

TOURISM APARTMENTS IN BARCELONA TO BE ELIMINATED



Barcelona is embarking on a transformative journey to enhance housing accessibility for its residents, a move that has received significant backing from the Catalan Parliament. The city is strategizing to cease renting tourist apartments by 2029.

The Catalan Parliament has authorized the non-renewal of licenses for tourist apartments in Barcelona, thereby liberating approximately 10,000 accommodations for rental or sale. **The current permits, extended for five years in November, will expire in November 2028.** Hence, commencing in 2029, if all goes as planned, tourist apartments, as we know them today, will fade from Barcelona, opening up avenues for a more accessible housing market.

Housing, Barcelona's Pressing Issue

Barcelona is set to make a significant change with a decree approved last year by the regional parliament of Catalonia. The decree will profoundly affect the number of accommodations with a tourist license in cities facing high real estate pressure.

"The city cannot allow such a high number of apartments to be used for tourist activity, given the challenges in accessing housing and the negative effects of an overpopulation of tourists," explained the municipal council.

Mr. Collboni, who perceives housing as Barcelona's most pressing issue, revealed a staggering statistic: rents have surged by 68% over the past decade in the Catalan capital. This alarming figure underscores the severity of Barcelona's housing crisis. Currently, there are 10,101 homes licensed as tourist apartments in Barcelona, which the city is determined to reduce.

Let's Limit Tourism

Under the leadership of former mayor Ada Colau (2015-2023), a former housing rights activist, Barcelona has taken proactive steps to regulate the city's tourist expansion. The city, a top destination for foreign visitors to Spain, has recently suspended issuing new licenses. However, the effects of overtourism have persisted in housing, particularly since the end of the COVID-19 pandemic.

To protest this situation, several local associations called for a demonstration in the city on July 6 under the slogan "Enough! Let's limit tourism! "

This gathering follows similar demonstrations already organized in recent months in other hot spots of Spanish tourism, such as the Canary Islands and Palma de Mallorca.

A New York Precedent

In September 2023, **New York set a precedent by introducing a law prohibiting owners from renting out thousands of furnished tourist accommodations for less than 30 days.** This law, aimed at addressing the housing crisis, echoes the measures being taken in Barcelona. It's a global

issue that requires collective action, and Barcelona is stepping up to the challenge.

Under this legislation, an owner can only rent a room in their apartment if they are present at home during the stay. As a result, the number of Airbnb listings has significantly decreased.

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