

MEXICAN TOURISM DEPENDENCE ON THE U.S. TOURISTS IS GROWING



Fifteen years ago, when Gloria Guevara became Secretary of Tourism (SECTUR) and Rodolfo López Negrete became Deputy Director General of the Tourism Promotion Council (CPTM), there was a growing business demand for the latter's budget to be channeled mainly to U.S. outbound markets.

The concept of President Felipe Calderón's "war on drugs" and the 2008 crisis "pulled" the U.S. market, which came to represent less than 60% of the total.

In order to diversify, the CPTM sought to **strengthen its presence in markets such as Great Britain, Canada and Germany**, which, together with the domestic market, helped Mexican tourism to get through this complicated period.

One of the consequences of the pandemic was that Americans not only stopped being afraid to come to Mexico, but also rediscovered a country with many climatic, product and price advantages.

Today, U.S. tourism is reaching historic records, both in absolute numbers and in percentage terms. Of the 18 million international tourists that arrived by air to Mexico last year, 75% came from the U.S.

A situation that is also highly profitable for Mexican tourism businesses, since the average U.S. traveler likes to spend and is not very demanding.

The problem is that concentrating once again on the U.S. market generates an undesirable dependency, which is precisely why today should be the time to invest more in diversification.

However, many hoteliers are forgetting that lesson from the past and are once again devoting most of their promotional budget to the U.S. market.

In reality, this should be the time to be looking to recover the travelers that have been lost from other important markets such as Canada and Great Britain or to analyze in depth the German market, which Mexico has not been able to reach with the numbers that would be desirable.

Without pretending to be fatalistic, there are some improbable, but not impossible, scenarios on the horizon that could affect the arrival of travelers from that country.

These include irreconcilable political differences between the two countries, an adverse economic situation or a security problem affecting travelers from that country.

A basic principle that applies to personal finances as well as to those of large companies is "not to put all your eggs in the same basket".

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