

# TOURISM IN ITALY: SUMMER SEASON SHOULD BRING 1.5% MORE VISITORS



Tourism in Italy is thriving, as the first five months of 2024 saw a 3.8% increase in stays at accommodation facilities. The summer forecasts are promising, with an expected 216 million tourists staying at official accommodation facilities between June and August, marking a 1.5% increase compared to last summer. These findings are from a survey conducted by the Centro Studi Turistici of Florence for Assoturismo Confesercenti, which involved 1,512 accommodation entrepreneurs in Italy.

In addition, a resolution promoting tourism in Italy aimed at discovering Italian roots has been submitted to Parliament.

## Foreign Tourism in Italy: Excellent Forecasts for 2024

The upcoming summer season is expected to see an increase in foreign tourists, while domestic demand is anticipated to remain relatively stable. Foreign stays are projected to reach 105 million, marking a 2.5% increase, **while the domestic market will experience a 0.5% rise, totaling over 110.9 million estimated stays.** The proportion of Italian tourists is expected to decrease further, estimated at 51.4% compared to 48.6% from foreign demand. In 2023, these figures were 51.8% and 48.2%, respectively.

Regarding foreign tourism in Italy, solid demand is confirmed from traditional markets such as Germany, France, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Poland, Austria, Belgium, the UK, and Brazil. The US market also increases, while stability is reported for the Canadian and Scandinavian markets.

However, a slight decline is observed in requests from China, Japan, India, and Spain.

City and art centers are expected to see the highest growth, with a 2% increase, followed by seaside resorts (+1.4%), lakes and spa towns (both +1.1%), and mountain destinations (+0.4%). Variations are also expected across different regions of the country, with slightly higher estimates for the Northwest and South/Islands regions at +1.9% and +2%, respectively. The estimated variation for the Central regions is +1.3% and +1.1% for the Northeast.

## The Impact of Climate Change on Tourism in Italy

Undoubtedly, potential weather developments, increasingly influenced by climate change, are factors that affect travelers' choices. However, the tourism industry has shown remarkable resilience. 24% of entrepreneurs have reported adapting to these changes, with higher demand for air conditioning, an interest in off-peak travel, and flexible booking options to accommodate guests' needs during heatwaves, flood risks, extreme weather events, or fires.

Vittorio Messina, president of Assoturismo Confesercenti, commended the industry's resilience, stating that "tourism once again confirms itself as one of the most resilient economic sectors in the country." He also emphasized the importance of the ministry's new approach to international promotion and support policies for the sector. Messina stressed the need to continue these policies, prioritizing restarting investments to update offerings in line with the demands and preferences of

an increasingly international and sustainability-conscious tourism industry, also increasingly influenced by climate change.

### **Italea: Tourism to Discover Italian Roots**

During a recent joint session of the Foreign Affairs and Productive Activities Committees, Fabio Porta, an MP elected abroad for the Democratic Party, presented a resolution with colleagues Di Sanzo, Carè, and Quartapelle.

The ITALEA project, a brainchild of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MAECI), holds immense promise. It aims to engage the vast community of Italians and their descendants worldwide. The project's primary objective is to promote experiential tourism, focusing on the country's inland areas and small villages, offering a refreshing alternative to mass tourism in large cities. This innovative approach is set to redefine the tourism landscape in Italy, inspiring a new wave of sustainable and culturally immersive travel experiences.

Porta emphasized the project's significant potential in response to suggestions and proposals from the system representing Italians abroad in recent years. However, he also highlighted substantial issues within the MAECI project, particularly:

The inefficiency and incompetence of regional coordinators, as well as their lack of knowledge about the realities of Italians living abroad;

#### **The lack of effective communication with associations and representation of Italians abroad;**

The lack of coordination between national and regional authorities and the simultaneous coordination of small-town mayors appointed by MAECI.

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