

SENIOR TOURISM TRENDS

REVOLUTIONIZE THE MARKET IN FRANCE



The Alliance France Tourisme (AFT) has released a comprehensive report on senior tourism. This study analyzes tourism trends among individuals aged 60 and older, constituting 27.7% of the French population, or approximately 19 million people.

The report emphasizes the changes in seniors' travel habits in the context of post-COVID recovery and rising inflation, as well as their specific needs and preferences.

Senior Tourism: Changing Travel Habits

Despite recent challenges, **70% of French seniors have traveled in the past two years, averaging 6.2 yearly trips.** These journeys are divided between 58% short and 43% long trips. France remains the top destination, with 55% short and 43% long trips.

However, the study reveals significant changes in seniors' travel habits: 33% travel less often, and 20% have stopped traveling altogether. This decline is primarily attributed to budgetary constraints due to inflation (44%), health issues (31%), and a lack of motivation or desire to travel.

Despite these challenges, the average annual budget that seniors allocate for holidays is €2,230, which is higher than the budgets of younger age groups. 18- 34-year-olds allocate €1,776, and those aged 35-59 allocate €2,090.

The study highlights a growing preference for stays in France (47%) and nearby locations (26%) compared to the period before COVID. Additionally, 30% of senior travelers are now seeking flexible booking options.

Specific Expectations and Travel Plans

Senior travelers have well-defined criteria for choosing their travel destinations. They favor:

- Accessibility (86%)
- Ease of getting around on site (89%)
- The overall budget for the stay (85%)
- On-site security (84%)
- Health care travel insurance (77%)

Despite facing challenges, 63% of seniors intend to travel in the next five years, depending on their health and financial situation. The study indicates that 70% of seniors who consider themselves in good health plan to travel, compared to only 45% of those with more health concerns.

For their next trips, the most considered destinations are:

- Metropolitan France: 77%
- Abroad (short haul): 64%
- Overseas (long haul): 21%

A notable observation is that many seniors prefer to travel during off-peak seasons. Currently, 72% of seniors travel outside of school holiday periods, and 95% plan to do so in the future. The primary motivations for this choice are to avoid overcrowding at popular sites and to take advantage of lower prices.

Regarding activities, cultural and discovery visits remain the most popular, accounting for 63% of preferences. Additionally, there is a growing interest in spa and relaxation activities, with future projections indicating an increase to 16%, up from the current 7%.

Adapting the Tourist Offer to Senior Travelers

The study highlights the importance of adapting the tourist offer to the specific needs of seniors, particularly for those with health constraints. One service stands out in particular: implementing adapted mobility to facilitate access to destinations and travel on-site.

Experts have formulated 10 proposals to develop senior tourism, addressing seniors' specific expectations and stimulating this vital segment of the French tourist market.

- Integrate senior tourism into the French national tourism strategy.
- Training tourism stakeholders in the needs of seniors.
- Develop an all-season tourist offer to encourage off-season travel.
- Promote gastronomy, wine tourism, and agritourism offers.
- Develop SPA and thalassotherapy.
- Adapt mobility to the needs of seniors.
- Improve the accessibility of tourist sites and services.
- Create intergenerational family offerings.
- Develop digital tools adapted to seniors for reservations.
- Expand the "Seniors on Vacation" program.

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