

# CHINESE TOURISTS NOW THE BIGGEST SPENDERS IN FRANCE



Chinese tourists in the majority of European countries now spend more than Russian tourists do, especially on luxury items. It is likely they will stay at the top of the spending league for a while.

The top spenders in France used to be the Americans - flashing the "green stuff" around as if the whole of Europe was a giant cheap store. Then came the wave of new Russians, hungry for luxury goods. The richer Russians are perfect customers as the higher prices suit their image the most and bargains do not interest them much. **Nowadays, China is responsible for the greatest amount of luxury spenders in France.**

Last year, Chinese tourists spent € 158 million in shops of the tax-refunded sector according to a ranking by the industry leader Global Refund. This was 47% more than they spent the previous year and the results made Chinese the biggest spenders in this area in France. In the ranking they are followed by Russian and Japanese shoppers.

The reasons for such an increase in the spending of Chinese tourists are clear. Firstly, easier visa conditions have made travel from China a lot more pleasant. **The economic climate in China has improved, meaning there is more money to spend.** Furthermore, China has taken advantage of other countries being hit harder by the economic crisis.

France is not the only country to experience waves of Chinese tourists spending money on luxury goods. Italy has experienced similar changes and Chinese spending in Sweden, mostly on clothing, rose by 32% last year. Only Britain and Germany have other nations at the top of their spending lists, for the time being. The rate of recovery of nations from the economic crisis is not as fast as the rate of growth of the Chinese outbound tourism industry.

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