

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

THIS REPORT CONTAINS ASSESSMENTS OF COMMODITY AND TRADE ISSUES MADE BY
USDA STAFF AND NOT NECESSARILY STATEMENTS OF OFFICIAL U.S. GOVERNMENT
POLICY

Voluntary Public

Date: 12/15/2011

GAIN Report Number: CI1047

Chile

Post: Santiago

Tourism Back on Track in Chile

Report Categories:

Agriculture in the News

Approved By:

Rachel Bickford, Agricultural Attaché

Prepared By:

Maria Jose Herrera M., Marketing Specialist

Report Highlights:

Record number of visitors in 2011 as tourist industry continues post-earthquake recovery.

General Information:

Tourism in Chile is officially back on track after a devastating earthquake rocked the industry in 2010. Visitor numbers have reached a four-year high in 2011 according to the latest figures from Chile's National Tourism Service (Sernatur).

More than 2.5 million foreigners visited the country from January to November, an 11.1 percent increase over last year.

The results consolidated Chile's position as one of South America's top tourist destinations, trailing only Brazil and Argentina, both of which attract around 5 million tourists annually.

According to a Sernatur study, most visitors are young or middle-aged, with 28 percent in the 25 to 34 age range, and 37 percent between the ages of 35 and 44.

Thirty-eight percent of the visitors came for vacations while 28.5 came to visit family or friends.

Of those visiting Chile as tourists, 54 percent listed historic centers and museums as an important draw, 41 percent came for reserves and national parks, 34 percent for beaches and 20 percent for a city tour.

Much of this year's promotional campaigns for tourism in Chile focused on European markets, a strategy that Sernatur plans to change in 2012.

Jacqueline Plass, undersecretary of tourism, told El Mercurio newspaper, "In 2012 we will concentrate a great part of our efforts in [South America], especially in Brazil, Argentina and Colombia."

Next year's promotional campaigns will highlight Chile's potential as a profitable business platform for foreigners, Plass said.

The Sernatur study found that some 27.5 percent of all Chile's visitors in 2011 came on business.

Sernatur's 2012 campaigns will also target the Australian market, capitalizing on the fact that Chile remains the only nation in South America directly accessible from there.

By 2014, Sernatur hopes to attract 4 million tourists, and to make tourism the third largest sector of the country's gross domestic product (GDP) by 2020.

By Joe Hinchliffe (editor@santiagotimes.cl)

Copyright 2011 – The Santiago Times