

VIETNAM REPORTED OVER US\$ 3.6 BILLION OF TOURISM REVENUE



Vietnam earned 85.6 trillion VND in tourism revenue (more than 3.6 billion USD) from January to February, according to the National Tourism Administration.

During the first two months of this year, the country welcomed 1.8 million foreign tourists and 20 million domestic travelers, the Vietnam National Tourism Administration (VNNTA) said.

In February alone, international arrivals totaled nearly 933,000, mostly from the Republic of Korea, the United States, China, Cambodia, Thailand, Japan, Malaysia and Australia.

The number of domestic tourists during this month was estimated at seven million, of which about 4.6 million travelers stay overnight.

As China has reopened its cross-border travel since January 8, 2023, ANTV has launched a number of activities to welcome Chinese holidaymakers to Vietnam.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, China was the largest source market of tourists to Vietnam, recording over 5.8 million arrivals in 2019. The share has increased from 23% in 2015 to 32% in 2019.

According to official figures, Vietnam only received 3.6 million foreign tourists last year, about 20 percent of the pre-pandemic level. This year, it is aiming for 8 million arrivals.

For several weeks, local tourism organizations and experts have been calling on the Vietnamese government to ease visa restrictions to speed up the recovery of tourism.

Alain Cany, President of the European Chamber of Commerce, insists on the need to "extend the visa to 30 days compared to the current 15 days, and to apply this regime to all citizens of European Union countries".

Today, Belarus, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Norway, Russia, Spain and Sweden are the European countries whose citizens are allowed to enter Vietnam without having to obtain a tourist visa for stays of up to 15 days (14 nights on site).

By way of comparison, Vietnam exempts travelers from around twenty countries from visas, compared to more than a hundred for Malaysia and the Philippines and around sixty for Thailand.

On the other hand, more and more foreign investors are suggesting **that Vietnam resume its three-month multiple-entry visa policy (available before Covid)**. Today, foreign tourists cannot stay in Vietnam for more than a month, and above all, they can only enter Vietnamese territory once; thus, during the trip, it is not possible to visit a neighboring country and then return to Vietnam.

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