



Cruise tourism, nautical sports and accommodation at lighthouses: Spanish ports' main options at FITUR

Spanish ports welcomed more than 9 million cruise passengers in 2017

- Passengers on regular lines increased 4% to 24.7 million people
- €1.255 billion in turnover and 26,500 jobs generated: Spain's backing of cruise tourism

17-01-2018 (Ministry of Public Works). **Puertos del Estado**, which is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year, will be attending Fitur and highlighting the relevance cruise tourism and nautical sports currently hold and have held over this period in Spain's productive economy. In this vein, thanks to government backing and the work of other administrations and private initiatives, **Spain has obtained an excellent standing in the global context of this sector, receiving more than 9 million visitors on cruise ships for the first time in its history.** Furthermore, Spain is the second ranked European country in terms of number of cruise passengers, while several Spanish ports lead the European rankings and are even among the world's 50 main ports. These include **Barcelona, those in the Balearic Islands and Canary Islands, Malaga, Valencia, Cadiz, Cartagena and Vigo.**

In the last 25 years, the volume of cruise passengers has multiplied by 18, increasing from a little over 480,000 visitors in 1992 to 9 million in 2017.

However, according to experts, Spain still has **major potential for growth.** In this manner, factors such as **deseasonalisation, destination diversification, promotion of Spanish ports as ports of embarkation/disembarkation, and the cheapening of transport** (both air and maritime) has allowed **cruises to be accessible to a wide segment of the population, with highly competitive prices and many options.** As such, and according to Port Authority forecasts, **cruise traffic will continue to grow** in the coming years at a rate of between 1.5-3%, and could **exceed 9.5 million cruise passengers in 2020.**



This situation could extend to **regular traffic lines**, which have also **seen progressive increases in tourist visits** year after year. **In 2017** the total number of passengers on regular lines was **24.7 million**, with an **increase of 4% on the previous year**. Although the bulk of these lines are concentrated among the links between the peninsula and northern Africa, as well as inter-island connections, the **routes that link Spain with Italy and the United Kingdom, or the recently announced route between Santander Port and the Irish port of Cork, have been gaining prominence.**

- A SECTOR THAT INVOLVES 26,500 JOBS, WITH A TURNOVER OF €1.255 BILLION

There is no doubt about the importance of ports and cruise tourism in helping to revitalise the Spanish economy. **The cruise industry** is very important to the Spanish economy as **the turnover it generates in Spain exceeds €1.255 billion; it provides jobs** (direct, indirect and induced) to more than **26,400 people**; and **it represents 10.9% of Spanish tourism's GDP**. Cruise tourism also promotes other parts of the country, including tourism away from the coasts.

Both Puertos del Estado and the Ministry of Public Works **have done their best to promote the sector**. Via State Budgets, **port costs for the use of infrastructures have been reduced, basic rates have been cut (harbour charge by 5% and mooring charge by 8.5%)** to increase competitiveness, and **the terms of concessions were increased to a maximum of 50 years** to encourage private investment. In addition, **the charge per ship has been cut by 50% for those using liquefied natural gas or those that connect to the port's electricity in order to encourage the reduction of cruise ship emissions**. These measures have brought a reduction in stopover costs and encouraged shipping companies and operators to increase their presence in our ports.

In 2018 a special tax treatment will continue to apply to cruise ships. In other words, a **70% reduction in the basic charge per ship will apply**, and if this involves a base port, there will be an additional reduction of 56% on the amount resulting from applying the 70% reduction. Furthermore, **loyalty in use of port facilities** as a base port will continue to be rewarded



by applying reductions when the same company completes a minimum of 12 stopovers. With regard to **the passage rate**, passengers on a tourist cruise in transit will see **a reduction in the applicable basic rate amount of 0.75%**.

– BLUE CARPET: OUR PORTS' IMAGE ABROAD

Nearly 5 years ago we launched **the Blue Carpet campaign**, a distinctive sign of Puertos del Estado, with a recognised image, under the slogan **"Blue Carpet: Step into Spain through world-class ports"**. It has been seen as a great success abroad, and **taken up by the Spanish Port Authorities, institutions and companies with which we have participated jointly at fairs and international events to consolidate and increase their presence abroad.**

In this way, **the Spain Brand and the image of its industry have taken up a strong position in our ports**, with the idea of conveying to all tourists who visit us from a Spanish port that **a "Blue Carpet" is being rolled out towards inland Spain, its cities, towns and villages..** In short, it is the best possible welcome to offer our visitors.

Along with cruise options, and taking advantage of the excellent location of port facilities, **Spanish ports offer citizens the chance to enjoy marinas and nautical/sport areas**. At all State ports combined there are **close to 30,000 berths**. The existence of **nautical/sports zones** at Spanish ports **favours transition spaces between citizen areas and the commercial port**, and these spaces are extremely necessary to guarantee suitable management and overlapping of city and port interests.

According to recent studies, **nautical sports** (construction, repair, associated industry and services) **contribute approximately 0.7% of the national GDP and more than 110,000 jobs (both direct and indirect)**. This sector is an incredibly important element within Spain's economic development, which is largely linked to another key industry in our economy: tourism and leisure.

Another offer that has recently emerged, but which has a long tradition in surrounding countries, is **the option of staying in one of the 187**



lighthouses shared around the Spanish coast. The Ministry of Public Works and Puertos del Estado are promoting the social value of lighthouses, given their historic and technical legacy, via the **"FAROS DE ESPAÑA" (LIGHTHOUSES OF SPAIN) project**, emphasising their value to society, once certain spaces have fallen into disuse due to the automation of lighthouses.

- €346 MILLION SET ASIDE FOR PASSENGER FACILITIES AND PORT-CITY RELATIONS FOR 2017-2021

Investment in the ports system and passenger facilities during the period 2000-2016 amounted to €282.7 million, and **a further €285 million is expected to be invested in the period 2017-2021.** In addition to these investments, there were **investments in improving port-city relations**, which amounted to €240.4 million in 2000-2016, while **a further €61.77 million is expected to be invested in this regard in the period 2017-2021.**

These investments prove it is possible and desirable to combine passenger flows with the well-being of citizens. The powers and competences local councils have will enable them to promote and help satisfy the needs and aspirations both of residents and visitors alike. **Support for cruise tourism and nautical sports is synonymous with committing to cities and a different form of tourism that is respectful of the environment and that values our culture.** It also means support for an economic sector that can create employment and economic activity at ports and in the cities that house them.