

EUROPE: NUMBER OF CRUISE PASSENGERS DOUBLED



The European cruise market continued to grow in 2012, with 6.14 million cruises booked by Europeans last year, according to figures provided by the Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA).

The number of European cruise passengers has more than doubled in eight years, as it was 2.83 million in 2004. It reached 3.12 million in 2005 and then 5.45 million in 2010 and for the first time crossed the milestone of 6 million in 2011.

Over the past five years, the European cruise market thus grew at an average of 8%, emphasized the CLIA statement. As in previous years, four out of five Europeans chose to take a cruise in Europe last year.

The Mediterranean remains the most popular destination. The French clientele increased by 9%, with 481,000 passengers, against 441,000 in 2011, and is still the fifth largest in Europe. **The first market is by far the British with 1.7 million cruise trips, an unchanged figure from 2011.**

Following in second position are the Germans with 1.55 million cruise passengers, which is an increase of 11%.

But with the economic crisis, 2012 was marked by the collapse of the Spanish clientele (-18% or 576,000 cruise passengers, against 700,000 in 2011), and to a lesser extent Italy (-9% to 835,000, against 900,000 in 2011). Italy remains the third European market and Spain fourth.

The most notable trend was the growing success of cold water cruises in Northern Europe, with a 10% jump in attendance in 2012, at 1.33 million cruise passengers.

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