

The Louvre --the world's most visited museum-- reopens



The Louvre in Paris, the world's most visited museum and home to the Mona Lisa, reopened July 7, but with coronavirus restrictions in place and parts of the complex closed to visitors.

The Louvre had been closed since March 13. Its director Jean-Luc Martinez said the museum has lost 80 percent of our public, since nearly seventy-five percent of visitors were foreigners. Of the more than 10 million visitors in 2018, almost three-quarters were tourists.

Martinez said the museum will at best see 20 to 30 percent of the numbers recorded last summer -- between 4,000 and 10,000 visitors daily at the most," he said.

Among the new rules, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, visitors are now required to wear masks, there are no snacks or cloakrooms available and the public has to follow a guided path through the museum.

Positions have been marked in front of the Mona Lisa -- where tourists routinely pose for selfies -- to ensure physical distancing.

Seventy percent of the museum's public areas -- or 45,000 square metres (about 485,000 square feet) -- are now open to the public.

After the success of its blockbuster Leonardo exhibition which closed earlier this year, the Louvre said its two exhibitions scheduled for spring and then postponed would now take place in the autumn.

These are on Italian sculpture from Donatello to Michelangelo and the renaissance German master Albrecht Altdorfer.

The Louvre has upped its virtual presence during the lockdown and it is now also the most followed museum in the world on Instagram with over four million followers.

The museum official are planning a revamp of the museum ahead of 2024, when Paris hosts the Olympic Games.

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