

CYPRUS ENJOYS BEST YEAR IN OVER A DECADE



Cyprus enjoyed its best year for tourism in over a decade in 2011, mostly thanks to a large influx of tourists from Russia.

Cyprus enjoyed an increase of 10.1% in 2011, which is the first double figure increase since 2000. The percentage refers to incoming arrivals, yet revenue in 2011 was up by 12.9%, perhaps representing a more important statistic for the Cypriots.

The significant increase in visits owes its gratitude mostly to an influx of tourists from Russia and a strong performance from the German contribution to tourism in Cyprus.

Thanks to improved visa conditions, Russians have had a good relationship with Cyprus for quite some time. However, the recent rise in amounts of Russian tourists on Cypriot soil is quite phenomenal.

Thanks to increased air traffic between the two countries (flights from Cyprus now go to 16 Russian destinations) and the upgrading of Cypriot airports, the number of Russians visiting Cyprus rose to 334,079 in 2011, in other words, an increase of 49.2%.

The second most important market is the UK, though the recession has stunted its growth and the Russians are catching up fast. **German participation in Cypriot tourism is also on a steady rise upwards and 2011 saw 13.4% more arrivals from German nationals in comparison with 2010.**

Middle East tourists also visited Cyprus in greater numbers in 2011. However, nobody matches the rise in the numbers of Russian tourists. Cyprus can now keep its fingers crossed that relations between the two countries continue to be successful.

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