

TOURISTS PREFER SHOPPING TO SIGHTSEEING



Nowadays tourists prefer shopping to going sightseeing. According to the 2006 study by the Travel Industry Association leisure travelers prefer shopping (53 percent) to sightseeing (48 percent). "Travelers have always been interested in shopping... But these days' people have more disposable income and are traveling more frequently and more adventurously. As a result, they are shopping in foreign countries more than they used to." explains Douglas Amrine, publisher of DK Eyewitness, a travel guide series.

A tourist can go shopping e.g. in Rome in the street of Via del Governo Vecchio. There are plenty of boutiques in this narrow cobblestone street. They offer various stuff ranging from clothing for both women and men to feminine dresses with bows and ruffles.

According to experts, New York City still remains a highly popular destination for upscale shoppers. There is the famous Fifth Avenue but also less-frequented Meatpacking District. Tourists can also find that many specialized shops that offer a trendy selection of designer clothing and accessories.

Another popular shopping destination is Hong Kong. Winnie So, editor of the Hong Kong-based Little Cream Book, a series of luxury travel books, claims that a customer can get there watches such as Patek Philippe, Cartier or Rolex at 20 percent to 30 percent off the retail price. There are no luxury taxes on watches here, so the prices are already lower," says Ms. Winnie So. "You can negotiate a discount. If you go with a regular client of the store, you can get as much as 50 percent off."

Chinese tourists are a very important source of income for retailers. These days they travel a lot and the trend is going to continue. According to the China National Tourism Administration the number of Chinese traveling overseas grew up to 29million last year. The fact is that Chinese tourists spend twice as much when traveling abroad than they do when at home.

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