

MASSES OF INTERNATIONAL TOURISTS DAMAGE JULIET'S STATUE IN VERONA



Verona, a popular tourist destination in northern Italy, is facing damage caused by international tourists' excessive touching of the Juliet statue. This is not the first time such damage has been reported in the city.

Verona's popularity among foreign tourists is due to its proximity to Lake Garda. The city's historic center, including the famous arena, hosts numerous events, attracting large crowds. **William Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet" also draws significant visitors to Verona**, contributing to the overcrowding and damage to the city's cultural landmarks.

The "Casa di Giulietta" in Verona, Italy, is a 14th-century house transformed into a tourist attraction due to its association with Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet." The balcony, reminiscent of the famous scene in the play, was probably added later. However, it has become a popular pilgrimage site for almost 1.5 million international tourists annually.

The bronze statue of Juliet in the courtyard of the estate is also a popular attraction, with visitors often touching her on the breast for good luck in love. However, this tradition has caused damage to the statue, with a small hole recently discovered on Juliet's right breast. While currently only a few millimeters in size, the damage is likely to spread, indicating the statue's expected service life of just under 50 years may be shorter.

The original statue by sculptor Nereo Costantini is in the Museum of the Juliet House, erected in 1972. However, it was also damaged due to visitor touch, leading to its replacement with a copy in 2014. Despite the new statue's expected service life of almost 50 years, signs of damage have already appeared after only ten years.

Italy's tourism industry significantly contributes to the country's economy, providing employment opportunities for many. However, many international tourists have also led to environmental degradation and the loss of natural and cultural heritage. As a result, several regions are considering shifting away from mass tourism and exploring alternative sustainable tourism models to preserve their resources and identity.

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