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**Growing Investments in Cuban Tourism (PART IV)**

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Havana, Jul 14 (Prensa Latina) Cuba's investment process in tourism covers many aspects to diversify the offer beyond sun and beach options.

That is why, the general director for development at the Cuban Ministry of Tourism (MINTUR), Jose Daniel Alonso, considers other spheres of interest.

The variety of options is broad, with the presence of the Spanish chain Meliá in the central-southern city of Cienfuegos and in neighboring Trinidad, where it will open the 350-room Meliá Trinidad Hotel, currently in the ground-breaking stage.

For its part, the Spanish group Iberostar will run the Ancon Trinidad Hotel, whose construction will start in October.

The list of real estate developments also includes the Trinidad Plaza, small hotels in heritage cities and for circuits, the boost of Viñales (since 2017 with a hotel in that city) and nature as a product in development.

The promotion of tourism in Gibara and the eastern city of Baracoa (the first village founded by the Spanish conquistadors in Cuba) is part of a big and well-designed program, consisting of large and small establishments in several

destinations to facilitate circuit tourism.

The plans in the aforementioned cities, as well as in Sancti Spiritus and Camagüey, are carried out in conjunction with prestigious companies like Meliá and Iberostar.

Alonso also referred to the beginning of operations in Cuba by the French chain Louvre Hotel.

Foreign investments in Cuban tourism will also target camping sites, a favorite option for Cuban families. Operations in this sector will involve firms from Italy and France, which are already assessing the works.

The Cuban official added theme and aquatic parks to the list of investments. In Varadero, a German group will build two of those facilities, while in Havana, studies are under way for the construction of an aquatic park.

In mid-2018, Cuban Minister of Tourism Manuel Marrero pointed out that 17 cruise companies with 25 ships operate in the country, and in the first semester of this year, that modality grew 28.6 percent.

Moreover, 70 airlines fly to Cuba from 73 major cities of the world, there are 27 joint ventures that run more than 5,000 hotel rooms, and 21 hotel managements. The plan also includes four joint ventures in real estate and golf courses.

The portfolio of investments consists of 140 projects, plus 2,152 private restaurants (known as 'paladares') and 23,185 rooms in inns, all of which function under the auspices of the MINTUR.

According to executives, those statistics show trust in Cuban tourism, in the country's security and, above all, in its people's kindness.

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