**Beat: Travel**

# FITUR opens its doors with pre-pandemic figures and without restrictions

**The American presence grows by 30%**

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**USPA NEWS -** The King and Queen of Spain, Felipe VI and Letizia, inaugurated on Wednesday the 47th edition of the International Tourism Fair (FITUR 2023), which is held until Sunday at IFEMA, in Madrid. The fair, which celebrates its first edition without restrictions after the pandemic, equals the pre-pandemic occupancy figures of its record year (2020) and is aligned with the momentum that national and international tourism is gaining. A total of 8,500 participants, 131 countries, 755 main exhibitors and 66,900 square meters of exhibition space define this edition, which means revenue for Madrid of more than 400 million euros.

Direct participation is the parameter with the greatest impact, with increases of 32% compared to the last edition of 2022, and 50% in terms of international participation. The estimated number of attendees stands at 120,000 professionals and between 80,000 and 90,000 general public visitors on weekends. Guatemala, FITUR 2023 Partner Country, joins this successful edition as a partner, presenting its new brand for tourism promotion within the framework of the fair.

FITUR's commitment to maintaining its call during the two years of the pandemic as the only active meeting point in Europe, together with the favorable evolution of the data from the national and international tourism industry in recent months, has made it possible to consolidate significant growth of the fair, resembling the record edition of FITUR held in 2020: 8,500 participating companies, 131 countries, 755 holders and 66,900 net square meters of exhibition.

With these data, FITUR arrives to consolidate the strong recovery of international tourism activity, marking the path as the first fair on the international tourism calendar. Thus, from January 18 to 22, the International Tourism Fair celebrates a powerful edition aligned with the global growth of this activity in Spain and in the world, and with the support that represents, once again, the involvement of all public agents. and private members of the value chain of the tourism industry. An edition with a solid business orientation, in which sustainable development, in its economic, social and environmental axes, will be the common thread of the great proposals of companies and destinations, as well as of the sections and activities of the fair, and that will focus on innovation and all those cutting-edge content that will mark the development of the sector.

**FITUR growth**

If something characterizes this edition of FITUR it is its vigorous growth, which has been felt in all the parameters of the Fair, being especially relevant in the exhibition area that is equal to its best edition in record size of 2022, with eight packed pavilions, as well as the direct participation of stand holders (755) which grows by 32% compared to the last edition and up to 50% in relation to international participation. Regarding the forecast of attendees, and in line with the very positive response of participation, a significant influx is expected, once international mobility has practically recovered.

In terms of international participation, and by breakdown of geographical areas, significant growth has also been recorded compared to the last edition of the fair. This is how Asia Pacific stands out this year, with a 163% growth in participating companies; Near East, 60%; Africa, 88%; Europe, 42%, and America, 30%. Increases that are also reflected in the international exhibition area, where Africa stands out, which increases its size at the fair by 146%; Asia, 78%; Near East, 437%, and Europe, 32%. Business participation also experienced a significant increase, with 25% more tourism companies, highlighting 27% more technology companies, which increased their exhibition area by up to 50%.

These important advances also have their correspondence in the capacity of FITUR to generate a relevant economic injection for Madrid, estimating income of more than 400 million euros in the Madrid region in sectors such as accommodation, transport, commerce or leisure and restaurants.

The evolution of FITUR also sets the trend as the first tourism fair on the international circuit, arousing the best expectations for the year 2023. In this way, the fair is being a faithful reflection of the data recorded by tourism at a national and global level. According to the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), international tourism reached 65% of pre-pandemic levels by the end of 2022, as the

sector continues to recover from the pandemic. In the case of Spain, according to data from FRONTUR and EGATUR, in the first eleven months of the year, international tourists who have visited the country exceed 67 million, which represents 85% of the figures for the same period in 2019. In addition, according to the forecasts of the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Tourism, during 2022 more than 71.5 million international tourists would have visited Spain.

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