

2026 to Be a Year of Restructuring in Tourism

Highlighting that the competition among price-focused destinations will intensify further in the coming year, Esin Güral Argat, Vice President of the Board at Gürok Group, stated that 2026 will be less about growth and more about “breathing” and strategic “restructuring” a period for adapting to the new world order that has taken shape after the pandemic.

As the tourism season comes to an end, the sector is preparing to close a challenging year. According to the World Tourism Barometer published by the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), Turkey ranked as the world’s 4th most visited country in 2024, hosting 56.7 million international visitors. The country’s tourism revenue target for 2025 has been set at \$64 billion. However, with a slowdown in the European market, rising operational costs, and intensifying global competition, success in tourism continues to depend on overcoming tough conditions.

“Global competition will intensify in 2026”

Evaluating the 2025 tourism season, Esin Güral Argat, Vice President of the Board at Gürok Group, said:

“The year 2025 has been extremely challenging for the entire tourism industry. We are facing intense competition in the market, particularly from price-driven destinations such as Egypt. We anticipate that our competitors will focus even more aggressively on the early booking period, while data from our tour operator and airline partners indicate a shift from growth to protection strategies. This shows that the competition will be much tougher next year. Therefore, we see 2026 not as a year of growth race, but

rather as a period of ‘breathing’ and strategic ‘restructuring’ to adapt to the new post-pandemic world order.

In recent years, we have experienced Euro based price increases of up to 50%, which we know have been challenging for our main market European guests. These increases are primarily driven by global cost escalations that have pushed our operational expenses to nearly 2.5 times higher than the previous year. This reality forces the industry to strike a delicate balance between maintaining guest affordability and ensuring sustainability. The greatest challenge in 2026 will be achieving operational excellence under rising cost pressures and intensified competition, without compromising on service quality. To remain competitive, we must focus not on lowering prices but on further elevating the value and quality we deliver.”

Ali Bey Hotels & Resorts Breaks Records, JOALI Maldives Named the Best in Asia and the Indian Ocean

With over 35 years of experience in Turkey through its Ali Bey Hotels & Resorts brand, and international success through its Maldives investments, Gürok Group continues to stand out with an innovative and sustainable tourism vision.

Reflecting on the group’s strong performance, Esin Güral Argat said:

“Despite a challenging environment, Ali Bey Hotels & Resorts achieved its 2025 goals by uniting the right strategies with an uncompromising commitment to quality. Our properties home to more than 100 tennis courts and recognized as the world’s largest tennis resort welcomed 95,000 guests this year, reaching 95% occupancy between June and September. Hosting prestigious international tennis tournaments, we also maintained 75–80% occupancy during the March–April and October periods.

Meanwhile, in the Maldives, our ultra luxury properties JOALI Maldives and JOALI BEING, each located on separate islands, continue to make a global impact. Combining nature, art, and sustainability with a refined approach to luxury, JOALI Maldives was voted ‘Best Resort in Asia’ by the readers of Travel + Leisure, and for the second consecutive year, was named ‘No.1 Resort in the Indian Ocean’ by Condé Nast Traveler Readers’ Choice Awards 2025.

In addition, both JOALI Maldives and JOALI BEING were recognized at the 3rd Annual Awards 2024 organized by the Maldives Ministry of Tourism. JOALI Maldives received awards for Outstanding Contribution to Employee Welfare and Outstanding Contribution to Community Engagement, while JOALI BEING was honored for Outstanding Contribution to Environmental Sustainability a testament to the value both resorts create for their employees, community, and the planet.

The consecutive international and official recognitions of JOALI Maldives and JOALI BEING as Turkish brands strengthen Gürok Group’s sustainable and innovative tourism vision on a global scale.”