

Top Duty Free Spenders? Korean and Chinese Travelers

Asia Pacific travelers stretch their travel budgets by shopping at duty free stores, according to a survey commissioned by Visa. The Visa Travel Smart Survey asked 2,226 travelers from across the Asia Pacific region on their travel spending habits and found that Korean and Chinese travelers spent the most on duty free items on their last trip with an average expenditure of US\$ 358 and US\$ 333 respectively. This was US\$ 100 more than the regional average.

Brian McGrory, Regional Head, Debit Products, Visa, said: “Duty free shopping can offer great savings on international brands as well as products that are exclusive to duty free shoppers so it is no surprise that the Chinese and Koreans, renowned brand lovers in the region, are snapping up duty free bargains.”

Reinforcing the appeal of duty free savings, 43 percent of all respondents said they shopped at a duty free store during their last overseas trip. Travelers from Japan (73 percent), Korea (71 percent) and China (49 percent) were the region’s most frequent duty free shoppers while Korean and Chinese travelers also made it to the biggest spender list.

When it comes to paying for duty free purchases, credit cards were the most popular form of payment for Australians and New Zealanders (59 percent respectively), followed by the Koreans (56 percent) who are the region’s biggest spenders.

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McGrory said: “Payment cards are accepted at duty free shops across the region and are a great way to help travelers overcome the problems of currency exchange during a cash transaction. With duty free shops located at airports and at downtown city centers, they are a great way for travelers to purchase gifts and save some money at the same time.”

During their last trip abroad, leisure travelers said they picked up a higher average tab (US\$ 219) at duty free shops compared with business travelers (US\$ 179). When asked where they made their duty free purchases, leisure travelers said they did most of their duty free shopping at the airport (84 percent) while business travelers preferred downtown duty free shops (67 percent).

Younger travelers were the most likely to stretch their travel budget with duty free purchases – 47 percent of 18 to 29 year old travelers said they bought duty free on their last trip while 42 percent of 40 years and above said they made such purchases.

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