

INTERNATIONAL TOURISM IN SPAIN CONTINUES TO RECOVER



Spain received four million tourists in March, eight times more than the 491,000 tourists the country received during the same month last year, thus increasing the pace of recovery of previous months, although 1.6 million more visitors are still required to return to the pre-pandemic levels.

The trend is the same in terms of international tourism in Spain and the spending of visitors, which reached €5,069 million in March, compared with €544 million a year ago and €6,035 million in March 2019.

According to the surveys of international tourist arrivals (Frontur) and spending in Spain (Egatur) published last week by the National Statistics Institute (INE in Spanish), **the most striking numbers are those of British tourists, the main source market of travelers to Spain** after its government lifted in the second part of last year the harsh restrictions imposed on travel.

The number of British Visitors Continues to Grow Strongly

In March, 826,000 people from the United Kingdom entered Spain, spending €1,013 million. Both figures represent an increment of 4,000 and 3,500% over a year earlier.

During the first three months of the year, 9.67 million tourists arrived in Spain compared to the 1.2 million tourists that arrived a year earlier and the 14.2 million tourists that arrived in the first quarter of 2019.

Of that total, 1.7 million tourists were British, a huge increase compared to the 57,400 British tourists that arrived during the first quarter of last year. In January-March 2019 British tourists totaled 2.8 million.

The British were followed by German tourists. 610,000 German tourists came to Spain in March, a five-fold increase, followed by 456,600 French tourists, 332% more than last year.

Average Daily Expenditure Above Pre-COVID Levels

Quarterly spending by foreign tourists who traveled to Spain totaled 11.853 million euros, almost 10 times more than in January-March 2021, but below the more than 15.000 million of the same period in 2019. Average spending per tourist rose to €1,257 in March, 13.6% more than a year ago and more than the €1,068 average spending of 2019.

At the same time, average daily expenditure grew by 20.4%, reaching 157 euros per person. This is the highest figure since before the pandemic, specifically since November 2019, when it was 161 euros.

After UK travelers, the biggest spenders in March were Germans (768 million), Nordic travelers (440 million) and French travelers (334 million). Their average daily expenditures were 137, 148 and 109 euros, respectively. The average trip duration in March was eight days, and 10.1 days for guests from Nordic countries.

The Canary Islands and Andalusia Increase Tenfold

The autonomous communities that benefited most from this recovery were the Canary Islands, where 27.9% of the total number of tourists arrived in March (1.1 million, 11 times more than a year earlier), followed by Catalonia (17.5% of the total and more than 700,000 people) and Andalusia (15.1% and 610,000 tourists).

In the first three months of the year, 2.851 million tourists visited the Canary Islands (a 991% increase), getting closer to the 3.68 million visitors they had before COVID.

Andalusia received 1.36 million international travelers, growing 949% over the first quarter of the previous year.

The recovery in air traffic is reflected in the airport arrivals figures, which accounted for **3.5 million of the total four million tourists that arrived in Spain in March, a tenfold increase over last year's figures.**

The Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism said that the figures for international tourism in Spain in March already represent 71% of the pre-pandemic levels and 84% of the usual expenditure,

The Minister of Industry, Reyes Maroto, is confident that this recovery trend will intensify in the summer according to the data of air capacity scheduled by airlines for April-June and the figures of affiliation to the Social Security in April in the hospitality industry due to the "extraordinary" holy week.

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