

# INTERNATIONAL TOURISTS SPENDING TO REACH 93% OF PRE-PANDEMIC LEVELS



The UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) has estimated that around 975 million tourists have traveled worldwide between January and September 2023. This is a significant increase of 38% compared to last year, indicating that the travel industry is recovering from the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic.

According to the latest data from the World Tourism Barometer, the international tourism sector is expected to reach nearly 90% of the volumes recorded in 2019 by the end of the year. **It is important to note that spending on tourism is also expected to be at 93% of pre-pandemic levels.**

According to the barometer, international tourists spent a lot of money in 2023. Visitors from Germany and the United States spent 13% and 11% more than they did in 2019, respectively. Italy had the best data, as their spending grew by 16% in the year leading up to August.

The tourism industry has also shown signs of recovery. The UNWTO Tourism Recovery Tracker reports that the number of air passengers and the occupancy levels of tourist accommodations have increased significantly, based on the IATA and STR data.

## 91% of International Tourists in the Third Quarter

Based on a recent study, international tourist arrivals have rebounded significantly since the pandemic, reaching 91% of pre-pandemic volumes in the third quarter. July specifically had the best performance since 2019, reaching 92% of pre-pandemic levels. Between January and September 2021, 87% of pre-pandemic levels had already been recovered.

In terms of revenue, it is expected that the year will close at \$1.4 billion, around 93% of the level recorded by destinations in 2019.

## The Middle East Leads the Recovery

According to the UNWTO, the Middle East has been the region that has recovered the most from the pandemic and has surpassed its pre-pandemic levels, with a 20% increase in visitors compared to 2019. Europe is in second place, receiving 550 million international tourists until September and accounting for 56% of the world total, reaching 94% of the levels recorded in 2019. **The strong demand from the United States has been the main driver of this rebound.**

Africa has recovered to 92% of the level of visitors before 2019, and the Americas are at 88%, with Caribbean destinations benefiting the most. In Asia and the Pacific, the recovery stands at 62% of international arrival volumes, with South Asia having already recovered 95% of 2019 levels, while Northeast Asia remains at 50%.

Against this backdrop, international tourism is on track to fully recover to pre-pandemic levels in 2024, despite economic challenges such as high inflation, weak global output, and significant geopolitical tensions and conflicts.

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