

# *Tour operators in U.S. say visits to Cuba starting to pick up following slump*

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New York, October 8 (RHC)-- Tour operators in the U.S. say they have noticed an increase in bookings to Cuba following what had been described as a drastic slump.

"We've gotten back to a more normal situation over the past two to three months. Sales have really picked up," Collin Laverty, president of Cuban Educational Travel, told the Miami Herald.

The newspaper said Cuba had become a less appealing destination after Hurricane Irma hit the island's northern coast in September 2017, the U.S. published confusing new regulations for travelers to the island, and the U.S. State Department issued a travel alert warning Americans to reconsider travel to Cuba.

James Moses, president and chief executive of Boston-based Road Scholar, said they continued to see Cuba as a safe destination. He said Cuba remains one of Road Scholar's top-tier destinations, but that after growth of more than 70 percent in 2015 and 2016, enrollment had markedly declined.

But tour operators Road Scholar and InsightCuba say they have begun to notice interest in Cuba picking up again. The tour operators say that a decrease in hotel prices is also playing a role in attracting more visitors to Cuba.

To keep the focus on the Cuba destination, the two companies said they are coming up with new offerings later this year and into 2019.

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