

Ministers of Tourism From Central America and the Caribbean Aim to Boost the World Cruise Industry

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Tourism Secretary Rodolfo Elizondo Torres opened the 'Challenges and Opportunities in the Cruise Industry in Mexico and Central America' seminar, at which government officials and industry representatives assisted with the goal of strengthening their joint efforts to consolidate the region as a main international cruise destination.

From Cozumel, the main international cruise ship destination, the SECTUR official welcomed the Ministers of Tourism of Costa Rica, Carlos Benavides, Honduras, Ricardo Martinez Castaneda, El Salvador, Jose Ruben Rochi Parker, Haiti, Patrick Delatour, and Nicaragua, Michael Navas Gutierrez, in addition to the Second Vice President and Minister of the Presidency of the Republic of Panama, Ruben Arosemena Valdes.

Elizondo pointed out the need to establish strategies that will boost the region's cruise industry and increase tourist spending to benefit the local populations that make a living from this activity.

Because of the important role played by Central American countries and Mexico in the cruise industry, Elizondo also said these countries are looking to synchronize their efforts to accommodate the cruise industry's fast growth, currently expanding at an average annual rate of 8 percent.

The Minister of Tourism of El Salvador, Jose Ruben Rochi, said another goal of the meeting of ministers was to review how the cruise industry is operating in all countries located along the isthmus of Central America and Mexico, in order to create a joint strategy over time that will bring into line the way in which the different countries manage the cruise issue.

An Integrated Work Plan

The officials will hold a technical meeting on the Island of Cozumel to prepare an effective work plan focused on key points between the marketing and promotion teams of the Mayan countries, in order to position their product as a world-class multideestination.

The countries that make up this cruise travel route include: Belize, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, and the southern states of Mexico (Campeche, Quintana Roo, Yucatan, Chiapas and Tabasco), which share 500,000 square kilometers (193,051 square miles) of this multinational tourism project.

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