

LAST YEAR FRENCH TRAVELERS WENT ON HOLIDAY IN RECORD NUMBERS



Despite the SNCF and Air France strikes, the World Cup and the yellow vest movement, 66% of French people went on holiday at least once in 2018. 35.5 million, that's two-thirds of the French population, have gone on holiday within France or abroad.

This record high departure rate of French travelers was boosted by the increase in short stays. In 2018, 38% of the French interviewed said **they had left for short stays (between one and three consecutive nights), i.e. 20.6 million people**. This is an increase by 5 points compared to 2017.

"It's the easiest holiday to prepare, where the budget remains under control," said Guy Raffour, president of Raffour Interactif, a consulting company. Benoît Crespin, CEO of Opodo France, added: "This can be seen in the success of city breaks in European cities such as Lisbon, Porto and Rome. Trips were often organized in France too, which made it possible to get away from the train and plane by using your personal car... thus avoiding strikes."

The outbound tourism numbers reveal that among the French travelers, 55% of them declare having booked part or all of their stay online. This is 2 points more than in 2017. "Consumers are looking for real-time information and online operators are working to make the search and booking process simpler and more transparent," says Guy Raffour. Moreover, 79% of the outbound tourists said they had booked their stay online. Always with this in mind to find the best rates... and the best experiences.

The experience lived on the spot and the emotions aroused by the trip are two key elements of the success of the French holidays. The proof: the mobile Internet accompanies 58% of French-speaking passengers during their stay thanks to geolocalised applications, tourist office guides or "good addresses" platforms. "The French do not want to exceed the budget set with a travel agency, for instance, to keep a budget dedicated to activities on site," notes Guy Raffour.

The outbound tourism industry is likely to grow this year as well, as 53% of French people who went on holiday in 2018 said that going on a trip is a "vital" need in 2019 as well. **In other words, more than one in two French people who traveled are willing to sacrifice other expenses in order to be able to afford moments of freedom and a break from their daily lives.** "We achieved a record 55% last year, the level remains very high again this year," says Guy Raffour. "Travelling helps and supports the daily lives of the French, especially given the social and economic context."

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