

ITALY: RELIGIOUS TOURISM ON THE RISE



It is estimated that religious tourism worldwide is worth more than 18 billion euros. According to recent data, there are 300 to 330 million religious tourists around the world. Italy is one of the main destinations of the world pilgrim tourism flow.

Recent data by WTO will be among the main topics discussed at the International Religious Tourism Conference in Rome from June 21 to 23. The event will be held under the patronage of the National Office for Pastoral Care of Leisure, Tourism and Sports and the University of Tor Vergata. Themed conferences, workshops, meetings between journalists, seminars and much more are expected.

In Italy, the figures show that religious tourism offers about 1,500 shrines, 30,000 churches, 700 diocesan museums, as well as a large number of monasteries and convents.

According to a research conducted by Isnart (National Institute of Tourism Research) religious tourism in Italy attracts more than 5.6 million visitors per year. Of these, 3.3 million are foreign tourists and 2.3 million domestic tourists.

Foreign customers represent approximately 60% of the segment. 45.3% of them come from Europe, while 14.9% from non-EU countries.

The study also shows that 41.4% of religious tourists are aged between 30 and 50 years. 44.4% rely on trip organization by intermediaries, tour operators and travel agencies. 32.7% prefer travelling with a partner, while 20% choose an organized tour. 19.7% enjoy travelling with a group of friends, 13.3% with their family and 9.8% alone.

Speaking about monuments, the St. Peter's Basilica is among the 25 most visited places in the world. But there are other destinations that stand out in the world. For example, Fatima, Santiago de Compostela, Lourdes, Czestochowa, Medjugorje, Caravaca, but also Jerusalem in the Holy Land or Guadalupe in Mexico.

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