

CUBAN TOURISM RECOVERY IS THE SLOWEST



The official website Cubadebate has presented a study in collaboration with Oxford Economics, which brings a sign of hope for the Cuban tourism industry. The regime has invested much money into this sector, including constructing unoccupied hotels due to the pandemic.

According to the report, international demand for leisure travel will be "robust" by 2024, except for Cuba. In a scenario where vacationers worldwide prioritize leisure travel for discretionary spending, **Cuba is expected to grow by 103%, but it may take another ten years to reach that figure.**

A recent ranking by Forwardkeys, a travel data provider, revealed that Cuba is the worst-performing country in terms of tourism recovery in the Caribbean. The company placed Cuba in the 28th position on its list due to a significant drop of 45% in international traveler arrivals from January to September 2023 compared to the same period in 2019.

On the other hand, the Dominican Republic has topped the ranking with a 10% increase in visitor arrivals and is expected to witness a further 54% rise in the fourth quarter of the year.

According to preliminary tourism data, Cuba received 158,902 visitors in October, bringing the total number of visitors for January-October to 1,973,060. However, with only two months left in 2023, the tourism industry's recovery appears to be significantly slower than anticipated.

According to a recent analysis of Cuban tourism, experts believe there will be a continuation of the non-compliance with tourist plans that occurred in 2022, which raises questions about the investment frenzy associated with Cuban tourism. This diverts resources that are urgently needed for other activities.

According to recent reports, Cuban hotels run by the government are experiencing low tourist attendance, resulting in seven out of ten rooms remaining vacant in the first half of 2023. Economist Emilio Morales predicts that with great luck, the number of tourists may reach 2.4 million, similar to the number of visitors in 2009, 14 years ago. **Morales also noted that many airlines have reduced the number of flights to the island due to a significant decrease in demand.** Some have even stopped flying to Cuba due to financial losses.

The expert stated that the internal crisis in Cuba has worsened significantly due to the scarcity of food and medicine, along with the inflationary spiral that has caused over 70% of the population to live in poverty. This has resulted in a growing increase in crime on Cuba's streets. As a result, several countries that are significant sources of tourists to Cuba have issued travel alerts to their citizens regarding the lack of food and medicine, as well as the increase in crime and assaults on the island's streets.

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