

The 22nd EMITT Tourism Exhibition is Underway with a Record Number of Participants

One of the top five tourism exhibitions in the world, the East Mediterranean International Travel and Tourism Exhibition (EMITT), which started on Thursday January 25, 2018, is underway with a record turnout of 1,065 participants from 85 different countries. Open until January 28, the exhibition, which is held at the TÜYAP Fair, Convention and Congress Center, awaits those who wish to make holiday plans at reasonable prices with corporate and individual professionals.

EMITT, which was established on an area of 60,000 square meters and is hosting 1,065 participants from 85 countries this year, continues to draw great interest on its second day with its topics, guests that shape the tourism sector and exciting activities that take place at the stands.

Along with several Turkish provinces and districts, many prominent touristic countries are also taking part in EMITT by setting up stands this year. The countries participating in EMITT include the U.S., Germany, Albania, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, the United Arab Emirates, Bosnia and Herzegovina, China, Morocco, the Philippines, Palestine, France, Guinea, South Africa, South Korea, Georgia, India, Iran, Spain, Italy, Japan, TRNC, Cyprus, Kyrgyzstan, Kosovo, Cuba, Latvia, Lebanon, Macedonia, the Maldives, Mongolia, Nepal, Russia, the Seychelles, Serbia, Taiwan, Tunisia, Uzbekistan, Ukraine, Jordan, Vietnam, Greece, and Zanzibar.

Record interest in EMITT with more than 7,000 appointments and 600 tour operators from 106 countries

Having drawn a record amount of interest this year, EMITT received 2,686 applications from tour operators from 106 countries. EMITT officials, who have handled the great interest of the tour operators with great care, approved the applications of 600 hosted buyers that will contribute to the country's tourism and included exhibition participants in the specially created appointment system. As a result, it has been made possible for more than 6,000 appointments to be held throughout the exhibition.

Held for the 22nd time this year, EMITT offers a great advantage in promoting the country and adding momentum to the growth of the tourism sector and plays a significant role in encouraging the concept of going on holiday and benefiting from making early reservations. As a sort of sectorial school for both participants and consumers, EMITT will offer guidance for the sector this year, as well, by generating value for all participants and paving the way for the formation of partnerships and the sharing of useful information.

Prominent names in the sector and current topics are at EMITT

EMITT, a sort of sectorial school for both participants and consumers, has once again been organized with rich content oriented towards the growth of the tourism sector.

On the second day of the exhibition, the panel titled “The New Trend in the World; Gastronomical Tourism” was moderated by the President of the Gastronomy Tourism Foundation Gürkan Boztepe. The panelists included Former Tourism Minister Bülent Akarcalı, Karaköy Güllüoğlu CEO Nadir Güllü, the General Coordinator of the Turkish Hoteliers Federation Necip Boz, Feriye Restaurant Chef Aydın Demir, and Haber Türk Deputy General Manager Erkan Ataman.

In his opening speech for the panel, **the President of the Gastronomy Tourism Foundation Gürkan Boztepe** expressed the following: “In the past, one individual would spend 154 dollars a week with regards to Gastronomy Tourism; today, this figure has reach 254 dollars. As the market is growing at such a high rate worldwide, Turkey needs to improve in the sector. We aim to draw tourists who come to Istanbul for gastronomy tourism to important destinations such as Antakya and Antep; in this regard, we will take a gastronomy truck to Europe in the near future to promote Turkish cuisine.”

The culture of eating out started in the 1990s in Turkey

Referring to the idiom “the way to a man’s heart is through his stomach,” Former Tourism Minister Bülent Akarcalı mentioned that Ottoman cuisine combined several cultures. Akarcalı expressed the following: “We were late starters with regards to Gastronomy Tourism. The culture of eating out started in the 1990s in Turkey. We have only truly been involved with flavor and taste for the past 20 years. Moreover, we have a significant food culture that stems from our long history. It is crucial that we properly explain this to others.”

During his speech, **Haber Türk Deputy General Manager Erkan Ataman** stated that there are a total of 33,000 promotion groups in 50 different countries in the world. He said, “Of these groups, 17,000 are located in the United States. Since this is the case, the U.S. has become the leader in Gastronomy Tourism. It is important that we have more NGOs to increase efforts in this regard. Moreover, we also have to bring local dishes to the fore. We have to properly introduce and promote our regionals products.”

Expressing that a chef who does not know his own culture and values cannot reflect his own kitchen, **Feriye Restaurant Chef Aydın Demir** placed great emphasis on the importance of championing our own culture and values to gain worldwide respect.

Karaköy Güllüoğlu CEO Nadir Güllü stated that whoever does this well is achieving progress in gastronomy tourism. He added that we have to do what we can in this regard. The last speaker, **the General Coordinator of the Turkish Hoteliers Federation Necip Boz**, mentioned that the culture of eating out has not been fully established in Turkey.

EMITT, which will last until Sunday, January 28, will host panels titled “Creating Gastronomic Trademark Cities in City Marketing” and “Local Development and Tourism” and also hold discussions on topics such as “Online Sales in Emerging Markets” and “Awareness about Gastronomy.”