

THE SURPRISING DYNAMIC OF FRENCH TOUR OPERATORS



Professionals in the French tourism sector have given a highly positive assessment of the summer season and are optimistic about the upcoming winter season. Despite not recovering all their pre-crisis customers yet, French tour operators have left behind the difficult period and are now seeing excellent results and prospects for the future. The Union of Tour Operating Companies (SETO) reported that its members served nearly 1.7 million customers during the summer season, representing an 11% increase compared to the same period in 2020. The average unit revenue also increased by 4.2%, resulting in a significant increase in turnover, up by almost 16% to €2.2 billion.

Asia is taking off again

There has been a significant increase in traffic to long-haul destinations, resulting in a 25% increase in revenues. Mauritius tops the list of popular destinations with a 28.4% increase in volume, followed by the United States with a 10.7% increase. The Dominican Republic ranks third but has experienced a sharp 45% decline due to Air France and Corsair discontinuing its services. There has been a strong recovery in travel to the Asian continent after its reopening. This is with some destinations like Indonesia (+119%), Japan (+300%), and Thailand (+121%) achieving remarkable performances. The summer season saw a satisfactory performance in medium-haul destinations, which account for 82% of traffic and two-thirds of turnover. Notable phenomena include the return of Tunisia, which has surpassed the Greek islands to top the list.

Egypt - the rising star winter destination

Seto's forecast expects an "excellent" fiscal year in 2023, ending on October 31st. They also have high hopes for the upcoming winter season since bookings for November 1st, 2023, to April 30th, 2024, have shown a significant increase in both volume (+40%) and revenue (+42%). Although it's too early to make definitive conclusions, some trends are emerging. Asia's recovery continues to be on track, with a 115% increase in bookings. Egypt has seen a tremendous surge in bookings, with a 193% increase. Medium-haul traffic is expected to increase by 71.5%, while long-haul traffic will increase by 33.6%.

However, French tour operators are always cautious due to various hazards they face, such as climate change, security issues, and economic contexts. While airfare prices are usually lower than package holidays, oil and kerosene costs are closely monitored. French tourists still seem willing to bear the expenses despite the price increase. Only time will tell how long that will last.

Date: 2023-10-04

Article link: <https://www.tourism-review.com/french-tour-operators-report-good-numbers-news13764>