

## **Turisme de Barcelona launches a package of actions to attract Premium tourism**

- **The consortium is setting its sights on the autumn with a promotional offensive to attract Premium tourism that brings added value**
- **A team from the Promotional Division is travelling to Mexico to attend the ILTM and attract high-spending visitors from North America**
- **The consortium has arranged 60 meetings with Premium agents in order to boost the city's position as a quality destination**
- **Barcelona's Premium tourists are repeat visitors who seek to avoid overcrowded destinations and spend around 600€ per person per day**

**Barcelona, 20th September 2021.-** This month, Turisme de Barcelona has launched a national and international strategy to attract Premium tourism and boost the position of the city and its surrounding area as a quality tourist destination. This is a high-spending strategic sector that can travel out of season and has evolved towards concepts such as personalisation, unique and genuine experiences and a search for authenticity that bring added value, such as a demand for excellence and professionalism in the services provided. They like to feel part of the community and value understanding and getting to know the culture of the place they are visiting. They also have the power to decide, meaning that they act as prescribers when they set up their businesses and hold meetings at a particular location. The consortium's commitment to this kind of tourism has resulted in the launch of a package of promotional actions that it will be introducing face to face at the world's leading luxury tourism fairs, events and workshops in Mexico, Marbella,

Brazil, the UAE, Cannes, LatAm, the USA, Russia and Asia, which are the main target markets in this segment.

The first action in the new season comes this week, when a team from the Promotional Division will be travelling to Cancun to take part in one of the world's leading luxury tourism events, **ILTM North America**, which attracts the main agents from the North American luxury travel segment (USA, Mexico and Canada). During the three-day expo, Turisme de Barcelona has put 60 meetings in its diary with the most important travel advisors from this segment. The North American market usually works through Virtuoso, the global network of high-end travel companies that organise bespoke travel experiences for luxury travellers. Turisme de Barcelona's latest initiative brings something new to the table: it provides the opportunity to for the direct penetration of this segment, in which mediation still plays a key role in markets and strategies. More specifically, it seeks to have a direct impact on markets, such as the North American one, when it comes to the recovery in 2022 and 2023, when government measures regarding Covid-19 are expected to be relaxed further and Barcelona's position will be strengthened as a quality destination through the promotion of unique, tailor-made experiences that can be enjoyed in the city and its environs.

This strategy has been designed to result in an increase in respectful visitors who are attracted by local culture and identity, interested in fine dining and the retail offer, with transformative experiences that will help them become part of new realities and cultures. Their spending power will lead to an increase in the average spend on the city's products and services and generate new business opportunities while consolidating the prestige and reputation of the Barcelona brand.

#### **Marbella, Brazil, Cannes and the USA**

The following action will take place on 30th September in **Marbella** at a meeting hosted by the Spanish luxury travel association, Luxury Spain. It will bring together 30 specialised companies and agencies (DMCs) to analyse and compare models and programmes with professionals and representatives from 13 destinations. Luxury Spain has its headquarters in Barcelona and comprises institutions, businesses and bodies from individual destinations who work together to promote Spain as a destination of excellence around the world. Turisme de Barcelona is part of the group of luxury destinations, which also include Catalonia, the Costa Brava, Madrid, Andalusia, Seville, Malaga and the Basque Country, and plays an active role within the association. Luxury Spain will be presenting its new website and brand at this meeting.

A fam trip organised by **Latin America's** foremost Virtuoso agency will take place in Barcelona in October. The representatives will be welcomed with a series of exclusive tours and presentations.

Also in October, Turisme de Barcelona will be working with a fam trip focusing on the **North American** market. Five high-profile, prestigious travel agents from Virtuoso will be taking part. Two of them are from New York and, as they already know Barcelona well, we will be organising an alternative programme of events for them, including unique, exceptional experiences, such as a live cookery display at one of the city's markets, a yacht trip to the coastal town of Masnou to visit the wine-producing zone of Alta Alella, where they'll take part in a wine and food experience, an exclusive tour of some of Gaudí's lesser-known buildings and a visit to the restoration department of the MNAC led by an expert historian. In general, the premium visitor is motivated by a personal interest in seeing and meeting people who do things, such as wine producers and chefs.

