

ITALIAN TOURISTS TO EXPLORE THE WORLD MORE IN 2017



After years of hardship and decline, Italian outbound tourism and travel expenses are set to rise in 2017. At least according to the forecasts made by research centers and *italiani.coop*, which promoted a nationwide survey to discover the intentions of Italians and their preferred destinations.

The report revealed an important trend. Italians in 2017 are willing to make some sacrifice just to go on vacation. Thus, **this summer there will be a 10% increase in the amount of holidaymakers compared to the last year (from 74% to 84%).**

This is a sign of relief after years of great decline in terms of Italian outbound tourism. Now the country feels strong need to spend a period of days in peace and just relax, also allowing themselves a bit of luxury. There is an increase in requests for cruises and luxury hotels, especially in the seaside resorts. This is the type of travel that will see the greatest increase during this summer season, according to experts.

According to the survey, one out of two Italians has already booked their holidays by the end of April, or at least by the end of May. A 28% increase in natural holidays was registered, while seaside holidays have seen a jump of 9%. Thus, seaside holidays will remain the favorite type of holidays even in the summer of 2017. In contrast, major cities and cultural sites seem to attract fewer Italian tourists at the moment, with a 4% decline. However, it could also be considered “physiological” because of the turmoil on the international front.

According to the survey, there is an increase in attention towards destinations abroad. Spain and Greece are the priority countries for sea lovers. In this regard in Italy, there are excellent signals coming from Sicily and Puglia, especially from Salento. Who can afford a greater expense first thinks of exotic destinations such as the Caribbean Islands or the Maldives. The USA, meanwhile, is an evergreen destination that all can agree upon.

In addition to the traditional destinations of the US like New York, there has been a rise in alternative destinations, thanks to expansion of direct links with Italian airports. The last case is Dallas, that since May 6 last year has a direct route to Rome Fiumicino thanks to the American Airlines. The city in Texas is considered to be America’s third-largest city in terms of tourism growth. Its impressive skyline is one of the most appreciated internationally.

Dallas has been focusing on tourism heavily, investing large capital in interventions to change things in the city and to improve their hospitality. **\$165 million was spent to create or renovate the city parks and \$1.74 billion to build new hotels and tourist complexes.** But there are still some bureaucratic issues related to holidaymaking in the States, which may increase with president Trump in office. Healthcare expenditure also is not free and can easily become very expensive.

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