

FRENCH CRUISE INDUSTRY: NUMBER OF PASSENGERS INCREASED BY 12%



French association of cruise lines reported an increase of 12% in the number of passengers in 2009. Most of the trips took place in the Mediterranean.

The Association of French Cruise Lines (AFCC) announced the latest statistics about the French cruise industry. **Compared to the previous year, in 2009 the association recorded an increase in the number of cruise passengers of 12%** - in total there were 347,000 French tourists going on cruise holiday. Out of them 233,000 opted for cruise vacation in the Mediterranean and 47,000 in the Caribbean, reported Tourmag.fr. Cruise lines offering river cruises reported that they had 165,000 customers from France.

AFCC commented that the growth rate of 12% corresponds with the overall trend in the European market. Currently, the French cruise market is on the fifth place with respect to its size behind the United Kingdom, Germany (the two make up over one million customers), Italy and Spain, and represents 7% of the whole European market.

According to AFCC the most positive trend recorded in the last year is the increasing number of partnerships with travel agencies. "It seems cruising is not seen as a monolithic product anymore," said François Weill, the chairman of the AFCC.

The association unveiled recently its new website where it lists specialized travel agents providing information about the cruise tours that the customers may choose. Currently, 150 "cruise expert" agencies are posted on the website. "By the end of 2010 we plan to have 500 of the agents on our web and a thousand in late 2011 to meet the increasing demand of cruise passengers," said Weill.

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<https://www.tourism-review.com/france-cruising-more-popular-among-domestic-tourists-news2138>