

MEXICAN RELIGIOUS TOURISM GENERATES PROFIT OVER USD 0.5 BILLION



José Manuel López Campos, president of Mexico's Confederation of National Chambers of Commerce, Services and Tourism (CONCANACO-SERVYTUR) reported that in recent years, the country has established itself as one of the most important destinations for religious tourism, registering over 20 million visitors in religious sites and faith centers, with receipts totaling more than 10 billion pesos (about USD 0.53 billion).

López Campos stressed that, in the case of Mexico, the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe is the most visited place by nationals and foreigners alike; reporting more than 18 million arrivals. **This figure ranks it as the second largest religious site in the world, only surpassed by St. Peter's Basilica, in Rome.**

The expert also mentioned that the main religious tourism date in the country is December 12, as 7.2 million people gather around the Basilica in Mexico City, an amount equivalent to the one recorded every year by Mecca, in Saudi Arabia.

Of the total number of tourists visiting the Basilica of Guadalupe, 64% are nationals and 36% are international visitors from countries such as the United States, Spain, Colombia, Germany and Argentina.

In this sense, the association explains that Mexico is among the top 10 countries with the greatest religious tourism in the world, which accounts for 330 million visitors every year to cultural heritage sites of the planet and represents 20% of international tourist arrivals, according to the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).

Other places with high inflow of believers in the country are Taxco (Guerrero), San Luis Potosí, Querétaro, Oaxaca, and **San Miguel de Allende (Guanajuato). The world-famous processions take place in these states.**

In the Tarahumara mountain range of Chihuahua, Pátzcuaro, Michoacán and Maní, and Yucatán, many Catholic and indigenous celebrations are held. These are very attractive to tourists and receive a considerable number of visitors each year.

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