

TUNISIAN TOURISM TARGETS 9 MILLION TOURISTS



The record of 9 million tourists is still the target of Tunisian Tourism Minister, René Trabelsi. In the meantime, the results reported are in line with the forecasts so far. At the end of last September, 6.25 million tourists visited the country. But with the end-of-year rush, especially to Algeria, the main supplier of tourists for Tunisia, the 9 million visitors mark in a year could be achieved.

This is despite the bankruptcy of Thomas Cook, the largest provider of British tourists to Tunisia which accounted for 3% of the total volume of Tunisian tourism activity.

Following the bankruptcy of the British tour operator, and after a moment of fear, the Minister of Tourism seems to be more serene about the consequences of the tour operator's bankruptcy for Tunisian tourism and the prospects of the sector.

Regarding the impact of the bankruptcy, Trabelsi pointed out that many tour operators, including Jet2 holidays and EasyJet Holidays, took advantage of the vacuum left by the British by taking over.

In addition, the recovery of Tunisian tourism is confirmed year after year, thanks to the competitiveness of the destination and above all the improvement of the security situation in recent years. In fact, major brands in the global hospitality sector are now positioning themselves in the Tunisian market, including Marriot, Four Seasons, Accor, Ritz, Radisson, etc.

Similarly, major players in cruise tourism, including MSH - Mediterranean Shipping Company (Italian shipowner operating 459 ships, serving 335 ports and controlling more than 60% of cruise traffic in the Mediterranean) - and GPH - Global Ports Holdings (the world's largest cruise port operator) announce their return to Tunisia after more than four and half years' absence, following the attack on the Bardot Museum on 18th March 2015.

As proof of their renewed interest in the Tunisian market, the two operators won in consortium the purchase of the cruise terminal port, Goulette, in the northeast of Tunisia. The operators plan to resume weekly cruises to Tunisia in 2021 but are already giving insurance to tourists and operators of the sector. This is a positive sign of Tunisian tourism.

Finally, the development of new emerging markets will boost Tunisian tourism. This is the case of Russia, whose tourist numbers rose from 100,000 in 2016 to 625,000 in 2018 and is expected to exceed the 725,000 mark in 2019. Let's recall that, in 2018, tourist arrivals reached 8.3 million visitors, while by 2020, the country has already set a target of 10 million tourists.

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