

Hundreds of tourists in Tenerife hotel lockdown over coronavirus (Update)

25 February 2020



Credit: CC0 Public Domain

Hundreds of people were confined to a Tenerife hotel Tuesday after an Italian tourist was hospitalised in a suspected case of coronavirus, officials in Spain's Canary Islands said.

"Hundreds of hotel clients are being monitored for health reasons.. but so far, we're not talking about quarantine," a health authority spokeswoman told AFP, saying the Italian tourist "was staying at this hotel while on holiday in Tenerife".

The archipelago's health authorities said late on Monday that an Italian man had tested positive for coronavirus and was being kept in isolation while his results undergo a second analysis in Madrid as required by Spain's protocol for suspected cases of the disease.

The results are expected late on Tuesday and until then "the guests will remain in the hotel," Spanish government spokesman Maria Jesus Montero told a news conference.

"Depending on the results of the test, appropriate measures will be taken," she added.

The tourist is reportedly a doctor from Italy's northern Lombardy region where several people have died from the virus.

He and his wife, who have both been hospitalised, had been staying at the four-star H10 Costa Adeje hotel on the island's southwestern coast.

Outside the hotel, which overlooks the sea, a handful of local and national police could be seen standing around wearing masks and purple protective gloves, the entrance cordoned off by plastic tape, footage from one of the hotel guests showed.

Some guests could be seen sunbathing outside by one of its pools.

Hand sanitiser empty

"We were told to stay in our rooms however it does not seem like people are following this," a British guest at the hotel told AFP by telephone, without giving his name.

"Absolutely bizarrely the hotel canteen opened for breakfast. All the staff were wearing face masks and the bottle of hand sanitiser at the entrance was empty," said the man, who had been due to fly home on Tuesday but will now miss his flight.

Another British tourist who also refused to be identified said hotel guests had received a notice telling them to stay in their rooms.

"We regret to inform you that for health reasons, the hotel has been closed down. You must remain in your rooms until the health authorities say so," said the text in Spanish, English, French, Italian and German, a copy of which was sent to AFP.

Travel firms Tui and Jet2holidays both use the H10 Costa Adeje hotel for package holidays, with Tui having around 200 guests there.

Ashotel, the association of hoteliers on Tenerife, said around 1,000 people were at the hotel and called for calm, saying the establishment was "following all the steps laid out in the protocol".

Two confirmed cases

The scare came as hotels across the Canary Islands were packed with guests who had flown in for the traditional February carnival festivities.

Spain is the second-most visited country in the world after France and tourism is crucial for the domestic economy, accounting for around 12 percent of its gross domestic product.

Spain had so far registered two confirmed cases of coronavirus, both in foreign tourists.

The first case was that of a German man on La Gomera island in the Canaries who tested positive on January 31 followed by a British man who tested positive in Mallorca in the Balearic Islands on February 9. Both recovered.

Seven people in Italy have so far died after catching the virus, making it the hardest-hit country in Europe. In China, where the virus first appeared, the virus has killed more than 2,600 people.

© 2020 AFP

APA citation: Hundreds of tourists in Tenerife hotel lockdown over coronavirus (Update) (2020, February 25) retrieved 3 May 2021 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2020-02-hundreds-tourists-tenerife-hotel-lockdown.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.