

TOURISM IN EGYPT: COUNTRY OPENS TO VISITORS WHILE FIGHTING THE PANDEMIC



Closed hotels, empty beaches, deserted cafés - for three months it was unusually quiet in the seaside resorts on the Red Sea. The country has opened its airports again on July 1 and tourism in Egypt is starting to revive.

As a result of the Corona crisis, there are hardly any foreign tourists. Anyway, Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sissi inaugurated two new international airports near the capital only a few days before the air traffic resumed. The aim is to attract international visitors as quickly as possible.

Those who come have plenty of space: **"In Hurghada there are only a few people, there is a lot of space, social distancing is not a problem,** and the hotels adhere to the very strict guidelines of the Ministry of Tourism: they are allowed to use half their capacity at most. Each room is ventilated and disinfected for two days after check-out - this provides the guests' security," says Ali El Halawani, managing director of the Palm Beach Hotel. He hopes that guests from abroad will soon return to the Red Sea.

Egypt as a Risk Area

Egyptian airspace was closed to passenger flights for three months; now airlines from all over the world are allowed to land again. For example, the Lufthansa Group is also resuming regular flight operations to Egypt in July.

According to official figures, less than 70,000 people have been infected with the coronavirus; less than 3,000 people have died of it - in a country with a population of more than 100 million. However, Egypt is far from having brought the epidemic under control on its soil, with more than 1,000 new cases announced every day and a health system on the verge of collapse, according to medical sources. The Egyptian government made it clear weeks ago that anyone who disagrees with the official figures will face fines and imprisonment.

Tourism Minister El-Enany defends the decision to let tourists back into the country: "The numbers are rising, especially in the Nile valley, in Cairo and in Giza. But we are only opening up the three tourist provinces of South Sinai, the Red Sea and Matruh. There are only a few inhabitants and the lowest infection rates in Egypt. These are all resorts with open terrain, sunny beaches, very warm - so very healthy weather."

Coral Reefs Recover

Many Egyptians try to avoid the crowds. In Hurghada this is currently easier than usual because mass tourism in Egypt is still taking a break. For diving businesses, this means enormous financial losses - but there is also a positive development - **less shipping also means less pollution, and that means the coral reefs are beginning to recover.** The number of dolphins is also increasing. The calmness is allowing the ocean and all its creatures to recover.

Date: 2020-07-06

Article link:

<https://www.tourism-review.com/tourism-in-egypt-ready-for-international-visitors-news11621>