

CHINESE TOURISTS EXPLORE EUROPE AHEAD OF THE GOLDEN WEEK



Chinese travelers are leaving for Europe sooner this year, filling up planes and hotels in the days leading to the start of the National Day holiday. According to the booking data from Trip.com covering departures between September 25 and October 7, 2026, 62% of the total number of travel dates fall between September 25 and 30 and 38% - between October 1 and 7.

The trend shows that Chinese tourists prefer to depart for Europe before the start of the Golden Week. Specifically, 28,413 departures for Europe were booked for the segment between September 25 and 30 and 17,634 - for October 1-7. In terms of daily averages, **on September 25, a record number of 9,434 travel dates were booked, more than twice as many as on October 1 (4,663).**

The overall average for the former period stands at 3,542 flight bookings per day and 2,519 for the latter, representing roughly a 41% difference between the two periods.

Those who left for Europe during the first half of October 2025 spent substantially more time on the road as the average trip length increased from 14.8 days in 2025 to 16.1 days this year (+8.8%). As a result, airfares rose by more than 40% YoY.

Italy Leads European Growth

Out of the five largest European markets tracked by Trip.com (Italy, Spain, France, Germany, United Kingdom), Italian hotels have seen the strongest demand increase among Chinese tourists, with bookings rising by a triple-digit percentage compared to 2025. Spain and France followed closely with another triple-digit growth, and Germany and the UK showed a double-digit increase.

Notably, classic tourist destinations remain popular with Chinese travelers. Specifically, hotel bookings in Rome, Florence, Venice, Milan, and Naples increased by 205%, 145%, 139%, 137%, and 139%, respectively. Other popular areas include Sorrento (+166%), Verona (+149%), Cortina d'Ampezzo (+412%), Palermo (+147%), Catania (+289%), Taormina (+43%), and Bolzano (+257%). Demand was up across various regions, including Lazio, Tuscany, Lombardy, Campania, Veneto, Sicily, and Trentino-Alto Adige/Südtirol.

France Sees Broad Recovery Beyond Paris

Meanwhile, Chinese tourists are returning to France in droves, with hotel bookings in the country up by 132% year-on-year. **Paris is the most popular destination, but the 15 most-booked areas outside of it had an average increase of 123%.** Chamonix-Mont-Blanc, Lyon, Strasbourg, Marseille, Bordeaux, and Aix-en-Provence saw the strongest demand increases, at 255.6%, 190%, 172.5%, 163.1%, 148.4%, and 129%, respectively. Nice, the second most popular city in France, grew by 105% in terms of the number of bookings.

It should be noted that the numbers represent the change in the volume of bookings and not the absolute value. In any case, it appears that Chinese tourists tend to arrive in Europe earlier than in previous years and that Italy, in particular, benefits the most from the trend.

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