

COSTA RICAN TOURISM INDUSTRY EXPECTS 3 MILLION VISITORS BY 2024



Costa Rica, a paradise known for its stunning landscapes, rich biodiversity, and commitment to sustainability, has positioned itself as a leader in the global tourism industry. This year, the country's ambitions are high, with the Costa Rican Tourism Institute (ICT) projecting that the number of tourists could reach a record 3 million by the end of 2024, surpassing the initial expectation of 2.8 million.

The optimistic forecast reflects the ongoing growth and resilience of the tourism industry, which has demonstrated remarkable adaptability.

Recent statistics show that Juan Santamaría International Airport welcomed 994,292 tourists, while Daniel Oduber International Airport in Guanacaste reported a 25% increase, receiving 537,823 visitors.

According to the Costa Rican Tourism Institute (ICT), **tourism grew by 14.5% in the first half of 2024**. From January to June of this year, over 1.5 million tourists arrived in the country by air, marking an increase compared to the same period in 2023. This growth underscores the sector's recovery following the challenges posed by the pandemic, which heavily impacted the industry in 2020 and 2021. Tourism is essential to the Costa Rican economy, contributing 8.2% to its GDP and serving as one of the significant sources of foreign exchange.

Approximately 92% of tourists visiting Costa Rica arrive by air, with the United States and Canada being the largest sources of visitors. Specifically, 61% of tourists come from the United States, 10% from Canada, and 2.8% from Mexico. The EU market also plays a significant role in the number of visitors, with countries such as Germany, France, and the United Kingdom contributing notably to the tourism industry.

The Authority is implementing new marketing strategies to attract more visitors from different countries and regions, including Brazil, Portugal, and Scandinavian countries, moving away from its previous reliance on North America. In addition, the GOL Linhas Aéreas Airlines will start operating direct flights between São José and São Paulo soon, creating new opportunities for the region.

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