

TOURISM IN ROME: MORE ARRIVALS BUT SHORTER STAYS



According to data from Ente Bilaterale Turismo del Lazio, between March and April, the number of tourists who stayed in the Italian capital was 4.3% higher than in 2019. More than 2 million and 300 thousand people visited Rome in just two months, double the number compared to 2022, for over 5,400,000 overnight stays. Overnight stays by Italians (+5.8% compared to 2019) are growing, but also, to a lesser extent, by foreigners (+0.2%).

According to Gianluca Roscioli, the president of Federalsburg Roma e Lazio, since lifting restrictions in the spring of 2022, Europeans and Americans have returned in large numbers. This year, Asians have also started returning. Despite competition from non-hotel tourism, such as short-term rentals on platforms like Airbnb, the occupancy rate is expected to exceed 85% at the beginning of June. In Rome alone, Airbnb has nearly 25,000 listings, with over 67% being entire apartments and concentrated in certain neighborhoods.

Many experts in the industry are questioning whether the current figures result from structural growth or simply a post-pandemic recovery, as many attendees who previously canceled have returned this year. Nonetheless, enthusiasm for the phenomenon currently overshadows concerns about the potential risks of uncontrolled growth.

According to Alessandro Onorato, the Councilors for Tourism, Sport, and Major Events in Rome, the city has reached a new attendance record. Bookings have increased by 11.48% compared to 2019 and by 68% compared to 2022, following a successful Easter weekend where hotel room occupancy hit 90%. Rome is investing heavily in major events such as Bruce Springsteen concerts, the Giro d'Italia, the Ryder Cup, and the Jubilee and pursuing the dream of hosting Expo 2030. Each of these events leads to a surge in overnight stays, according to Federalbergh. The city council is confident that this strategy will continue to attract visitors. Furthermore, Rome is becoming more appealing to luxury tourism, with plans to open over ten new 5-star hotels by 2026, filling a gap with cities such as Milan. This expansion will help improve the city's hotel offerings and further boost its tourism industry, as explained by Roscioli.

However, the figures for the beginning of 2023 in Rome also tell us something else: the "arrivals" are growing much faster than the total number of overnight stays: in short, the number of tourists who choose a short stay - for one or two nights is increasing. Rapid tourism crowds the capital center's streets and fills the bars and hotels, but that does not create those "slower" and more sustainable rhythms.

Date: 2023-06-13

Article link: <https://www.tourism-review.com/tourism-in-rome-more-guests-than-in-2019-news13284>