

Syria's Crazy Campaign to Lure Tourists

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May 28, 2014

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What civil war? The regime's Tourism Ministry thinks you'll enjoy these new beachside cafes.

Bashar al-Assad's regime has one-upped even the satirists at the *Onion*: His government has decided to launch a new push for tourism. In early May, the regime unveiled proposals to lure visitors to the Assad heartland of Lattakia, as well as 24 small and medium-sized tourism projects such as a 42-room hotel in Hama. In a country where three UNESCO World Heritage Sites -- Palmyra, Krac des Chevaliers and the Aleppo Citadel -- have suffered damage while being used for military purposes, tourism may be a tough sell. But Assad has other reasons for it beyond just keeping up appearances.

Read the full text of this article on the *New Republic* website (<http://www.newrepublic.com/article/117929/syria-launches-tourism-campaign-despite-civil-war>) . ❖

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