

GERMAN TRAVELERS EXPECTED TO BOOK MORE LONG-DISTANCE TOURS



The travel industry is anticipating a successful travel year in 2024, with high demand for the upcoming summer months. The German Travel Association (DRV) is expecting moderate sales growth of four percent in comparison to the previous year for the holiday and private travel markets with at least one overnight stay.

German travelers are expected to spend 78 billion euros on travel services booked before their vacation starts, including package tours from tour operators and individually tailored vacations. DRV President Norbert Fiebig predicts **that long-distance travel will experience a significant upswing.**

This assessment for the new tourism year 2023/24, which started with the travel month of November 2023, is based on a new market forecast developed by the DRV in collaboration with industry experts. In the future, the well-founded market forecast will be published twice a year, at the beginning of the year and before the summer holidays, with the latest market figures and expert assessments.

More Holidaymakers and Sales Are Expected for Long-distance Routes

Industry experts predict that the eastern medium-haul route, which includes Turkey and Greece as destinations, will continue to be a positive growth driver for the German travel market throughout the year. According to DRV President Fiebig, Turkey is already one of the most popular flight package holiday destinations for German travelers in 2024.

The DRV expects a positive development in long-distance travel compared to the previous year, with an 11% increase in travelers and an 18% increase in sales in the summer travel half-year. Although some long-distance travel destinations, such as USA, Australia, Thailand, or Indonesia, are gradually recovering after the pandemic, the catch-up effects can still be expected in the long-distance travel sector, even if domestic economic factors and associated consumer uncertainty could have an impact.

German Travelers Will Not Give up Holidays

The German Travel Association (DRV) predicts a slight decrease in the number of travelers for the year, despite increased sales. Although fewer people traveled with tour operators in 2023 than before the pandemic, industry experts believe the expected decline this year will not be as significant as in 2023.

However, the impact of an increase in air traffic tax planned by the federal government on prices and demand remains uncertain, as details are not yet available. DRV President Fiebig views the planned increase as a social issue, particularly for average earners with families and children, who may find it hard to afford vacation trips in 2023 due to higher costs. Therefore, the federal government should avoid making travel more expensive.

Experts believe that most Germans will continue to travel despite the cost increase. This is

supported by good advance bookings for tour operators for the 2024 summer season, which are already significantly higher than the values from last year and the pre-pandemic year of 2019.

Germans are booking their vacation for the summer vacation months much earlier and are taking advantage of current early bird offers from tour operators, which allow them to save money.

Some experts, however, believe that the number of German travelers may decline this year due to general price increases, particularly for fuel, heating, and food, which strain household budgets. Experts predict that people may travel less or shorten their stay to save money. More households are expected to focus on one or two main vacation trips. Booking data and expert assessments indicate that holiday and leisure trips will be significantly reduced in the winter, but high demand is expected for the summer. This decline could significantly impact the individual travel market for destinations mostly reached by car.

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