

TOURIST DESTINATIONS: CITIES WITH THE BIGGEST VISITOR NUMBERS



Tourists are flooding the big cities worldwide. However, only two European metropolises made it into the top ten list of the most visited cities. Asia's major cities are experiencing an unprecedented inflow of tourists – especially Hong Kong, with around 27.9 million visitors last year. Thus, the Chinese city claim its title as the most visited city in the world.

The British market research institute Euromonitor has identified which cities attracted the most tourists in 2017. Four of the top five were Asian cities: **Bangkok** in second place (22.5 million visitors), **Singapore** in fourth (17.6 million) and **Macau** in fifth (17.3 million). In the top ten are also **Kuala Lumpur**, **Dubai** and **Shenzhen**.

The creators of the published “Top 100 City Destinations of 2018” explain the great interest in travelling to these cities with the rising thirst for travel of the Chinese population. For example, more than 50% of visitors of Hong Kong are from the Chinese mainland, or at least around 14 million people.

Another interesting thing is the development of Delhi as a tourist destination. The Indian metropolis was in 13th place with visitor numbers reaching 10.1 million and recorded growth of 36.4% compared to the year before. The city, known for its smog, is trying to position itself as “Green Delhi”, according to Euromonitor. The focus is set on the city's green spaces, organic markets and eco-friendly hotels.

Sustainable tourism is also the challenge in other cities. Wouter Geerts, author of the study, says that it is no longer enough to attract only the masses. “The tourism offices of the cities will have the challenge of attracting the right visitors in the future.”

European cities have done poorly in the ranking of 100 most visited cities in the world. In the top ten are only **London** (3rd) and **Paris** (6th). **Rome** finished 15th, **Amsterdam** 23rd and **Vienna** 34th.

“Concerns about over-tourism, as well as urban reservations about companies like Airbnb are slowing down growth and the visitor numbers,” says Geerts. Many European tourism authorities recognize that it is not numbers that matter, but the added value of tourism for the local economy.

For the analysis, the market research institute Euromonitor examined visitor numbers of more than 600 cities from 2017. International arrivals were counted – people who travelled from abroad to a certain city. Be it for a private or professional reason.

Top Ten Most Visited Cities

rank	city	Million arrivals (2017)	Change to 2016 [%]
1	Hong Kong	27.9	+5
2	Bangkok	22.5	+8.5
3	London	19.8	+4

4	Singapore	17.6	+6.1
5	Macau	17.3	+10.4
6	Paris	15.8	+13.7
7	Dubai	15.8	+6.2
8	New York City	13.1	+3.6
9	Kuala Lumpur	12.8	+4.5
10	Shenzhen	12.1	+3.1

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