

EL SALVADOR BREAKS RECORDS WITH 36% GROWTH OF VISITOR NUMBERS



April 2026 saw El Salvador receive more foreign travelers than ever before - 473,000 people chose the destination for their visit. That number climbs sharply from the year earlier, rising by 36 percent since April 2025. Growth like this hasn't happened in any prior April. Behind these figures lies stronger visibility abroad along with increased interest across neighboring regions. Momentum now builds on consistent outreach and changing perceptions.

Early signs of growth held steady through time. From January to April 2026, visitor numbers reached 1.7 million, up by one-third compared to early 2025. Progress did not slow - instead, it built on earlier gains of visitor numbers, signaling more than just recovery from past setbacks. Tourism now fuels broader financial gains while lifting the country's regional standing. Momentum continues without pause.

Neighbors Top the Visitor Numbers

After Guatemala, the United States brought in 440,000 travelers - up 8% since last year. **A surge of 69% lifted Guatemalan visits to 748,000, making it the leading origin through April.** Third on the list was Honduras, recording 319,000 arrivals and a rise of 30%. Growth stood out most from Central America's northern neighbors.

By April, numbers showed Guatemalans made up 231,000 visits - then came 105,000 arriving from the U.S., along with 83,000 Hondurans. Neighboring nations brought strong results, suggesting Central Americans increasingly choose El Salvador when traveling nearby. Visitors from the United States keep coming at a reliable pace, showing lasting interest despite distance.

Increased Earnings and Rising Expenses

871 million U.S. dollars - earned through global travel during early 2026 - marks a sharp upward trend. That sum, pulled in between January and March, exceeds the prior year's opening months by nearly one-fifth. Compared to the beginning stretch of 2019, gains jump close to nine out of every ten dollars. Strength in visitor spending now clearly surpasses the pre-pandemic levels.

Spending by foreign travelers typically fell within a range of 80 to 180 U.S. dollars daily per individual, staying on average anywhere from three up to nine nights. Because trips lasted longer, money flowed into lodging, meals, transit options, along with diverse travel-related offerings - boosting how much tourism added to the country's overall economic output.

Optimism Ahead

April 2026 stands out as the strongest April ever recorded for foreign tourist entries, according to the Ministry of Tourism. **With momentum building early, officials now expect annual tourism income to surpass USD 3.6 billion by year-end.** That figure rests on an estimated flow of around 4.2 million overseas travelers. Forecasters see sustained interest fueling these numbers through December.

With more travelers arriving, strong consumer spending, and effective marketing efforts, tourism

now plays a central role in El Salvador's economic recovery. Though challenges remain, steady expansion seems likely through the coming months as the nation strengthens its position across the region.

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