

COLOMBIA EXPECTS A RECORD CRUISE SEASON



The upcoming cruise season of 2023-2024 is expected to bring good news for Colombia, as it is projected to generate revenue of nearly \$50 million, according to a study by Business Research & Economic Advisors (BREA) titled "Economic Contribution of Cruise Tourism to the Destinations Economies."

The calculation by BREA is based on the average spending of passengers and crew members, highlighting the importance of the cruise industry in boosting the local economy.

Germán Umaña Mendoza, the Minister of Commerce, Industry, and Tourism, **emphasized that the cruise sector contributes to foreign currency entering the country.**

According to data from port authorities and the cruise industry, at least 30 cruise lines from countries such as Norway, the United States, the United Kingdom, Switzerland, Germany, and Monaco are expected to make 220 port arrivals in the country. This will result in an estimated 334,000 passengers visiting Colombia this cruise season.

Around 14 ships will explore Colombian destinations for the first time, representing an important advance in tourism in the country. These cruise lines include Carnival Conquest, Silver Nova, Celebrity Beyond, Viking Mars, Seven Seas Grandeur, Silver Dawn, Marella Discovery, MSC Explora I, Wind Spirit, Le Dumont-D'urville and MS Hamburg.

Buenaventura, one of the Great Colombian Pacific ports, is preparing to welcome its first expedition-type cruise from the Plantours cruise line in November 2023. Additionally, Cabo de la Vela collaborates with local authorities and communities to create a work plan. This will help them receive four calls from Emerald Cruises, Noble Caledonia, and Hurtigruten cruise lines in the first half of 2024.

The cruise industry in Colombia showed impressive growth during the last cruise season (2022-2023) compared to the previous one (2021-2022). ProColombia estimates that calls increased by 151%, and passenger arrivals showed a significant increase of 346%. These calculations were based on the ports of the cities and the General Maritime Directorate (Dimar).

During the last season, Colombia received 219 cruise ship calls, with 355,559 passengers and 34 cruise lines. Among the prominent brands that visited Colombia were Norwegian Cruise Line from the United States, Royal Caribbean, TUI Cruises from Germany, MSC Cruises from Switzerland, and Silversea Cruises from Monaco.

Since the activation of the cruise industry in 2006, there has been steady growth in the number of calls made. There were only 53 calls back then, but the number has increased significantly. This growth is limited to the number of calls and cruise line diversity. Nowadays, cruise lines specialize in luxury and exploration, resulting in various customer choices.

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