

UZBEKISTAN'S TOURISM BETS ON COMPENSATIONS FOR INFECTED VISITORS



Uzbekistan's tourism sector, which has recently been growing stronger, is facing difficulties during the Covid 19 pandemic. The president wants to attract tourists to the Central Asian country with an unusual offer.

Coronavirus means severe cuts for many holiday countries, whose economy otherwise depends heavily on tourism, especially in summer. Even though the borders have been opened and travel is possible, many people are forgoing holidays in distant countries this year. **Uzbekistan is not exactly considered the number one holiday destination - yet the country in Central Asia is also dependent on tourists.**

The government wants to make holidays in Uzbekistan appealing to travelers with an unusual offer. Those who become infected with the coronavirus during their stay in the country shall receive US\$ 3000 - the equivalent of about 2600 EUR - as a compensation. President Shavkat Mirsiyoev signed a decree to this effect to boost Uzbekistan's tourism. However, this only applies if the tourists were travelling in the country with a specially certified tour guide who ensures that the hygiene rules are observed.

The accommodations must also meet certain hygiene standards. "We want to reassure tourists that they can come to Uzbekistan," said Sophie Ibbotson, the tourism ambassador, appointed by the state tourism authority Uzbektourism, in a statement. "We are so confident that the new security and hygiene measures being introduced in the tourism sector will protect tourists from Covid 19 infection, that the president is even standing up for it with money".

Uzbekistan closed its borders on March 16th because of the pandemic and is now slowly trying to get tourism back on track. **For several weeks now, air travel has been possible again, but only Uzbek citizens and people from countries with low corona risk are allowed to enter the country.**

Before the pandemic, Uzbekistan's tourism was a relatively young but booming industry. The Uzbek presidential administration announced at the end of May that 1500 tour guides and 1200 hotels had to stop working because of the coronavirus. A total of 250,000 people had been "seriously affected" in their income.

Date: 2020-07-27

Article link:

<https://www.tourism-review.com/uzbekistans-tourism-strategy-pay-the-infected-visitors-news11657>