

CHINESE TOURISM SUPERPOWER: 97 MILLION OUTBOUND TOURISTS



A recent report revealed that in 2013 China had the highest number of outbound tourists, and the country was also considered to be the highest overseas spender.

According to the China National Tourism Administration, 2013 saw 97 million people travelling outside China compared to the 83 million in 2012 and it is expected this year there is a good chance that **the number of outbound tourists from China will cross the 100 million mark.**

The Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Tourist Research Center also stated in the report that since 2012, Chinese tourists have maintained the position of leader buyers in the world. With more than USD 102 billion spent in markets overseas, China did not only see almost an 40 percent growth since 2011 in overseas spending, but they also managed to surpass US and German tourists as the world's leading overseas spenders.

The report also stated that Asian and European countries received the highest number of Chinese tourists, which made up for almost 75 percent of tourism. The director of the Tourist Research Center, Song Rui stated that despite the total overseas spending figures for 2013 are yet to be confirmed, we can expect substantial growth in overseas spending by Chinese tourists this year.

The report also said that in contrast to the USD 2,440 spent per person by US tourists in 2011, according to the US Commerce Department Report, Chinese tourists on average spent USD 7,107 per person while visiting US in 2011.

The significant increase in spending by Chinese tourists has forced service providers in most countries to reshape their entire business model to suit Chinese tourists. Hilton Worldwide and Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide are amongst the first ones who have already started to adapt to these changes. According to an announcement released by Hilton's Hotels Worldwide, all hotels will serve Chinese food and as an additional "Hilton Huanying" service will provide traditional Chinese Tea Pot and Tea Pouches in rooms from August. Starwood's Hotels also released an announcement that 19 of their hotels already have started to provide chopsticks with meals.

There also have been many leading hotels in China who have started to localize their brand. For example, in 2012 the Grand Mercure Hotel was renamed by Accor to Mei Jue and the brand Hualuxe Hotels & Resorts was also created by the InterContinental Hotel Group for the local Chinese customers.

One of the directors of The World Tourism Cities Federation or WTCF, Wei Xiao'an also stated that Chinese Tourists should pay respect to the customs and traditions of the country they are visiting in and should behave accordingly.

Tourism within China has also grown over the past year. **The country hosted 3.2 billion tourists in 2013, according to the Tourist Research Center report, beating 2012's mark by 300**

million. According to the report from the Tourism Research Center, China has not only become the country with the largest number of outbound tourists, but the tourism in China has also increased by 300 million from 2012 to 3.2 billion in 2013.

Amongst all the destinations in China, the province of Sanya, Hainan was the most popular amongst tourists.

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