

# *Cuba Expects to Receive Five Million Foreign Tourists in 2018*

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Havana, July 13 (RHC)-- Cuba expects to receive five million foreign visitors in 2018, Manuel Marrero, Minister of Tourism told deputies of the Service Provision Commission. He spoke with lawmakers at Havana's International Convention Center, in the run-up to tomorrow's plenary of the National Assembly of People's Power.

According to Marrero, in his report Wednesday, the country needs to expand its accommodation capacity in view of these expectations.

Cuba currently has more than 67,700 rooms in hotels, a figure that at the end of this year should exceed 68,000.

In the non-state sector, there are 2,000 restaurants, and more than 22,000 rooms in private homes (casas particulares or Bed and Breakfast), mainly in patrimonial cities such as Viñales, Santa Clara, Remedios, Cienfuegos, Trinidad, Camagüey, Baracoa and Santiago de Cuba.

According to the minister, in the first six months of 2017, just over two million six hundred thousand tourists had visited Cuba -- an increase of 23.2 percent compared to last year.

The Ministry of Tourism predicts that Cuba will close the year with four million 700 thousand tourists, half a million more than expected. It estimates a growth of 16.5 percent compared to 2016 when, for the first

time, Cuba received four million vacationers.

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