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# Japan sees record 3.14 mn visitors in June as weak yen fuels tourism boon

Japan tourism boomed with 3.14 million tourists in June, driven by weak yen. Taiwan and US set records, totaling 17.78 million visitors in the first half of 2023. Estimated spending reaches 8 trillion yen. Tourism ranks as Japan's second largest export. Overtourism impacts Mt. Fuji and Himeji Castle. Luxurique reports spontaneous travel plans.



Online Bureau , • Reuters  
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Japan set a fresh record high for monthly visitors in June, official data showed on Friday, as the weak yen fuelled a tourism boom that is becoming a key driver for the economy.

The number of foreign visitors for business and leisure was 3.14 million last month, exceeding the previous monthly record set in March and up from 3.04 million in May, data from the Japan National Tourism Organization (JNTO) showed.

The 17.78 million travellers through June was also a record for a half-year period, and on pace to smash through the previous annual high of 31.9 million in 2019 before the COVID-19 pandemic shut global borders.

Spending by visitors is estimated to reach 8 trillion yen (\$50 billion) this year, Prime Minister Fumio Kishida said on Friday, adding that the government needed to guard against so-called "overtourism". The tourism industry is on pace to become Japan's second-biggest export sector, behind automobiles and ahead of electronic components.

The yen's slide to a 38-year low against the dollar has made Japan an irresistible bargain for overseas travellers. Out of 23 markets tracked by the JNTO, travellers from 18 regions set new records for June arrivals. Visitors from Taiwan and the United States set their highest totals for any month.

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"The weak yen has undoubtedly boosted Japan's appeal, encouraging

spontaneous travel plans," said Naomi Mano, president of high-end travel agency Luxurique. "We are also witnessing a more diverse mix of countries visiting Japan, a notable shift from 2019 when approximately 30% of travellers were Chinese."

While traveller spending has been a boon for the economy, the masses of people at visitor hot spots has rankled some locals and prompted concerns among policymakers.

Crowded trails and increased littering on Japan's sacred Mt. Fuji prompted officials to this month impose admission fees and hiker limits for the first time.

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The mayor of Himeji in western Japan also last month suggested charging foreigners about six times the rate that residents pay to enter the city's famous samurai-era castle.

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