

FRENCH TOURISTS WENT WILD ON THEIR SUMMER VACATIONS



The French really did go "wild" during their last summer vacations, to the great benefit of destination France. As a result of the deconfinement and the increased desire to go out, and of savings accumulated due to restricted consumption, their tourist spending by bank card in France not only exceeded last year's level but also that of 2019.

According to Insee, which delivered last week its first data for the summer season in the context of a general review of the French economy, **the amount of transactions by credit card has increased by 23% in accommodation, both in July and August.** As for the restaurant industry, long at a standstill or forced to reduced activity, their level increased by more than 15% in July compared to the same month of 2019, the increase is brought below 10% in August.

Health Pass

The National Institute of Statistics, which does not specify the amount of expenditure in euros, highlights the impact of the implementation of the health pass. The latter seems to have also weighed on leisure consumption, as operators have pointed out: the increase in spending exceeded 10% in July, but only came close to this mark the following month. While the agency does not address the issue, the weather may also have affected activity for both leisure sites and restaurants during the summer vacations.

However, the impression of over-consumption of tourism this summer refers to another subject: the French have been very keen on France as a destination, in the context of global health crisis and multiple persistent restrictions on travel abroad.

The number of overnight stays for July reached 123 million, compared to 112 million in July 2019 and 117 million last year, according to Insee. Unlike July 2020, domestic tourism primarily helped the hotels, campgrounds and other paid accommodations, exceeding the level of two years ago with a total of 60.7 million overnight stays, 9.2 million more than in July 2019. Non-market accommodation (second homes, family or friends' homes...), meanwhile, returned to its July 2019 level.

Record Overnight Stays since July 2011

The data on summer vacations also confirm that the hotel business was boosted in July by the increase in occupancy of the French, while that of foreigners was in retreat. Globally, occupancy was at 81% of its July 2019 level, 16 points higher than in July 2020. With a total of 14.8 million, the number of overnight stays recorded for resident tourists is the highest since July 2011, the institute points out.

In contrast, foreign visitors fell by 57% compared to July 2019, with a total of 4.1 million overnight stays. The increase compared to July 2020 is due only to certain European customers of proximity (excluding British), the disaffection of foreign customers from afar (Americans, Asians ...) having particularly affected the Ile-de-France and Paris. While waiting for the full results of the last summer tourist season in November. The data confirms that the capital has not benefited, unlike the

rest of France, from the cushioning effect of a domestic consumption surplus.

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