

GERMANY 2021: RECOVERY OF INBOUND TOURISM EXPECTED



As expected, inbound tourism in Germany in 2020 experienced heavy losses compared to 2019, but the desire to travel continues to grow and opens up opportunities for recovery in 2021. Moreover, virtual tours are growing in popularity.

For inbound tourism in Germany, 2021 will be a year of transition in the face of the current situation caused by the coronavirus pandemic. **Starting in 2021, the industry expects a progressive restart of international demand.** This is the forecast made by the German National Tourist Board (GNTB) based on 2020 data available so far and on analyzes of various market research institutes.

Petra Hedorfer, CEO of the Board of the GNTB, highlights that “the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting standstill in large parts of global tourism are reflected in the balance of German inbound tourism in 2020. Simultaneously, international studies confirm the radiance of the brand, Destination Germany, and the increasing willingness of international guests to travel.”

“The contributors of the German tourism industry faced the challenges of the crisis during the lockdown phases [...] many processes were digitized and extensive hygiene concepts developed. Tourist offers were aligned with the adjusted customer needs. This reinvented environment creates good conditions for a recovery phase.”

As expected, inbound tourism in Germany suffered significant losses in 2020. According to preliminary data from the Federal Statistical Office, 32 million overnight stays by foreigners in accommodations with at least ten beds and campsites were registered, resulting in a 64.4% decrease compared to the previous year.

Perspective for 2021: Gradual Recovery

The European Travel Commission (ETC), in its ‘Monitoring Sentiment for Domestic and Intra-European Travel’ report, recorded a steadily increasing willingness to travel in the coming months: in the fourth round of surveys carried out in early December, 52% of respondents said that they wanted to travel in the next 6 months, 5% more than in the third round of surveys in early November.

In the third round of surveys, 27% said they intended to travel in the period from April to June 2021, meaning that the figure rose by 32% in the fourth (and latest) multi-round survey.

This scenario is also forecasted by the International Air Transport Association (IATA). The experts predict that after a 328 billion dollars slump in airline sales worldwide in 2019 and 2020, or a 61% drop, sales could rise by 40% in 2021, reaching 459 billion dollars.

The CEO of the GNTB added that, “despite the ongoing lockdown phases and travel restrictions, there is the reason for cautious optimism. In view of the experiences of the past year, we expect an increase in travel from Germany and Europe, especially in the summer months. Inbound tourism from overseas markets is expected to recover more slowly.”

“We continue to assume that private travel will recover faster than business travel. The business travel segment will be increasingly characterized by hybrid formats and online events in the medium term. Based on these developments, the pre-crisis level of inbound tourism to Germany can be recovered by 2024. The digital transformation, innovations and sustainable orientation of tourism in Germany remain a prerequisite for a market recovery,” said Hedorfer.

Stay at Home and Travel - Virtual Tours

German tourism is also betting on virtual tours this year during the ongoing lockdowns. **The tourism board has prepared a list of 6 cities that can be visited online - Dresden, Bonn, Berlin, Cologne, Lübeck, and Hannover.**

“Is it necessary to physically walk through beautiful cities and visit monuments or museums? Take a virtual tour through Dresden, visit the Beethoven House and take a look at the Ludwig Museum with the most extensive collection of Pop Art in Europe. You can also climb to the top of the Reichstag and the Berlin TV Tower, explore the Hanover region and discover the charming Lübeck. It will be difficult to choose the destination of the next trip,” writes the official German tourism website.

Many would-be travelers have been attracted to the virtual tour's concept and Germany wants to benefit from it as well. The offer of virtual tours is thus likely to grow even more.

Date: 2021-02-22

Article link:

<https://www.tourism-review.com/inbound-tourism-in-germany-expected-to-recover-news11893>