

CHINESE TOURISTS INVADE GREECE AND INVEST



Chinese tourists are currently “invading” Greece in big numbers. Last year, 150,000 Chinese travelers visited the country. Usually they travel in groups, but more and more individual travelers are also arriving to the country world known for rich history.

Most visitors from the Far East stay in Greece for one or two nights at most. Nevertheless, their importance for the local hotel industry and the whole Greek tourism is undeniable.

In a local hotel in Athens, Chinese visitors represent a quarter of all guests. This amount is on the rise, despite some minor issues with the guests. These issues are connected to meals mainly, as they prefer food from their own country. Hoteliers are trying to adapt to their demands and are offering Chinese food. Many Chinese restaurants are also opening in Athens.

The main target group from China are young visitors. “It’s easier for younger people to book flights and hotels, as they know how to do it online. So, it is convenient for them to pay a visit to Europe,” a Chinese tourist in Athens said.

Other than actually visiting the country, Chinese tourists are also greatly boosting the Greek property market. This was confirmed by Lan Xiao Cheng, representative of Silk Road Travel, a travel company for Chinese tourists.

Many Chinese people are willing to invest in Greece. They buy properties, renovate them and then rent them out. **Reportedly more than a thousand families have invested necessary funds to obtain the so called Golden Visa.** This visa is available to those, who invest at least 250,000 euros in Greece. This visa is in fact a five-year residence permit.

The Chinese are boosting the Greek economy. This, however, is perhaps only the beginning of a possible big tourist boom in the future. In September, direct flights from Beijing to Athens are expected to launch. Thus, if last year 150,000 thousand Chinese visited Greece, more will arrive, this year and in the years to come.

Date: 2017-07-31

Article link:

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