

Bulgaria Marks Increase of Russian Tourists 1st Half 2011

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The inflow of **Russian tourists** into Bulgaria for the first 5 months of 2011 has increased with 23% with respect to the same period 2010.

According to official information announced Wednesday by the Bulgarian Ministry of Economy, Energy and Tourism, a total of 66,814 **Russian tourists** have visited the country, which makes 3/4 of all **Russian** visits to Bulgaria for the period.

January-May 2011 has also marked a 42% increase in the number of visa applications at the Bulgarian embassy in **Moscow** with respect to the same period last year.

According to ministerial statistics, **Russian** tourists spend on average 12 nights in Bulgaria, with half of them choosing 4- or 5-star hotels.

90% of them have come to Bulgaria by plane, and 24% are parts of families with children.

According to the Ministry, the slogan for attracting **Russian tourists** - "Memories with a Smile" - has done its job, as it has directed Russians to a well-known and safe place for their holidays.