

# *Deepening relationships in the tourism sector*

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By María Josefina Arce

Until August 3, businessmen from China will visit several of Cuba's main tourist destinations, an opportunity to deepen relations between the two countries in this area, which was seriously affected by the COVID 19 pandemic.

For the Caribbean nation, this is an essential sector to advance in its development, which has not yet taken off at the desired pace, after more than two years of health emergency.

That is why this tour of the Asian giant's businessmen through Havana, Trinidad, Cienfuegos and the world-famous Varadero beach resort, in the province of Matanzas, offers new perspectives.

It is an opportunity to increase the number of Chinese tourists visiting us. In 2019, before the arrival of COVID 19, almost 45 thousand vacationers from the Asian country traveled to our country.

Cuba is one of the nations approved by Beijing authorities to resume group visits, after the long period of pandemic.

Likewise, last May Cuba was awarded the Most Distinctive Tourist Destination Award granted by the International Travel Fair of the city of Guangzhou, South China, which recognizes the largest of the Antilles as the most unique and characteristic destination, with safety, wide cultural, patrimonial and historical legacy.

The visit of the businessmen is also a good opportunity to encourage the increased presence of Chinese companies in the area. The business director of the Cuban Ministry of Tourism and responsible for foreign

investment in the sector, Zuyen Rivero Martinez, recalled in statements to Prensa Latina news agency the current existence of two companies with mixed capital.

And for that purpose, on August 1, the businessmen will learn about the Portfolio of Opportunities of the Greater of the Antilles in the so-called leisure industry.

The presence of Chinese businessmen in Cuban territory is part of the actions developed by both nations to increase links in this branch and bring them to the degree of excellence they have in other sectors such as biotechnology. Thus, memorandums of understanding have been signed with the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and the China Tourism Academy.

Also, since October last year, a Tourism Consultancy has been operating in the Cuban embassy in Beijing, which allows working in that market.

Cuba and China share the interest and commitment to continue strengthening bilateral ties, and to that end they are taking sure steps in that direction, which will benefit both peoples.

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