

# ITALY IS A POPULAR SHOPPING TOURISM DESTINATION



Shopping tourism, especially in Italy, has become one of the main drivers of tourist flows, especially international tourists. Trips motivated by shopping have been widely recognized by the World Tourism Organization, which has welcomed among its members also “Value Retail”, one of the big players in the European outlet sector.

Italy is at the forefront as a shopping destination. **Thanks to the power of “Made in Italy” as a recognized brand of high quality products and the presence of a globally recognized brand, the country has a great appeal to the shopping-oriented tourists.**

According to data from Global Blue, which monitors the performance of Tax Free shopping in the world, Italy, from January to October 2013, recorded a sales increase of 11 percent, with an increase in average spending of 2 percent, average expenditure has reached EUR 713. Most of the money is spent on buying clothes and everything to do with the fashion segment, which won 76 percent of the pie. 14 per cent of the share went to jewelry.

Regarding nationality, the Russians are the top spenders on Italian territory, with a 27 percent share, followed by the Chinese with 21 percent and the Americans with 6 percent. The most significant increase in recorded sales was by the Ukrainian market, which grew by 48 percent, followed by China, with a 23 percent rise and Russia with 17 percent. But the highest receipt is due to visitors from Hong Kong who spent on average over EUR 1,000 in Italy, followed by the Chinese with EUR 903 and the Americans with EUR 817.

**Milan remains firmly at the top of the list of the most popular cities for shopping.** Milan has won a 34 percent share and clearly stands out above other places in the rankings. Second place went to Rome, with a 19 percent share and third position was taken by Florence, with 9 percent. Close behind was Venice (6 percent) and lastly Verona with 1 percent.

The latter city is an interesting case; from January to October 2013 Verona recorded an increase in tax-free sales of 21 per cent, a clear signal of a strong increase in non-EU tourism in the city, especially for the Russian market, which shows an increase of 56 percent in purchases.

Strong increases were recorded also for Milan, with a 9 percent rise, Rome, 7 percent as in Florence, and Venice with 5 percent.

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