

# REVERSING THE DECLINE OF THE TOURIST STAY IN PORTUGAL



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Reversing the downward trend of the average stay of tourists in Portugal is a mission of the sector, assumed by the Portuguese Hotels Association (AHP) and the Secretary of State of Tourism. During the first nine months of this year, the average tourist stay in the Portuguese hotel industry was 2.64 nights, 2.8% below the same period last year, according to the most recent data released by the

**The average stay of residents living abroad fell by 3.3% until September, dropping to 3.03 nights, while that of residents in Portugal fell by 1.2%, to 2.04 nights.**

This evolution took place in a period in which the Portuguese hotel industry welcomed 21.149 million guests, 6.9% more in comparison with the previous year, with 55.890 million nights, an increase of 3.9%.

The bed occupancy rate dropped 0.8%, falling to 50.2%, a trend that should continue in the next two years, according to the president of AHP Raul Martins.

“There will be a decrease in hotel occupation in the next two years, something that will have to be offset by the increase in average stay and total revenue, until the moment when Lisbon’s airport capacity, fueled by the construction of the Montijo airport, increases the number of passengers and tourists,” the president of the AHP revealed.

Raul Martins stated that it is necessary “to bet on the quicker growth of other issuing markets, which can offset the current losses and also the losses expected in the two most important foreign markets for Portugal (the United Kingdom and Germany), stimulating the increase of the tourist stay in Portugal with marketing efforts”.

During the last five years, the average stay in the Portuguese hotel industry establishments fell by 8.3%, from 2.88 to 2.64 nights, a drop of 3.3% in the market of the residents in Portugal (from 2.11 to 2.04 nights) and 12.1% in the market for those who live abroad, from 3.44 to 3.03 nights.

The data reveal that, between January and September 2018, the average stay was 2.72 nights, 2% less compared to the same period in 2017, where the figure was 2.78 nights, which was already a 2% drop compared to 2016. In the first nine months of 2016, there was an increase from 0.1% to 2.83 nights, after a drop of 1.9% in 2015 and 1.8% in 2014.

**The data show that, if the average tourist stay from January to September of this year were to be identical to that of the same period of 2018, the Portuguese hotel industry would have 1.5 million more overnight stays, including around 200.000 more tourists living in Portugal and around 1.3 million more tourists living abroad.**

If the average stay for the first nine months of this year were to be identical to that of the same period in 2014, there would be more than five million overnight stays, including 500.000 domestic tourists and around five million more foreign visitors.

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