, it increased by 4.6% compared to 2017**, according to Xavier Marcé, tourism councilor.

As for the type of accommodation, which has increased the most are overnight stays in tourist homes (14.2%), although it has also been a good summer for hotels (7.2%). In hotels, the average occupancy has reached above 90%, while tourist accommodations have broken a record of 2.4 million tourists until July.

As for the place of origin of visitors, international tourists increase by 8.5% at the expense of domestic tourism, which dropped by 3.6%. By nationalities, French visitors lead in numbers, followed by the Americans, the British, and the Italians.

“It’s been a good summer, we can be happy,” said Marcé who insisted on the need for “managing better” the arrival of visitors. Marcé said that the government is not against tourism, but committed to diversify the offer and restrain the figures. “We are not pushing for tourism reduction, but neither for growth,” he said.

This summer has also seen record numbers at the airport with 35.6 million passengers flying to the country throughout August. In fact, these figures have not stopped growing since 2014 and it is precisely during that month that a historical record of 5.4 million passengers was reached.

Another positive data provided by the City Council is the 10% increase in employment for the tourism industry. Almost 157,000 contracts in the industry have been signed, with employment rates on the rise every month of 2019 in comparison to last year. Marcé explained that the message of the municipal government has been that “nothing can be done without working together, and that we want a business-friendly city,” while taking advantage of the meeting to praise the willingness of the companies to collaborate.

Date: 2019-09-30

Article link:

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