

TURKISH ANTALYA TO WELCOME ABOUT A HALF TOURISTS FROM RUSSIA



The number of tourists coming to Antalya by the end of the year is expected to exceed 10 million. While flights from Russia increased in June, the number of tourists from Russia coming to the city exceeded 100 thousand in a week. Despite or perhaps due to the Russia-Ukraine war, more tourists came from Russia than in the last two years of the pandemic.

Recep Yavuz, Chairman of the Tourism Working Group of the Antalya City Council, reminded us that the Minister of Culture and Tourism Mehmet Nuri Ersoy put forward Turkey in 2022 '42 million tourists and 35-billion-dollar revenue' goals. Stating that Minister Ersoy's estimate is a very realistic target, Yavuz said that **according to the report prepared with the data of the last 10 years, Antalya has set a target of 10 million 920 thousand tourists this year.**

From the Pandemic to the War

Pointing out that the most important affair for the tourism sector for this year is the Russia-Ukraine crisis, Yavuz stated that the number of tourists from Russia in the 5-month period between January and May was 376 thousand, "During last two pandemic years in the same period of 2020, 145 thousand and 300 thousand respectively in the same period of 2021 of Russian tourists came to Antalya. In the same period of 2019 before the pandemic, it was 1 million 250 thousand. Antalya tourism has come out of the impact of the pandemic in the last two years and has entered the effect of war. Yet this year there is an increase from Russia compared to the last two years. But if there had been no war we could easily catch up with the 2019 figures."

The number of Flights Increased

Stating that an average of 25 daily flights were organized from Russia in May, Yavuz said, "When the bans were lifted, the war began. The tourist faced obstacles due to the sanctions imposed due to the war while still traveling with a mask. Towards May, the heat of the war disappeared, and tourism activity turned to its old days as it disappeared from the agenda. Antalya is the only destination that can accommodate both European and Russian holidaymakers."

Over 100,000 Tourists from Russia a Week

Yavuz provided the following information about the flights from Russia to Antalya in the first week of June: 62 flights on June 1, 56 flights on June 2 and 3, 110 flights on June 4, 55 flights on June 5, 53 flights on June 6 and 60 flights on June 7. So, the total number of flights in the first week of June was 452, and more than 100 thousand Russians arrived. With both Turkish planes and Russian planes over Sochi, the number of flights is increasing day by day.

At the same time, the Russian Association of Tour Operators (ATOR) recently emphasized the insufficient number of flights. The problems are associated with the limited ability of Russian airlines to fly abroad due to the air sanctions, as well as the narrowing of the geography of departures (this year travelers can fly to Turkey from 17 cities of Russia, in 2019 there were 46 of them). Turkish airlines cannot fully provide the necessary volume of traffic, moreover, they agreed on 450 flights per week as a maximum.

So, as estimated, airlines will perform no more than 500 flights a week, then about 3 million Russians will spend holidays in Antalya this year - 2.5 million less than in 2019.

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