

Majorca Daily Bulletin

Thursday, May 13 2021

1.20€ · Founded 1962 · N.17525 · Passeig de Mallorca 9 A,
Palma 07011

Greek tourism minister hopeful of joining Britain's 'green list'

Athens.— Greek Tourism Minister Harry Theoharis said yesterday he was hopeful Britain would include Greece on its "green list" of quarantine-free holiday destinations when the list is reviewed at the end of the month.

Greece was kept off an initial list of just 12 countries and territories that Britain said travellers could visit from May 17 without having to quarantine on their return

home. "I am moderately optimistic that in the next review, if not our whole country, at least our islands should be on the green list," Theoharis said on Greek state TV.

Theoharis is currently on a visit to Britain, one of the three largest markets for its vital tourism sector, meeting government officials, tour operators and airlines ahead of the official start of the tourism season on May 15.

The Greek government al-

lowed organised beaches, museums, bars and restaurants to reopen from last week and wants to vaccinate the entire population of its islands by the end of June.

Greece came out of the first wave of the pandemic last year in better shape than many European countries but it has suffered heavily in recent months as a surge in cases forced it back into lockdown and put health services under severe strain.

WE'RE ALL GOING ON A SUMMER HOLIDAY



Spain's foreign affairs minister, Arancha González Laya, said yesterday that there are "good contacts" with London aimed at Spain being included on the UK's green list of safe travel destinations.

Speaking to the BBC, González Laya expressed her optimism that, with

the advance of the vaccination programme in Spain, "the British will be able to spend their holidays in Spain this summer". The most important thing, she stressed, is that this programme is accelerated; and Spain "is going in the right direction". In addition, she noted, the European Union will be lifting, proba-

bly next week, the restrictions on travellers from the UK.

With all of Spain having been excluded from the green list, the minister explained that Madrid is in regular contact with London in seeking to convince the UK government that there are various regions of the country which are safe for

travel. She identified Valencia (which has the lowest coronavirus incidence in Spain), the Canaries and the Balearics.

González Laya outlined the development of the EU's vaccination certificate, which will allow free movement of people who have been vaccinated and will facilitate entry into Spain. She

added that people who have not been vaccinated will need to present a negative PCR test.

"The United Kingdom and Spain are working very hard to ensure that all citizens are vaccinated as soon as possible and can enjoy a summer that is similar to summers of the past," said the minister, who stressed Spain's

desire to welcome British tourists. With regard to the vaccination programme, González Laya was hopeful that its good pace will mean that herd immunity in Spain will be achieved in 98 days. (Prime Minister Sánchez said a couple of days ago that herd immunity in Spain will be achieved in 100 days.)

**Spain sees foreign
tourist numbers
rebounding to 45 mln
this year from
pandemic slump**

Madrid.—Spain expects foreign tourist arrivals to reach as many as 45 million this year, over half the pre-pandemic level, its tourism minister said yesterday, inviting potential visitors to start planning their Spanish vacations.

"Spain will be ready to reopen to the world very soon," Reyes Maroto told reporters at a presentation of Spain's promotional campaign to entice visitors back this summer.

"International tourists can start planning their Spanish vacations now."

Foreign tourism to Spain - the world's second most visited country before the COVID-19 pandemic - plunged 80% last year from 83.5 million visitors in 2019 as pandemic restrictions brought leisure travel to a virtual standstill.

With vaccination rates rising across the world, tourism-dependent nations like Spain are hoping to salvage at least some of the economically vital summer season and are scrambling to define rules for safe travel.

The government had previously said it expected tourism to reach half its pre-pandemic levels this year.