

CHINESE TOURISTS SPEND MORE IN GERMANY



Chinese tourists in Germany spend on average 513 euros per day in Munich, which is more than the Arab visitors (367 euros), according to a recent survey by the Bavarian Trade Association. Visitors from China do not look for luxury goods only, but also cover medium-sized shops and department stores.

The Bavarian Trade Association examined the purchasing behavior of the Chinese tourists in Munich for the first time and included only 153 Chinese visitors. The results however correspond to the experience of the local sellers, according to the association spokesman Bern Ohlmann.

Food, clothing and cosmetics as well as shoes, watches and jewelry are on top of the visitors' shopping lists. At the same time, the survey shows that Chinese tourists in Germany cannot be encouraged to buy more only by attractive shop windows. They usually know in advance what they want and which shops exactly they want to visit. **Their most important source of information during travel preparations is no longer the classic travel guide, but the Internet, according to Ohlmann.**

A good, possibly multi-lingual website, which so far has not been offered by any company, could be of crucial importance for in-house trade. Especially since Chinese visitors are particularly concerned about problems of communication. Shop operators, who have recognized the problem, now help guests from all over the world with special shopping advisors. These advisors act as intermediaries between the salesperson and customers from abroad.

The Frankfurt airport, for example, has been offering such free service to Chinese tourists since 2012. Since that year, nine employees, who are at the airport, have already served thousands of Chinese tourists in Germany. In addition to shopping advice, they also help with VAT refunds, customs issues, and other things. Guided shopping tours for tourists are also organized by tour organizers.

However, tourism is a sensitive industry. It often reacts directly to political developments and global or regional crises. Terrorist attacks in European metropolises such as Paris and Berlin, as well as stricter visas for Chinese tourists, have been the main reason for the decline of tourists in Europe. This was reported in a study conducted by consultancy company Bain & Company.

In addition, business with global shoppers is quickly reaching its limits anyway. "It is really only felt in the centres of big cities," says Ohlmann. In less central districts, or small and medium-sized towns, the shopkeepers have to come up with something else in order to survive in the long-term.

According to the trading expert Serge Hoffman, luxury good suppliers should not be worried. He says that online trade will continue to account for no more than 20 to 30 percent of the market's total trade. With the exception of a few product groups such as books or music. Mainly due to the fact that the shopping experience, including advice, cannot be completely replaced. **This is why store shops will continue to be important for large luxury goods manufacturers.**

"These stores serve primarily as brand ambassadors. They transmit the luxury experience,"

Hoffmann says. After all, customers cannot convince themselves of leather and silk goods' quality themselves when purchasing online.

Date: 2017-03-27

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