

1.9 MILLION TOURISTS ARE EXPECTED DURING THE RIO CARNIVAL



Rio de Janeiro's City Authority estimates to receive 1.9 million tourists during the Rio carnival, which surpasses last year's 1.7 million. It also expects to have 7 million people on the city streets, and maximum hotel occupation.

According to the president of Riotur, Marcelo Alves, the hotel network occupancy rate currently at 70%. **In five-star hotels, the forecast is to reach 100% occupancy.** "We will reach 100%, no doubt. Today, we already have the confirmation from ABIH [Brazilian Hotel Industry Association] that it's the best year in history, in terms of hotel occupancy. There will be an economic turnover of more than R\$4 billion (about \$1 billion), which will feed the consumption. That's tourism. That's our DNA. It's the city's main business and, above all, it generates joy. Obviously, there is a lot of responsibility and logistics involved, with a lot of intervention by public agencies," said Marcelo Alves, during the presentation of the operations planning for Carnival 2020.

The expert said that, in addition to hotels, tourists look for other types of accommodation: properties offered online, ships and family homes.

Rio is the priority destination, and the numbers are a consequence of marketing efforts conducted for one year, focused on the inhabitants of Brazil, to make the city the first choice of visitors.

"Currently, Brazilian citizens are not traveling frequently abroad due to the high value of the dollar. The priority option is to travel within the country. Rio de Janeiro is a desirable destination. The city has evolved, security has improved, the city hall is working better and the events have shown efficiency in logistics. New Year's Eve proved this in an exemplary way. Carnival will do as well," Mr. Alves said.

In 2020, the city government will invest R\$100 million (about \$24.5 million) in the carnival. Of this total, R\$16 million will be invested in the Sambódromo.

Mr. Alves pointed out that, during the last three years, only through sponsorships obtained with tender documents R\$ 78 million were invested, in addition to subsidies worth R\$ 25 million.

According to the president of Riotur, 543 block parades have been registered so far. The largest share will be in the southern and central areas, with mega blocks attracting more public. Among them, Bloco da Preta, by singer Preta Gil, and Fervo da Lud, by singer-songwriter Ludmilla. In each of the regions, 133 blocks will be presented.

The City Hall's Operations Center (COR) has been reinforced by Riotur and will have 811 cameras to monitor the street blocks. So far, representatives from thirty government agencies are expected to be present in the COR's operations room to facilitate integration and immediate response in the services.

The Sambódromo is being improved and the work should be finalized in early February.

The president of Riotur, Marcelo Alves, assured that the schedule for the Sambódromo works is being fulfilled and the works will be finished on time.

In addition to the above, the Ministry of Tourism has invested over R\$8 million (\$2 million) in the development of the Rio carnival. They include alterations to the electrical installations, to provide more security to the space, painting works and renovation of the stands.

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