

TOURISM ON THE UP - EXCEPT IN THE US



Tourism is renowned for being the world's number one industry, often giving hope to poverty-stricken nations of Asia and Africa. With new campaigns and innovative ideas all over the globe, the industry is growing at a pace which other industries are failing to keep up with. On a global scale, it is estimated that 35 million more people per year go on trips and holidays than in the year 2000. This is relevant to almost every country in the world and all but one of the world's developed nations. The notable exception in this case is the United States, where the inbound tourism has taken a number of hits since 2000. There have been 2 million less visitors every year than normal and the economy has been suffering at a consequent rate of \$150 billion as a result.

The reasons for this decline are no secret. Firstly, many tourists have been led to believe, in the wake of recent history, that America is constantly under threat of terrorist attacks. The problem is that the Americans are convinced of this too. Also, tourists from outside the US tend to think that going to the US is far too much hassle than is necessary. Nobody wants to stand for hours on end at their local American Embassy waiting to lodge a visa application, especially when they know that they can be turned away at the airport even with a valid visa. No refunds are given anywhere for American visa applications. Besides visas, airport security has tended to annoy many in recent years. American paranoia about terrorist attacks has led to tourists even being strip searched at US airports and has led to hours of delayed air traffic. Tourists have, therefore, turned their attention elsewhere in making holiday destination choices.

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