Fighting Back: Mexico’s Tourism Industry Takes Action Against Sargassum

YesToMexico has created a “Sargassum Fast Facts Guide” outlining how the tourism industry in Quintana Roo has proactively attacked the issue so visitors can prepare for and enjoy the beautiful Mexican beach vacation they imagined.

Miami (PRWEB) August 28, 2019 -- A seasonal phenomenon, sargassum has had a wide-ranging impact on destinations in the United States, Caribbean and Mexico this summer. However, while reports focus on the science behind the acceleration of this issue and showing select beaches with knee-deep piles of seaweed-like algae, travelers have been left with more questions than answers. In Mexico, the tourism industry fought back and has put in place strong protocols to put tropics-bound travelers at ease whether they are traveling this month, upcoming winter travel season or already planning next year’s summer vacation.

Educating U.S. tourists and travel agents about key issues impacting travel to Mexico, YesToMexico’s “Sargassum Fast Facts Guide” outlines how the tourism industry in Quintana Roo has proactively attacked the issue so visitors can prepare for and enjoy the beautiful Mexican beach vacation they imagined.

“Mexico’s tourism industry has always been fiercely committed to making sure guests have the best experience possible,” said Tom Brussow, president, YesToMexico. “No doubt, this year’s sargassum season has been unprecedented and presented some challenges. Realizing that, the resorts and local communities quickly responded and are working together to mitigate the impact to the Mexico experience further demonstrating why Mexico is the number one international destination for U.S. travelers.”

Sargassum Fast Facts Guide:

Sargassum 101
Sargassum is a traditionally periodic occurrence that makes itself known on Mexico’s Caribbean Coast from April to October. The severity and timing of sargassum is influenced by the tides and can vary day-to-day, and destination-by-destination. All of Mexico is not impacted by sargassum. The Pacific Coast is sargassum-free, and in parts of Mexico’s Caribbean Coast, the impact varies. For example, the resorts of Cozumel and Isla Mujeres have shown small to virtually no signs of sargassum this year.

Know Before You Go
While sargassum patterns are influenced by unpredictable natural forces, that doesn’t mean travelers cannot investigate its impact before they travel. Be a Sargassum Spy: Many resort brands, including Krystal Hotel & Resorts, and Beachscape Kin Ha Villas & Suites Cancun, offer their guests 24/7 beach cams that show a live look at their beautiful beaches. This way travelers can see what the beach is like at their favorite time of day prior to booking or travel. Check with an Expert: Through the Quintana Roo Tourism Promotion Council, travel agents can sign-up to receive bi-weekly updates on the latest destination news, including photos from more than 100 miles of coastline stretching from Tulum to Cancun.

Keeping Sargassum at Arm’s Length
Some resorts have installed barrier systems to help keep sargassum off their beaches or invested in a maritime fleet to help with pick-up at sea. Examples include: In Puerto Morelos, Zoetry Paraiso de la Bonita invested in a $120,000 industrial seaweed barrier for its 1,900-foot stretch of beach, while Desire Riviera Maya Resort spent more than $96,000 to create a 918-foot-long linear barrier. Combined these barriers helped collect more than a
ton of seaweed each day.

Bahia Principe Hotels & Resorts launched an eco-friendly response plan that includes a network of boats to contain and redirect sargassum, while safely collecting the algae. The early results show a 95% reduction in sargassum at their resorts.

Now You See It, Now You Don’t
If sargassum does reach beaches, resorts have implemented extensive clean-up efforts. Manual beach pickup is taking place at some hotels and resorts 2-3 times per day to ensure their beaches are Sargassum-free, while other resorts such as the Royalton Suites Cancun Resort & Spa, Ritz-Carlton Cancun, JW Marriott Cancun Resort & Spa and Marriott Cancun Resort are leveraging special equipment to assist with quick pick-up. Hotel Xcaret México takes the pick-up efforts even a step further, using an aerial monitoring system to watch overnight accumulation of sargassum, and then at dawn staff complete collection taking the sargassum to Grupo Xcaret’s processing facility.

Planning for the Future
In July, Cancun hosted a tourism industry summit in which leaders from 13 impacted countries attended to discuss short and long-term solutions to address Sargassum including research and warning systems. In addition, government entities have also come together to help popular tourist destinations. In Tulum, the “Cleaner Beaches Program”, in collaboration with the federal, state and municipal government, have removed and disposed almost 2,000 tons of Sargassum.

Putting Sargassum to Good Use
While much is focused on sargassum collection, disposal is also important. The Sargasso Industrial Association, a collective of five private-sector companies, is turning it into biofertilizer for food crops. In addition, one local is using the sargassum in an even more unexpected way. Omar Vazquez is building sustainable homes with “sargablok”s which are created from collected sargassum.

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