

Tijuana tourism suffers amid violence

by UPI

TIJUANA, Mexico - Rampant violence in Tijuana has slowed tourist traffic to the Mexican town just across from the U.S. border from San Diego, it was reported Sunday. This year alone, more than 50 people have been killed in Tijuana. The Los Angeles Times reported that since 2005 cross-border visits to Tijuana are down 90 percent, according to the downtown merchants association. Local shopkeepers counter the statistics by saying recent police crackdowns in the city have made it safer than it has been in years, the newspaper reported. Additionally, they say, Tijuana is cleaner thanks to recent beautification projects. "In reality, the violence isn't targeting tourists. It's between drug traffickers, criminals and police. But the tourist doesn't know the difference," said Victor Clark Alfaro, director of Tijuana's Bi-National Center for Human Rights. Tourists who want to visit Tijuana also must deal with new rules making it more difficult getting back into the United States. Cross-border travelers, since Jan. 31, must show proof both of citizenship and identity. "Americans had 9/11; we had 1/31," said Tijuana waiter Marcos Rojas.

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