

AIRBNB LEAVES CHINA - NOT ONLY BECAUSE OF COVID



Airbnb has decided to suspend its rental accommodation offering in China due to repeated confinements since early 2020, according to a source close to the matter. The room, apartment and house booking platform entered the market in 2016 to woo Chinese tourists traveling abroad and also develop a local accommodation offering.

More than 25 million people have since visited these homes, but this local activity has always been expensive and complex to manage, according to the source. And Covid-19 hasn't helped. **These stays in China have accounted for only about 1% of the group's revenue in recent years.** Unlike other major economies, China has a strict "zero-Covid" policy of isolating outbreaks to stop the spread of the virus.

Hard Lockdown

Shanghai has thus been undergoing a harsh form of lockdown since April, with a ban on leaving homes in much of the city, depriving many people of adequate access to medical care and food. Airbnb declined to comment on the information. The San Francisco-based company is expected to suspend its on-site offerings and "Experiences" (on-site activities) this summer, to focus on Chinese travelers.

According to the World Tourism Organization, 150 million Chinese people made a trip abroad in 2018, up from 4.5 million in 2000. China became the world's largest country in terms of international tourists in 2012. Airbnb is counting on the good recovery of this successful market, especially in neighboring Asian countries, with the gradual reopening of borders thanks to vaccines.

Successful Year

Globally, the company has had a record start to the year, and expects to see sustained demand through the end of the year in North America, Europe, the Middle East and Africa, and Latin America. **In the first three months of the year, the company recorded 102 million room nights** and booked "experiences," more than any other quarter to date.

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