

EL SALVADOR TARGETS 4.2 MILLION INTERNATIONAL TOURISTS BY THE END OF 2026



El Salvador is set to attract 4.2 million international tourists by the end of 2026, which is 100,000 more visitors than in the previous year, said minister of Tourism Morena Valdez in an interview with the local press.

According to Valdez, in the January-September period, El Salvador welcomed 3.5 million tourists. The minister did not report how much revenue the tourism industry generated.

While **Guatemala, Honduras, and the United States continue to dominate the list of countries contributing the largest number of visitors**, Argentinian, Chilean, and Uruguayan tourists have also started to arrive in greater numbers in recent months.

Tourism Revenue is Projected to Rise in El Salvador

The amount of foreign exchange generated by international tourists is expected to rise by 10 percent this year, said Valdez. The minister added that the industry's revenue is forecasted to hit 3.6 billion dollars by the end of 2026. The projection is in line with the 3.5 million tourists who have already arrived in the first nine months of the year.

Beaches and Surfing Drive Appeal

Still, beaches remain one of the main tourist attractions. Their closeness to the capital and the surf spots they offer make them some of the most popular destinations. In recent years, the government has ramped up its promotion of surfing and the coastal resort towns.

The government of El Salvador has positioned the country as a premier surfing destination in the years leading up to the Los Angeles 2028 Olympic Games. The Surf City ISA World Longboard Championship, held at El Sunzal Beach, where athletes from 37 countries compete, is expected to draw more than 120 competitors. **This is part of an effort to promote and market surfing to increase investment and tourism in the coastal regions and connect the sport to major international events.** The ISA World Longboard Championship is an annual competition organized by the International Surfing Association (ISA) in collaboration with national federations. Additionally, it is an important qualifier for the 2027 Pan American Games, serving as a pre-Olympic event.

Security Cited as Key Growth Factor

Valdez cited enhanced security as a significant factor contributing to the boom in tourism. The minister stated that the international image of El Salvador has improved dramatically among international tourists.

Date: 2026-10-25

Article link:

<https://www.tourism-review.com/el-salvador-to-attract-100-000-more-international-tourists-news15680>