

TOURIST TAX IN ITALY: SOME PAY IT AND OTHERS DON'T



Six hundred million euros. This is the sum collected through the tourist tax that over a thousand of Italian municipalities are charging those who come to visit the city from foreign countries. Over 27% of the amount ends up in the coffers of the capital. Rome ranks first with earnings as high as 130 million euros, followed by Milan, Venice, and Florence.

The ranking of cities is also reflected in the regional standings, as Lazio leads with 135 million euros collected, followed by Veneto and Lombardy.

However, the tax is not extended nationally throughout the entire country and this is because the Italian government has never adopted the framework regulation that should have established its general principles. The result is a fragmented and uneven situation regarding the tourist tax. If in Rome a family of three pays, for two days of stay, 24 euros. In the same conditions in Venice, they pay over 17 euros.

However, there are issues connected to this tax. Platforms like Airbnb have the obligation to collect the tourist tax only in theory but in practice, they don't do it or do it too little. This is why Fedarberghi, the Italian hospitality industry association, has launched an attack at the renting platform

The president of the association, Bernabò Bocca, referred to Airbnb as to the "Far West" of the industry. According to data, Airbnb only fulfills its obligations in 18 out of 997 municipalities across the country. For example, Liguria has registered a lot of irregularities in this sense, with at least 5 thousand illegal tourist apartments present in the region out of a total of 18 thousand registered.

However, Airbnb didn't wait long to make a response. In a statement released to the media, the company claimed to be "the only digital platform to have finalized residence tax collection agreements in almost all cities of art. An innovative way that was implemented with local politicians and administrators".

Airbnb leaders then proceeded to ignite the controversy by accusing the tourism association of carrying out a "rearguard battle in defense of associations that in some cases are accused of embezzlement and offending the local authorities that on the contrary have shown far-sightedness, to the point that today the protocols drawn up with Airbnb are a model for all other hotel platforms".

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