

UPCOMING TRENDS IN MICE TOURISM 2020



The general rule says that people travel for pleasure; however, the reality is that a fair share of tourists visits destinations for business reasons. The MICE segment (meetings, incentives, conferences, and exhibitions) has slowly become one of the main economic development engines for the tourism industry. The numbers agree more than 20% of tourist trips made in the world fall under meetings, incentives, conferences, or exhibitions.

There are two major differences between traditional tourism and MICE tourism. On the one hand, MICE tourism is subject to low seasonality, and while for most people holidays take place on specific dates, such as Christmas, Easter, and summer, **the number of people that travel due to MICE is much more random.** This allows the demand not to depend on the season, which promotes a more profitable and stable tourism industry.

On the other hand, MICE tourists are quite different from traditional travelers since they are willing to spend more on shopping, leisure activities, gastronomy and hotels, which in turn contributes to the development of the destination.

It is not surprising that more and more destinations are coming up with offers specifically designed for business travelers. In the latest years, the countries with greater socioeconomic stability have seen how the number of professional events and gatherings has multiplied, so it is natural for agencies to take advantage of this change and try to attract a greater number of travelers.

Here are the main upcoming trends that will change the MICE tourism next year.

More customization

In the same vein that customization has become an essential aspect of traditional travel, MICE tourists also value and appreciate when a service, experience, tour, hotel or activity is specially designed for them.

To achieve this, service providers must learn more about the participants' interests while also allowing their schedule to be updated at all times. This should be part of all aspects of the stay, from food to the activities in which they participate.

Unique experiences

While it is true that their priority is attending the conference or meeting, they also get to stay in the city and it is very likely that it is not their first time in it. Therefore, it is important that each stay provides something unique, and it is not only about the activities they can enjoy, but that allows them to feel transformed by the end of the trip.

Part of it lies in the introduction of wellness and mindfulness activities, another growing trend in the workplace. In this sense, in addition to a business trip, the traveler can see it as a retreat for the body and mind.

Secondary destinations

Year after year, London, Barcelona and Berlin top the list of the 10 most visited destinations in Europe by the MICE tourism segment. **They are followed by other popular cities in the industry, such as Paris, Amsterdam, Madrid, Munich, and Prague.**

However, we have seen a recent boom of the so-called “secondary destinations” to host such events. Slovenia, Lithuania, Malta... they all offer, in addition to the novelty, better value for money compared to other major cities.

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