POPE LEO XIV'S HISTORIC VISIT TO ARGENTINA BOOSTED TOURISM



Pope Leo XIV's historic visit to Argentina has left a huge tourism boost, with large numbers of people attending in the cities of Buenos Aires, Luján and Córdoba.

Thanks to religious tourism, the country saw big inflows of both domestic and international tourists in these areas. According to a survey by the Argentine Confederation of Medium-sized Enterprises (CAME), **the total impact of the 3 main days was around $88 million.**

The City of Buenos Aires saw a total of 1.24 million tourists come to visit between the 6th and 10th of November. Of this total, 242,000 tourists stayed overnight with 165,000 being domestic tourists and 77,000 international tourists. One million excursionists visited the city, with hotel occupancy at 75%.

In Córdoba, the Vatican reported that over 650,000 people attended the Mass on the 10th of November at the Argentine Aircraft Factory (FAdeA). In Luján it is estimated that over 2 million pilgrims arrived for the Mass on the 11th of November. Hotel occupancy was over 90%, and there was also a 1,800 increase in searches for accommodation.

There was a huge spike in tourism due to the holidays around the time of Pope Leo XIV's visit. Many people took the opportunity to take a short break for fun. The majority of people stayed for short periods and last-minute bookings were made. Some areas saw a huge increase in domestic tourism with hotel occupancies up to almost 95% and others only saw a moderate increase of 40%. A total of over 34,300 million pesos was the economic impact in provinces including Santa Fe, Neuquén, San Luis and Jujuy.

To coincide with the Pope Leo XIV's historic visit, the Secretariat of Tourism, Environment and Sports of the Nation, in collaboration with the provinces and the Autonomous City of Buenos Aires, launched a guide to the 80 "must-see" religious tourism spots across the country. This will bring attention to the variety of ways faith can be expressed in the country, highlighting the different historical, architectural, cultural and traditional aspects. This will help boost the development of tourist destinations.

The guide takes users on a pilgrimage around the country, showing a range of sanctuaries and temples. It shows the diverse culture in the country by including a variety of faiths, including Catholicism, Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, indigenous beliefs and popular beliefs such as devotion to Gauchito Gil and the Difunta Correa. There are special sections on the Way of the Jesuits and Pope Francis.

Religious tourism is a large part of the industry globally. It can boost local economies, increase the value of the heritage and show off the culture. According to UN Tourism, hundreds of millions of people take national and international trips for faith-related reasons. Pope Leo XIV's visit to Argentina highlighted how impactful religious visits can be in terms of faith and economic opportunities.

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