

Press release for immediate circulation

New overnight stay record is set: 2018 marks stellar year for tourism in Geneva

Geneva, 27 February 2019 – With overnight stays up by more than 5.8% compared to 2017 – already a record year – Geneva’s tourism sector has every reason to celebrate. High quality services and a strategic location go some way to explaining the region’s success as a tourist destination.

After its historic performance in 2017, which saw the destination exceed the three million overnight stays mark for the first time since 1934, tourism in Geneva is thriving. 2018 sets a new record with a total of 3,232,871 overnight stays recorded. Geneva also outperformed the Swiss average for overnight stays (+3.8%) with a 5.8% increase. The city is the third most popular Swiss tourist destination for foreigners (i.e. excluding Swiss visitors), with a 12.3% market share, behind Zurich (20.5%) and the Bern region (14.4%).

The Swiss are back, Middle Eastern visitors remain stable while Indian tourism shows strong growth

Top of the headcount of most frequent visitors to Geneva were the Swiss who made a notable comeback with a total of 625,961 arrivals (+14.5%). The United States came in second place with 284,713 tourists to the destination (3.3%) ahead of the United Kingdom with 263,054 (+2.9%). France, with 260,828 visitors (+5.5%), and the Gulf region, with 252,885 (+1.5%), were close behind.

With a surge of 22.6%, India showed the highest increase in visitor numbers with 8,841 more tourists compared to the previous year. In second place was Switzerland (+14.5%), followed by Spain (+13.2%) and China (+7.8%). The high potential South-East Asian market also showed significant growth (+6.7%).

High quality services and a location that reflects emerging trends

Several factors go some way to explaining this success. Geneva offers a fantastic visitor experience that includes incredible hotels, innovative tourism services and easy access thanks to superb air, rail and bus connections. But its location also plays a major role in its allure. According to the CEO of Geneva Tourism & Conventions Foundation, Adrien Genier, *‘Breaks to cities that have the countryside on their doorstep are a mega trend in international tourism. Nowadays, tourists want to visit a city not merely to be able to enjoy the cultural attractions and local restaurants, but also to make day trips. These figures show that Geneva’s breathtaking setting on the shores of Lake Geneva in close proximity to the Alps, coupled with its exciting cultural and food scene, makes the city their ideal destination.’*

For photos and press releases

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Geneva Tourism & Conventions Foundation: The Geneva Tourism & Conventions Foundation is a private foundation officially recognised as serving the public good. Its mission is to promote and market Geneva as a travel, leisure and business destination. The Foundation welcomes visitors, provides assistance and information, as well as organising tourist events. Geneva Tourism is funded principally by the tourist tax and the tourism promotion tax.