

THE CHINESE DOMESTIC TOURISM MARKET IS ACCELERATING



domestic tourism revenue.

The summer tourism season that just passed provided an excellent opportunity to observe the growing popularity of cultural tourism. The China Tourism Academy's "2023 Summer Tourism Market Monitoring Report" indicates that, based on comprehensive estimates, the number of domestic tourists during this summer (June-August) reached 1.839 billion, generating 1.21 trillion yuan in

Compared to the same period in 2019, tourism's popularity has significantly increased this summer, and many scenic spots have received a record number of tourists.

According to the China Tourism Academy's report, **the summer market is gradually opening up and expanding.** The industrial boom spread from upstream industries (such as transportation, accommodation, and catering) to downstream (like shopping and entertainment). Accommodation facilities in various places have increased. The cultural tourism, shopping, and entertainment sectors, which have been slow in the first half of the year, have benefited from the positive market sentiment. For instance, concerts in Haikou have generated hundreds of millions of yuan in revenue. The number of tourists is now spreading from the main source cities to many remote destinations. The proportion of tourist inflows in North China, Northeast China, Southwest China, and parts of Inner Mongolia, Tibet, and Xinjiang generally exceeded that of 2019.

Cultural Tourism Market Continues to Rise

The cultural tourism market has rapidly recovered since the beginning of this year, with self-driving tours becoming a popular way of travel. This is a reflection of the overall rebound in the popularity of cultural tourism. Various tourism platforms have released data showing that the summer cultural tourism market is recovering strongly. According to relevant data, domestic tourism consumption orders (including hotels and B&Bs, attraction tickets, transportation, etc.) have seen significant growth compared to 2019. The "2023 Summer Culture and Tourism Data Report" indicates that its users have made over 400 million travel check-ins and searched for travel-related content more than 500 million times, a year-on-year increase of 147%.

Multiple Business Formats Accelerate Recovery

According to the China Tourism Academy's data, summer travel is unprecedented this year. There is an increase in tourists taking longer trips and spending more time outdoors. Popular summer vacation destinations include areas with higher latitudes or altitudes, such as Harbin, Changchun, Urumqi, and Kunming. These places also attract a high proportion of foreign tourists, with some typical destinations in Tibet, Qinghai, and Xinjiang provinces having more than 75% foreign tourists.

During the summer, tourist spots in urban areas offering rich cultural heritage and high convenience are more popular among travelers. Concerts and music festivals have become significant factors in drawing young people to travel, and various festivals have become new engines for stimulating tourism consumption. Lu Mengxi, who heads the Meituan Cultural and Tourism Research Institute, believes that the performance economy is a specific form of integrating cultural and tourism consumption. The performance market's continued activity will help attract more tourists, boosting

the region's accommodation, transportation, and catering sectors. This, in turn, is expected to lead to business growth.

China's cultural tourism consumption is increasing. According to relevant platform data, the search volume for "night tour" has increased by about 80% since summer compared to last year. Life service categories such as catering, leisure, and entertainment experience a peak in consumption at 7 p.m.

Family-oriented travel is an important aspect of China's summer vacations as well. According to relevant platform data, hotel bookings related to family travel increased by 150% in July compared to the same period in 2019. The number of group purchase orders for children's meals has also increased by nearly 400% year-on-year, and the number of catering establishments offering children's meal services has increased by more than 155% year-on-year. The search volume for "parent-child photos" has also increased by 45% month-on-month.

New Supply Stimulates New Vitality

This year, travelers have more vacation options than ever before. Recently, during the opening ceremony of the 2023 China (Alshan) Tourism Conference hosted by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 19 ski resorts were awarded national-level ski resort licenses. In recent years, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and the State Sports General Administration have been working on expanding the supply of high-quality tourism products, building high-level ski sports facilities, and providing top-notch tourism and vacation services.

In the summer, more and more people go on leisure vacations. There is now a wide variety of leisure and vacation products available. Over the past few years, national-level tourist resorts have been evaluated consistently. These developments cater to people's diverse and personalized leisure and vacation needs and provide a new impetus for the tourism market's growth.

With culture and tourism integration, the market continually expands. Experts have noticed an increase in cultural tourism demand. To keep up with this trend, businesses supplying cultural tourism products have created new products, formats, and scenarios. They have launched high-quality products and services that cater to tourists' preferences, generating stronger momentum for developing the cultural tourism market.

In Rongjiang County, part of Qiandongnan Miao and Dong Autonomous Prefecture in Guizhou Province, China, the "Guizhou Village Supermarket" has become a popular tourist destination. Visitors can watch traditional games, admire folk customs, and taste delicious food while experiencing a new form of consumption. The supermarket has gained significant attention on the popular social media platform Douyin, with over 17,000 related topics and more than 10 billion views. Netizens have also liked and shared the content nearly 200 million and 8 million times, respectively. As a result, catering orders in Rongjiang County have increased by 113% month-on-month and 327% year-on-year in Douyin.

The popularity of "Guizhou Village Supermarket" shows **the current trend of tourists wanting to experience authentic local culture and rural events during the recent upgrade of cultural tourism consumption.** According to local government statistics, the "Village Supermarket" attracted over 420,000 tourists within a month, including 303,900 local and 116,100 foreign tourists. In May of this year, Rongjiang County welcomed 1.0737 million tourists, a 39.73% increase from the previous year. It generated comprehensive tourism revenue of 1.241 billion yuan, a 52.08% increase from the prior year.

The Chinese Ministry of Culture and Tourism plans to continue enriching the supply of cultural and tourism products, promote the adaptation of cultural and tourism supply and demand, and release the vitality of cultural and tourism consumption.

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