

# SUMMER TOURISM IN ITALY IS BOOMING



Italian summer tourism has shown positive numbers. Tourism Minister of Italy, Dario Franceschini, has announced a 3.2% increase in domestic tourism. Ninety million visitors at bathing establishments were registered in the past three months. Seaside resorts saw a 16.7% increase in attendance, while boroughs and museums (+12.5%)

also did well.

It was a record summer for tourism in Italy. There was an overall increase of 3.2% in the number of visitors, 16% increase in seaside resort attendances and a 12.5% increase in borough and museum visitors.

These figures confirm that Italy has received large flows of vacationers both internally and externally this summer. The figures for September are promising too.

**The official figures confirm and consolidate the positive trend recorded in the first months of the year and predict a good 2017 for the industry.**

“Summer tourism in Italy reveals successful trends and first positive signs regarding the season-adjustment policies are arriving. There are significant increases in arrivals from abroad,” said the Tourism Minister. “Sustainable tourism is also doing well, with a success of the Year of the Villages after that of the Year of the Paths. Thus said, 2017 is about to become a record year for one of the strategic sectors of the national economy, which needs to accompany and support its growth.”

## **Seaside Resorts and Museum Boom**

In June, July and August, bathing establishments recorded 90 million presences. This is a 16% increase compared to 75.6 million in 2016. There was also an increase of 5% in terms of foreign tourists over the same period last year as well as a generalized increase of visits in all coastal regions. Emilia Romagna registered a 25% increase, while Puglia and Sicily saw a 23% and 22% increase, respectively.

Between June and September, hotels and other accommodation facilities recorded 48.3 million arrivals and 208.7 attendances. This is an increase of 2% compared with 2016. Meanwhile, Airbnb recorded 3 million arrivals and 15 million presences between June and August, with a 20% increase year on year.

The increase in summer tourism is not supported by foreign visitors only, but also by the domestic ones. In the summer months, there were 35 million Italians on the move. This is 3.2% more compared to 2016.

In addition to seaside resorts, the positive trend this summer also affected mountains, art cities and rural tourism, with over 7 million overnight stays in farmhouses. This is an 8% increase compared to the 2016

summer season.

It was a great summer also for museums, with a growth rate double that recorded during the year thanks to the performance recorded in most tourist regions.

### **Towards a Record 2017**

The summer season marks the success of the Italian tourism sector recorded in the first half of the year (53 million arrivals and over 160 million overnight stays). This is an increase of 4.6% and 6%, respectively, compared to the first half of 2016. There has also been an increase of 4.6% in average foreign tourist expenditure in Italy in the first half of the year.

Moreover, a 6.8% increase of aircraft passengers (99.6 million) and 3% increase of inbound and outgoing aircrafts (887.201) in January – July 2017 was registered. Train transport also saw growing numbers, with 3% more Trenitalia passengers (24 million passengers) and an increase of 1.8% in January–May of light vehicle transit per kilometer (24 million/km).

### **The Slow Travel Phenomenon**

In the year of the Villages there is a 74% increase of presence in rural areas. This growth is sustained by the rise of sustainable tourism. There are various forms of sustainable tourism, such as the phenomenon of trips on historic trains along railway lines no longer used by local public transport service.

While in 2016 there were 59 thousand passengers on the “timeless tracks”, in 2017 it will reach 70,000 passengers. These are partly Italian tourists and about 40% of foreigners looking for a green, silent, enchanting experience. These people want to discover beautiful Italian provinces, towns or villages. This is a new phenomenon and it must be pointed out that it has been having a steady increase of 20% over the last three years.

### **The Capital Confirming the Trend**

Summer tourism in the capital also increased with an average growth of 3%. This was announced by the Lazio Tourism Bilateral Institute during the inauguration of a new tourist information point in Rome. In June, July and August, Rome registered 3.2 million arrivals and 7.8 million attendances at Roman hotels and accommodation facilities.

A major increase was recorded in the luxury sector. **Arrivals in 5-star hotels reported a 4.7% growth in the first seven months of the year.** With respect to the air transport, long–distance destinations to and from Fiumicino Airport have been on the rise. From January to late August there was an increase of 6.1% in the non–EU segment with long–distance routes. The best performances were in North America, which saw an increase in traffic volume of 8.2% due to increases in routes to/from New York, Atlanta, Chicago and the new connection with Dallas.

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