

Tourism Among Brazil's Top Ten Earners

Contributed by Lílian de Macedo
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Up to September, foreign visitors to Brazil spent US\$ 2.325 billion in the country, an increase of 33.3% over last year. José Francisco Lopes, at the Brazilian Tourism Corporation (Embratur), says tourism is now one of the top ten sources of revenue for Brazil.

Tourism becomes one of country's growth industries
And it is not just foreign tourists. Domestic tourism is also up 17% over last year.

Lopes says that tourism is an important part of government plans.

One target for the sector is to raise revenue to US\$ 8 billion by the end of 2007, which would mean attracting 9 million foreign tourists.

That will be double the number who came to Brazil this year when the total should reach around 4.5 million.

Lopes points out that tourists nowadays are more demanding and not willing to settle for pretty sunsets anymore.

"They want to see historical sites and go on adventure and ecological treks. One very popular place in Brazil is the Foz de Iguaçu waterfalls and surrounding region where 400,000 tourists arrived this year. Most of them from Argentina, along with 26,000 Spaniards, 25,000 French, 8,300 Japanese and 5,000 Chinese," said the Embratur director.

Lopes also says that foreign tourists are visiting Brazil more than once because they are satisfied.

An Embratur survey of 36,000 tourists found that 87% said they thought their visit was better than they expected. 97% said they wanted to come back. "That is the best advertising," says Lopes.

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