

SWISS TOURISM SET FOR FIRST SUMMER DECLINE SINCE THE PANDEMIC



The summer of 2026 may bring fewer overnight stays to Switzerland, breaking a post-pandemic rise. A projection from BAK Economics suggests about 24.9 million overnight stays that season. That figure falls short by some 255,000 nights when measured against 2025. Put another way, it reflects a dip of less than one percent. This shift would mark the first downturn since Swiss

tourism rebounded.

BAK Economics points to the Iran conflict as the main driver behind the current trends. Because air routes were shut at first, global flight activity faced immediate setbacks. As fuel costs stayed elevated, interest in extended journeys dropped off sharply. Travelers arriving from faraway regions felt these effects most strongly.

Long Haul Markets Suffer the Most

A drop of 3.7 percent - equaling 246,000 fewer overnight stays - is expected in long-haul trips to Switzerland, according to analysts. Hit hardest? The Asian segment, where declines in India and Southeast Asia stand out sharply. **Routes passing through Middle Eastern airports face limitations, which, along with heavy reliance on imported energy from the Persian Gulf, worsen conditions for travelers from those areas.**

Not far off, Swiss tourism leaders began raising concerns. Lately, Jungfrau Railways - alongside Titlis Bergbahnen - flagged lower earnings, pointing straight to fewer Asian travelers as the core reason.

Among global markets, China shows stronger resilience. With flights operating directly and avoiding disruptions in the Middle East, Chinese travel demand should hold steady. In contrast, modest gains may appear across the U.S., though at a slower pace. Stability in Asia offsets some weakness elsewhere.

Domestic and European Travelers Help Stability

Expect modest gains from local travel trends. A half-percent rise in visitors from Switzerland should add roughly 58,000 lodging nights. Rising flight costs, along with worldwide instability, seem behind this move toward nearby spots. Travelers now lean toward shorter trips, possibly due to these pressures.

Not expected to grow, European destinations may dip just a bit. That softness traces back - according to BAK Economics - to summer 2025, when an unusual lineup of high-profile happenings drove crowds abroad.

Switzerland Still Leads with the Alps

Even with a predicted economic slowdown, Swiss spots claim nearly every spot in the top ten of the latest Alpine destinations. First place and most others go to Switzerland, showing its strong lead in travel appeal across the mountain region.

Even so, the report points out where progress could happen. **Especially smaller places in Switzerland fall short - notably because visitors tend to stay fewer nights on average.**

Despite global tensions affecting visitor flows, Switzerland's mountain resorts continue drawing locals in notable numbers. Energy market swings pose risks, yet internal spending helps steady performance across alpine regions. External pressures reveal fragility, though homegrown interest supports stability amid regional challenges.

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