

JAPANESE TOURISTS FLOOD EUROPEAN FOOTBALL MATCHES



Japanese tourists like to travel for sports, especially football. Therefore, Italy is one of their favorite destinations. A Sports Events 365 survey has revealed that Japanese tourists travel to stadiums for championship matches mostly to Spain, Italy and the UK.

The study is based on the purchase of tickets for sporting events during the European football season between August 1, 2016 and June 30, 2017 on the Sports Events 365 website and other ticket buying platforms collaborating with the company.

The English Premier League, Italian Serie A and Spanish La Liga are the most popular championships among Japanese tourists. They combine leisure holiday and football matches of exceptional teams.

The most favorite clubs for Japanese tourists are Barcelona, Bayern Munich, Inter Milan, Roma, Real Madrid, Arsenal, Chelsea, Borussia Dortmund and Paris Saint Germain. The strong demand for Inter and Borussia Dortmund tickets is also explained by the presence of Japanese players playing in both teams – Yuto Nagatomo for Inter and Shinji Kagawa in Dortmund.

There are also great efforts in terms of marketing that have been made in the last three years by some European football clubs in Japan.

Last season, as in the previous year, European football became the most popular sport among Japanese sports tourists. 70% of the tickets ordered on Sports Events 365 in Japan covered football matches.

"The growth of Japanese sports tourism to Europe and the USA is becoming a factor that cannot be ignored," says Sefi Donner, founder and CEO of Sports Events 365.

"This trend is strongly driven by the growing presence of Japanese players in European football teams and even American baseball teams," Donner added.

But Japanese tourists aren't the only ones in Asia who are increasingly interested in European football. **Chinese fans have also started visiting Europe for this purpose.** One of the reasons is quite simple: many clubs in top European leagues are being purchased by Chinese businessmen. Most notable teams are Inter and Milan in Italy, who have launched extensive promotional programs in the country. But Chinese entrepreneurs have also invested in the likes of Manchester City or Atletico Madrid.

Thus said, the Asian market is one of enormous potential that is being discovered by all sectors, including tourism. It is only a matter of time when it will be exploited to its maximum.

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