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Guatemala sees surge in tourism as international arrivals rise and new flights boost connectivity

Government campaign highlights cultural heritage, natural beauty, and gastronomy to attract visitors from key global markets

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Guatemala is taking new steps to boost its profile as a travel destination and attract more international visitors. In 2024, the country welcomed over three million tourists, marking a 15% increase compared to 2023, according to the Guatemalan Institute of

Tourism (INGUAT). This growth comes as the government launches a global strategy aimed at raising awareness of Guatemala in key markets such as the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, Mexico, Spain, and other parts of Europe.

The campaign focuses on promoting Guatemala's diverse attractions, from its natural landscapes and cultural heritage to its unique gastronomy and hospitality. Harris Whitbeck, Guatemala's Minister of Tourism and Director General of INGUAT, said that the rising number of international visitors shows how appealing the country has become for travelers. He emphasized that Guatemala is eager to showcase its vibrant culture and friendly people to the world.

Several airlines have responded to the growing demand by announcing new flights to Guatemala City, which serves as the main entry point for tourists. The city offers a mix of modern amenities and access to historical sites. From there, visitors can explore destinations like Antigua, a UNESCO World Heritage Site known for its colonial architecture and significance in Hispanic history.

Guatemala's climate is another draw for travelers. Known as "the land of eternal spring," it enjoys mild weather year-round with average daytime temperatures around 80 degrees Fahrenheit. This makes it comfortable for tourists to visit various regions throughout the year.

In the northern region of Petén, travelers can discover ancient Maya archaeological sites surrounded by jungle, including Tikal National Park, which has been protected by UNESCO since 1979. The Pacific coast offers more than 180 miles of volcanic beaches and nature reserves where visitors can see crocodiles, iguanas, and sea turtles.

Adventure seekers are drawn to Guatemala's highlands for activities like zip-lining and hiking. Lake Atitlán, considered the deepest lake in Central America, is a popular spot for both relaxation and outdoor pursuits. The area is also home to Maya towns such as Santiago Atitlán and San Pedro La Laguna. These communities are known for their colorful markets, local restaurants, churches, and artisan shops.

Guatemala’s food scene highlights regional ingredients like corn and rice. The country is also recognized for producing some of the best coffee and chocolate in the Americas. These culinary offerings are an important part of the tourism experience.

The government’s new strategy aims not only to increase visitor numbers but also to position Guatemala as a must-see destination in Central America. By targeting international markets and improving air connectivity, officials hope to build on recent growth and further develop the country’s tourism sector in the coming years.