Turisme de Barcelona is getting ready to take part in a roadshow in the **United Arab Emirates**, which will include trade visits to Dubai.

To end the year, Turisme de Barcelona will be attending the **ILTM in Cannes** in December. The ILTM is the world's foremost luxury travel expo that has set the benchmark for the sector. It is a leader in by-invitation, professional events that attract the finest travel agents and advisors who specialise in luxury travel and showcase travel experiences around the world. The aim is to have an impact on key markets in the luxury segment and continue to raise Barcelona's profile as an exclusive travel destination by presenting the city as a destination for high-spending and highly cultured visitors.

These types of meetings showcase unique, exclusive and, above all, bespoke experiences that a city and its environs have to offer. One of the most important aspects of the ILTM expo is the opportunity it provides to meet key agents from mature and emerging markets in order to innovate, expand and have an impact on the most interesting profiles and to see how the tourism and professional sectors are recovering. On this occasion, we expect to hold meetings with 45 professional agents from markets including Russia, Europe, the USA, Asia and the Middle East.

Continuing with its strategy to strengthen the Premium travel segment, the Promotional Division will be hosting a series of Premium **webinars** covering different areas. The sessions will involve presentations and training sessions for specialised agents from the Latin American, Asian and US markets, as well as an email campaign about Barcelona Premium for 30,000 Virtuoso customers.

Turisme de Barcelona works closely with the luxury travel sector in order to guarantee that international agents can provide an ideal experience for the most discerning and demanding travellers with bespoke, local experiences. Every year, Barcelona Premium attends the leading fairs and workshops from the luxury travel sector and holds some 800 meetings with specialist travel agents. The ILTM Asia-Pacific in July and Virtuoso Travel Week held in Las Vegas in August, are two of the most recent events Turisme de Barcelona has taken part in. They both brought significant results in terms of making new contacts to improve Barcelona's image as a destination of economic and cultural excellence.

The roll out of Turisme de Barcelona's new strategy to raise the city's profile as a high-end destination, in order to boost its image and further its prestige, involves developing a policy of alliances with this industry and its organisations, such as Virtuoso, and focusing on priority markets to attract the end customer and their trusted travel advisors.

For this reason, this strategy is being carried out in collaboration with businesses from the Premium industry and by working closely with the luxury travel sector in order to guarantee that international agents can provide an ideal experience for luxury travellers through personalised, local experiences.

### **Profile of Premium travellers**

Premium travellers organise their trips through intermediaries. They are high-spending clients with an **outlay of around 600€ per person per day** (almost 400€ if we exclude accommodation), almost 300€ more than the average spend by other visitors to the city. They place a high value on architecture, culture and food, and seek to avoid overcrowded destinations. This is a key factor in a post-Covid context where personalised, distinctive

service will be particularly important, alongside other elements, such as avoiding overtourism, safety and open-air experiences in small groups.

The director of Turisme de Barcelona, **Marian Muro**, argues that “we are looking for a quality tourism with high added value that will appreciate our distinctiveness and respect our culture and customs with everything this entails. We need to look for the best tourism. It’s the quality that matters, not the quantity”. In this regard, **Marian Muro** considers it essential to keep working in this segment “at a time when customers are willing to pay more for exclusive services and products and special deals that will reduce their contact with other guests or passengers.”

Before the pandemic was declared, Barcelona was popular with visitors from the **United States** and the rest of **Spain**, as it had been in previous years. People from the **Middle East, China, Canada** and **Australia** joined the top ten, along with visitors from nearby countries, such as the **United Kingdom, France** and **Germany**.

The **average age of** Premium visitors is around **45.5**, ten years older than the average age of other visitors to the city. The largest age group is between 45 and 54 and accounts for a quarter of all Premium tourists. The second age group is between 25 and 35, almost 15 points below the average age group of visitors to the city.

More than half Premium visitor (52.1%) **know Barcelona** because they have been before. Of these, more than 25% are visiting for the fourth time or more.

Historically, most Premium visitors travelling to Barcelona only come with their **partner** (42.0%) followed by those who visit with their **family** (16.0%). It is important to bear in mind that the family doesn’t only include children aged under 15 (the percentage in this case would fall considerably) but all kinds of relatives (brothers and sisters, cousins, adult children...).