

Ko?ice: Slovakia?s hidden gem joins the tourist trail

The Slovakian city of Ko?ice, the country's second-largest city, is set to become a must-visit weekend break destination for European travellers as new flight links from London and D?usseldorf look likely to come on stream this year.

A report on the city by hotel consultancy HVS London predicts that the hitherto unknown destination will experience growth in inbound tourism over the coming years due to its history, beauty, weather, friendly people and affordable hotel rooms.

As this year's European Capital of Culture Ko?ice has received a cash injection of ?63 million to improve its appeal to leisure tourists.

The city boasts a good supply of hotels, mainly smaller independent properties, some of which offer good value, boutique-style facilities for around ?70 a night. Over the past few years larger hotels have opened in Ko?ice including a 170-room DoubleTree by Hilton and a 166-room Hotel Yasmin, which together make up 50% of room supply.

At least two further hotels are rumoured to be opening over the next three years, adding an anticipated 190 rooms.

Said report author Veronica Waldthausen, consulting and valuation analyst with HVS London: ?Occupancy and average rates are currently relatively low in Ko?ice's hotels, although performance has shown growth since 2009 with occupancy up over 50% in 2010 and up again in 2011. RevPAR growth of around 3% was shown in 2012 and we expect further slow and steady growth for the city in 2013.?

The city of Ko?ice, which is small enough to walk through in an hour, is blessed with an intriguing mix of history, modernity and innovation. It also has a thriving culture and business centre with around 20,000 businesses including some large international companies, accounting for more than 9% of Slovakia's GDP.

?The city is an ideal weekend destination, with a good mix of restaurants, museums, hotels and fashion stores. Ko?ice should hit the radar screens of adventurous weekend travellers looking for a relatively new and untapped European destination,? added Waldthausen.

Ko?ice: A hidden Tourist Gem? Putting a Mark on the Map by Veronica Waldthausen can be downloaded at <http://www.hvs.com/article/6197/ko?ice-a-hidden-tourist-gem/?campaign=email>.

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