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# Japan Sees Surge in Russian Tourist Arrivals

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Tokyo, Japan. **Natalie Voitovich / pexels**

More than twice as many Russian tourists have visited Japan so far this year compared to 2023, according to preliminary data from the Japan National Tourism Organization published on Thursday.

In the first nine months of 2024, nearly 64,000 Russians visited the East Asia island nation, while the same period last year saw just 27,070 visitors from Russia. The uptick likely reflects a gradual recovery to pre-pandemic levels of tourism after Japan lifted all Covid-19 travel restrictions in April 2023.

In 2019, the year before the pandemic disrupted global travel and prompted lockdowns, a record 120,000 Russian tourists visited Japan.

Overall, Japan has received almost 27 million visitors so far in 2024, with South Korean (6.5 million), Chinese (5.2 million), and Taiwanese (4.5 million) tourists topping the list.

Japan joined the United States and Europe in placing sweeping economic sanctions against Russia over its full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022.

Tokyo froze the assets of individual Russians and groups and banned the export of goods to companies in Russia's defense sector, as well as the export of construction and engineering services.

Japan and Russia are also locked in a territorial dispute surrounding the Kuril Islands, which Tokyo calls its Northern Territories and which the Soviet Union captured during World War II.

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