

TURKISH TOURISM HOPES TO SEE GERMANS SOON



The Turkish tourism industry hoped that German holidaymakers would soon come again. The country is, after all, the third most popular holiday destination for Germans. However, a travel warning still applies to Turkey which is a clear sign, that German tourists are likely to holiday elsewhere.

Turkish tourism businesses hoped that German tourists would soon be allowed to come again in the country, but the decision of the federal cabinet on Wednesday disappointed many travel companies, at least for the time being. **Turkey remains on the list of the 160 non-EU countries for which the German government's travel warning was extended until the end of August.**

German TÜV certificate as security seal

Turkish hoteliers reacted angrily, saying that Turkey had done "pioneering work" and should be among the first countries for which the travel warning is lifted. Foreign Minister Heiko Maas announced that there could be exemptions, "always with the safety of travelers as the central criterion".

There is no question that Turkey fulfils the conditions for such an exemption, according to Tayfun Özdoğan. The manager of the Akra Hotel in Antalya has had his hotel rebuilt to comply with the new Corona security rules. In order to document these measures for his guests and the tour operators, he is trying to obtain a safety certificate from the German TÜV and says: "We firmly believe that we will get it.

Hygiene packages against corona

At the Calista Luxury Resort on Belek beach, the TÜV inspections are currently in full swing. Two Turkish employees of TÜV-Süd want to make sure that all 129 points on their list are fulfilled.

This is a list of corona safety measures agreed with the Ministry of Tourism and Health. It defines distance rules in the restaurant, at the reception, in the fitness and pool area, prescribes the disinfection of rooms - right down to the sterile individual packaging of towels and hygiene kits for each guest.

"The Germans do everything very precisely and with great discipline, says Ali Kızıldağ, General Manager of Calista. And that is why it is important for us to do it the same way." About 10% of his guests per year come from Germany. They trust their TÜV rather than the certificate of other testing companies, says Kızıldağ. That's why all the hotels that receive many bookings from Germany try to get the TÜV stamp.

Sunbeds and beach tables with minimum distance

Even on the beaches, the deckchairs are pulled 1.50 meters apart and beach cafés set the tables apart. Turkey is preparing for the return of its foreign guests and is trying to meet all requirements.

Turkish ministers regularly talk to their German and European counterparts and hope that Turkey will be granted an exemption. From the beginning of July, it is hoped that the quarantine regulations currently in force on both sides and the travel warning for Turkey could be lifted.

Turkish Airlines, Anadolu Air and other airlines have meanwhile started to offer regular flights to destinations in Germany again. **But only when the quarantine rules are lifted will bookings increase again.** This is what tens of thousands of German-Turks in particular are waiting for, who want to spend their holidays in Turkey again this summer.

"They miss us, and we miss them," says hotel manager Ali Kızıldağ, who is impatiently waiting for his guests from Germany. "And we are looking forward to welcoming them again soon." This, says Kızıldağ, he means of course only in a symbolic sense.

Tourism is one of the most important economic sectors in Turkey. Due to the corona pandemic, the number of visitors had fallen drastically. According to official figures, around 4.2 million tourists came to the country in the first four months of the year, which is around 51 % less than in the previous year.

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