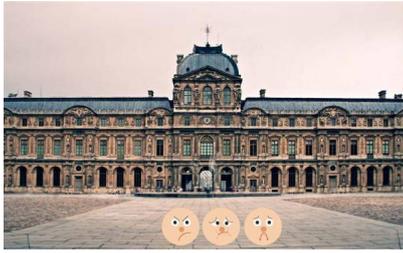


# A NUMBER OF TOURISTS NOT IMPRESSED WITH FRANCE



Amongst westerners, Paris is a popular tourist destination. In fact, it is among the top tourist destinations for the entire world. Canadians, Americans and Europeans visit the city in droves and come away impressed with their experiences. However it is not a case for everyone.

Of course, it has always been trendy amongst Americans to complain half-heartedly about the "rude" locals encountered in Paris. This is truly ironic because many tourists feel the same way about New York City. Things are changing however. According to recent studies, tourists in nations like China, India, Brazil and Russia are largely unimpressed with their trips to Paris and the French countryside. In fact, many travelers are so unimpressed that a large number state that they simply refuse to return. In fact just 39 percent for Chinese tourists and 43 percent visitors from India said they were "very satisfied" with their visits.

Since the significant number of tourists who come to France at this time are from BRIC countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China), this could mean a long-term problem for the French tourism industry. This is very alarming as a majority of tourists from China have stated that they will probably not return. Currently, tourists from emerging countries spend a significantly larger amount of money during their trips than their western counterparts. These visitors also spend a large amount of money purchasing exotic or luxury items.

One of the major areas of contention appear to be the hotel industry. Many BRIC countries tourists complain about the accommodations and other amenities available at their hotels.

The lack of shopping opportunities was another negative point mentioned by BRIC tourists. On the other hand visitors were satisfied with the museums, tourist attractions, and other cultural venues.

Why is there the wide disparity of perspective between tourists from developed Western countries and tourists from emerging and potentially very attractive source markets? There is no a single answer. Whatever the reasons, it seems to be apparent that the tourism industry in France needs to adapt or put at the risk a large portion of its inbound tourism.

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