

# COUNTRIES BREAKING RECORDS OF INTERNATIONAL VISITORS



According to UN Tourism, 1.4 billion people traveled abroad last year. This figure is less than 1% of the numbers from 2019, before the COVID pandemic. Still, it represents an increase of over 10% of international visitors compared to the attendance figures for 2023, which had indicated a recovery.

However, the impact of this recovery varied significantly across regions. Several countries managed to break their attendance records.

## France's 100 Million International Visitors

With 100 million visitors in 2024, France has again set a record and solidified its position **as the world's leading tourist destination**. While we can attribute some of this success to the "Olympic effect," the reopening of Notre Dame, and the celebrations for the 80th anniversary of the Normandy landings, it is clear that these events are just a part of the story. France remains an incredibly popular destination for travelers from around the globe.

## Spain Is Closing in on France

For 2024, Spain ranks second in the world for tourism, breaking a record with 94 million visitors. This number may increase further in the coming years, potentially positioning Spain to surpass France. Spain is already leading in terms of tourist spending; while France earned €71 billion in tourism revenue last year, Spain saw €80 billion in spending from tourists.

## Greece, Croatia, Italy, and Portugal Also Celebrated

Spain, France, Italy, and Greece are the leading holiday destinations in Europe, with visitor numbers expected to rise even further in 2024.

Last year, Greece welcomed 35 million international visitors, marking a 10% increase from 2022. Portugal also set a record with over 30 million visitors. Croatia is celebrating an exceptional year, reporting 21.3 million arrivals.

Italy has reached a historic milestone with 65.8 million tourists, with popular destinations including Sicily, Sardinia, the Amalfi Coast south of Naples, and major cities like Rome, Florence, and Venice. However, the growing influx of tourists in these regions has sparked debates about the adverse effects of overtourism.

## Morocco Once again Leads in Africa

For many years, Egypt was the leading tourist destination on the African continent. However, this has changed in 2024. Last year, Morocco emerged as the top tourist destination in Africa, boasting over 16 million arrivals and achieving a new record. This success aligns with the country's goal of welcoming 26 million tourists by 2030.

## **Mauritius: The Safe Bet**

Mauritius has long been a highly sought-after destination in the Indian Ocean. With its beautiful beaches, rich culture, and laid-back lifestyle, it offers everything needed to captivate visitors. Last year, the island welcomed 1.4 million international visitors, marking a 7% increase compared to 2023 and coming close to the record set in 2019, just about a thousand more visitors.

## **Japan Surprisingly Attracts Crowds**

While Thailand is gradually recovering in tourist arrivals, it still falls short of its pre-Covid performance. However, Japan is a surprising destination in the region that is thriving in terms of tourism.

Japan is poised to see a significant surge in tourism in 2024. This is mainly due to the historic weakness of the yen, which has depreciated by 10% against the euro, coupled with moderate inflation. This creates a particularly favorable situation for European tourists. As a result, Japan welcomed 36.8 million foreign visitors in 2024, nearly 5 million more than in 2019, which had previously been a record year for tourism.

## **Brazil's Ambitions**

**Brazil is striving to become a leader in the tourism sector within South America,** outperforming Colombia, Argentina, and Peru. To achieve this goal, the country is making significant financial investments through its "National Tourism Plan 2024-2027," which aims to attract over 8 million foreign visitors by 2027. Additionally, the plan seeks to encourage at least 150 million domestic travelers within Brazil.

This ambition seems feasible, especially considering Brazil saw a notable increase in tourism in 2024, welcoming 6.6 million international visitors—a 12% rise compared to the previous year.

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