UNWTO and Comunidad de Madrid Hold First Experts Meeting on Cultural Tourism

**Madrid - 28 November 2022.** UNWTO and the Comunidad de Madrid have teamed up to bring together the world’s leading experts in cultural tourism.

Around 20 international professionals will meet in Madrid between 30 November-2 December to share ideas, debate and explore the challenges and trends to boost cultural tourism. They will also draw up conclusions and set out their recommendations for cultural and tourism destination managers, all of which will be presented in a report next January at the International Tourism Trade Fair (FITUR).

The rise of cultural tourism has led to a number of challenges for destinations, all of which will be addressed in the Madrid meeting. Experts will also examine the growing importance of a holistic tourist-cultural experience, recognizing that a visit to a museum, monument or show does not begin at the entrance door, but is the responsibility of a destination’s entire tourism system. The role of tourism promotion, cooperation with the private sector, the appropriation of cultural resources and the fragility of the intangible will also be discussed.

**Recognizing tangible and intangible values**

Ion Vilcu, Director of the UNWTO Affiliate Members Department, stresses the importance of this conversation because “the focus is often placed on tangible cultural heritage, and intangible cultural values remain in the background, even when they inherent to the tangible ones. However, the intangible is an important attraction for visitors, precisely because of its unique, exotic, intangible and, in many cases, ephemeral nature.”

As such, aspects such as gastronomy, handicrafts, forms of production, folklore, linguistic heritage, among others, are important cultural resources for destinations, which, without sustainable management, can easily become blurred or even distorted.

**Madrid tourism returns**

The Comunidad de Madrid formalized its accession to the UNWTO as an Affiliate Member in 2021, through the public entity for the management and promotion of Madrid’s tourism sector Madrid Cultura y Turismo SAU. This global meeting, in addition to deepening the needs of cultural tourism, will help to project the region internationally as a tourist destination, recognizing the specific weight that Madrid’s culture represents.
in attracting tourists from all corners of the planet. It will also strengthen the image of
the Community of Madrid and contribute to consolidating the recovery of the tourism
sector which, according to the latest official data, by July of this year had recovered
100% of international visitors compared to the same period in 2019.

About Comunidad de Madrid

https://www.comunidad.madrid/

1st Experts Meeting on Cultural Tourism

UNWTO Affiliate Members: https://www.unwto.org/affiliate-members

FITUR 2023: https://www.unwto.org/events/fitur-2023-international-tourism-fair