

Tourist Resorts to Drop Alcohol Ban?

The Tourism Minister, Felix Jimenez has indicated that the recently introduced ban on selling alcohol after certain times, may soon be lifted in tourist areas. Apparently, when the new laws, limiting alcohol sales after midnight were brought in last year, the President didn't realise that the ban would have a detrimental effect on tourism. According to Jimenez, the ban was not originally designed to encompass the tourism areas.

The ban came into effect last year in order to curb the increase in violence which it was felt was due largely to late night drinking. The decree currently in effect forces establishments such

as bars, clubs and shops to stop selling alcohol after 1am on weekdays and 2am at weekends (Fri-Sat). In most cases, this forces bars to close in order to avoid being 'visited' by the police. Understandably, many business owners are complaining about the loss of business.

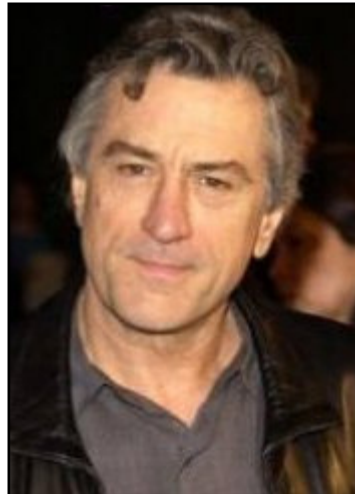
Over the last few months, tourism operators have complained to the Tourism Minister regarding the ban, but also pointing out the fact that tourists were actually more at risk from hold-ups and assaults if the operators are forced to suspend their tours.

On a TV interview for Colorvision Channel 9, Jimenez stated that, "2.4 million tourists don't come here for a church life. They come to sing, dance and have fun." He indicated that the tourist industry has to follow a different plan with regards to the restriction on alcohol sales.

Jimenez has not yet given a definite answer as to if/when the ban will be lifted, but says that they are studying the results of a pilot plan now in effect, and anticipates the ban will soon be lifted in the tourist areas.

De Niro Plans Investment in the DR

Robert De Niro has been in talks with the Dominican Tourism Minister, Felix Jimenez



in which he declared his plans to invest in tourism here. Last year, De Niro was in the country making the film, Good Shepherd, a drama about the CIA.

Apparently, De Niro was impressed by the country and plans to invest either in Pedernales (Southwest) or Montecristi (Northwest).

According to Jimenez, the Dominican Tourism Ministry is keen to encourage investment from foreign groups or personalities in the local tourism industry. The DR is increasingly becoming popular with celebrities seeking a site either for a second home or for a tourism investment. Other recent celebrities to have invested in the DR are Charlie Rose, Oscar de la Renta, Julio Iglesias and Moby.

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such as 'guardians' or 'carers'!

Injuries from Books

Mark Sutton, an English author was told by a tourist information center in Swindon, UK, that they would not sell his book unless he had liability insurance. The reason had nothing to do with the content of his book about World War 1, but was in case readers suffered paper cuts turning the pages. Spokesman for Swindon Borough Council, Richard Freeman indicated that, "We have to cover every eventuality."

Ed - If you cut your finger reading this - tough!

Feng Sui Au Naturale

If moving the furniture around, adding some mirrors and chime bars doesn't do the trick, take a leaf out of the government of southwestern China's Fumin county. In order to Feng Shui the villagers living next to the mined-out Laoshou mountain, the forestry department were ordered to spray-paint the mountainside green.

Ed - I guess it's quicker than planting trees?

Relaxed Burglar makes himself at home.

The Shanghai Daily newspaper reported the story of a Beijing thief's unusual modus operandi. Rather than escaping with the valuables after breaking into luxury villas, the man would try on clothes, have a shower and sleep in the bed, even while the owners were at home. On one occasion, Ye, on finding a woman at the house, simply took a carton of milk from the fridge and went to bed on a different floor. The woman went to work the next morning while Ye stayed in the house. When she returned in the evening, Ye managed to keep avoiding her and slept on whichever of the two floors she wasn't on. Police were finally alerted on his fifth break-in, when the villa's owner returned at 2am and found Ye, freshly bathed,

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