

CHINESE TOURISTS DRIVE TOURISM IN ASIA DURING 2026 NATIONAL DAY HOLIDAY



attracted media attention.

Chinese tourists showed greater enthusiasm for overseas travel during the 2026 National Day holiday. Destinations extended from neighboring Asian countries such as South Korea, Thailand, and Malaysia to more distant locations in Europe, Australia, and New Zealand. Chinese tourists are showing more interest in diverse itineraries, extended stays, and multi-destination travel, which has

The popularity of these destinations has brought in revenue for local tourism, hotel, and retail industries, which are enticing Chinese tourists with discounts and other incentives.

South Korea Leads as Top Destination

South Korea was the preferred choice of Chinese tourists who want to celebrate National Day abroad. According to South Korea's Seoul Economic Daily, **20.1% of Chinese tourists surveyed intended to visit South Korea, compared to 6.6% who planned to go to Singapore.** 54% of Chinese tourists polled wanted to go somewhere overseas for the 2026 National Day holiday, compared to 35% in 2025.

Korean department stores, duty-free shops, and convenience stores are offering discounts and payment incentives to Chinese tourists. Retailers expected increased consumption from Chinese tourists compared to the previous year. New World Department Store saw spending by Chinese tourists increase 66% compared to the previous week, while overall spending by foreign visitors only grew 12.5%.

Thailand Sees Sharp Rise in Chinese Arrivals

Thai tourism is benefiting from the increased appetite of Chinese tourists to go overseas. Thailand's Nation Daily reported that 522,500 foreign tourists visited Thailand between September 27 and October 3, an 8.24% increase from the previous month. 133,900 of the visitors were Chinese tourists, an increase of 41.98% from the previous month.

There was already high demand before the National Day holiday. Thailand's Tourism Authority used the period from September 25 to October 7, which coincided with the Mid-Autumn Festival as well as the 2026 National Day holiday, to attract visitors. Tourism officials expected around 250,000 Chinese tourists to visit during this period, which would be a 24% increase from the same period in 2025. This would generate 11.5 billion baht in tourism revenue, 37% more than the same period in 2025.

Malaysia Benefits from Peak-Season Demand

Malaysian tourism is also seeing benefits from the increased interest of Chinese tourists in traveling overseas. According to Malaysia's Star News, the hotel occupancy rate in Penang and Sabah is expected to exceed 80% due to the National Day holiday. These rates are higher than other parts of

the country and have been influenced by the surge in Chinese tourists. Malaysia's National Day holiday is an important peak season for tourism.

Longer Trips and Distant Horizons Gain Traction

In addition to China's neighboring countries, Chinese tourists are considering more diverse and longer-haul destinations. Asia Travel Weekly reported that Chinese tourists were departing earlier and staying longer in their chosen destinations. According to travel agency data, bookings for multi-destination travel increased by 84% during National Day.

Demand for long-haul travel also increased, **with travelers showing more interest in far-off destinations such as Europe and Australia.** There were also increases in flight bookings for popular overseas destinations such as Jeju in South Korea, Cebu in the Philippines, and Phuket in Thailand.

Broader Economic Ripple Effects

Industry analysts note the importance of Chinese tourists to the economies of the countries they visit. In addition to spurring domestic tourism, their spending helps airlines, hotel groups, and restaurants. During the National Day holiday in 2026, Chinese tourists' spending patterns continued to influence the travel market.

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