

Switzerland, Israel top adventure tourism ranking

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Switzerland has topped an annual ranking of adventure tourism destinations by the Adventure Travel Trade Association - but if you're looking for something a little less traditional, Israel or the Slovak Republic could be the best bets.

The 3rd annual Adventure Travel Development Index (ADTI) ranked 195 countries, giving a score to each one signifying its potential for adventure tourism based on ten factors including infrastructure, safety, sustainability policies, natural resources and adventure activity resources.

Among the developed countries, Switzerland, known for decades as one of the world's top winter sports destinations, overtook Iceland to reclaim the top spot it held in 2008, with Iceland dropping from first to second place.

In a considerable shake-up of the top ten destinations, New Zealand earned third place, Canada fourth and Germany fifth, while the United Kingdom, Australia, Luxembourg, Denmark and Spain dropped out altogether.

Among developing countries, Israel overtook last year's winner the Slovak Republic to win first place, with the Adventure Travel Trade Association noting that Israel's appeal is broadening, with statistics reporting a drop in religious tourism and a rise in general interest tourism.

The Slovak Republic, in second place, was praised for its prioritization of adventure tourism, which the ADTI said mostly revolved around mountain holidays and winter sports.

There were, as always, some surprises - the US ranked a comparatively low 21st place due to poor health and humanitarian scores, while Cape Verde rocketed from 122 place in 2009 to 44th place this year on the back of more complete figures.

The study was conducted by the Adventure Travel Trade Association, the George Washington University and Vital Wave Consulting.

Top developed countries:

1. Switzerland
2. Iceland
3. New Zealand
4. Canada
5. Germany
6. Sweden
7. Ireland
8. Norway
9. Finland
10. Austria

Top developing countries

1. Israel
2. Slovak Republic
3. Chile
4. Estonia
5. Czech Republic
6. Bulgaria
7. Slovenia
8. Jordan
9. Romania
10. Latvia

View the interactive rankings map: <http://www.adventureindex.travel/2010-results-visual.htm>

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