

CUBA EXPECTS 120,000 MEXICAN TOURISTS THIS YEAR



This year, about 120,000 Mexican tourists are expected to visit Cuba thanks to the reopening of the borders and the elimination of health requirements to enter the country, said Sonia Beltrán, tourism counselor of the Cuban embassy in Mexico.

"Tourism is already partially recovering in Cuba since the opening of the borders in November last year and the prospects are good," she emphasized.

The counselor announced that as of April 4, the sanitary requirements for entering the country were eliminated, which means that **it is no longer necessary for tourists to get a PCR test and they are not required to have a vaccination certificate**. Only face masks are mandatory and random Covid tests are performed at the airport.

These measures are similar to those of the Mexican government since the beginning of the pandemic, which allowed Cuba to be among the 10 most visited countries internationally in 2020 and 2021.

Beltrán explained that from January 1 to April 17 of this year, a total of 399,777 international travelers visited Cuba. Of that amount, 4,979 were Mexican tourists, a better figure compared to the 441 Mexicans who had gone to that country in the same period in 2021.

In this regard, Mexico ranks 11th out of the top 20 tourist source countries, below countries such as Canada, the United States, Russia, and Germany, to name a few; however, Mexico is the leading tourist source country in Latin America, surpassing Argentina, Colombia and Venezuela.

The tourism counselor pointed out that this increase in recent months is due to the increase in the frequency of flights departing from Mexico to the island, as there are currently 41 weekly trips departing from Mexico City, Cancun, Merida and recently Monterrey.

The airlines currently flying to Cuba are Viva Aerobus and Magnicharters, but by December of this year, Aeromexico could join the companies that travel to destinations such as Havana, Varadero, Santa Clara, Camaguey, Holguin and Santiago de Cuba.

"If Aeromexico starts offering flights to Cuba, although nothing has been confirmed yet, by the end of 2022 we expect more than 120,000 Mexican tourists to visit the country," said Beltran.

This year a total of 2,500,000 thousand international visitors are expected to arrive in Cuba, which would mean a recovery of just over 50 percent of the tourism sector in Cuba in comparison to the 4,275,561 travelers who visited the country in 2019, the year before the pandemic.

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