



Canada ranks second on Chinese travellers' bucket list

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Chinese millennials pushing the boundaries on edgy international travel

TORONTO - July 17: The seventh annual Hotels.com Chinese International Travel Monitor has revealed that Chinese millennials born after 1990 are pushing the boundaries of international travel, increasing their travel expenditure in the past year by a staggering 80 per cent to fund social media-influenced trips full of edgy experiences, high tech accommodation, exotic delicacies and taboo ticket-items.

Star-struck by global pop-culture, film and television (62 per cent) are now the main sources of inspiration for Chinese millennial travellers, playing a key role in attracting them away from Asian destinations, and to more far flung parts of the world for their thrills and frills.

Travel brag moments and selfies were a huge part of the Chinese millennial travel experience in 2017, with 63 per cent using the reverse camera angle to boost likes and build their social brand. While millennials were at the helm of social media influence and trends, the report found that no generation was free from its undeniable draw, with a third of the older generation reporting their travel decisions and behavior were influenced by their digitally-connected children.

Hunger for The Great White North

With the number of Chinese travellers to Canada increasing by 67 per cent in the past 12 months, Canada jumped up two positions to the 12th most popular destination. While Chinese travellers still feel the most love in Asia as they collect passport stamps from across the globe, Canada is now considered the eighth most welcoming country in the world, and third outside of Asia (an increase from tenth position in the world and fifth outside of Asia last year).

Halfway through the 2018 Canada-China Tourism Year, Canada is now the second most preferred country that Chinese travellers plan to visit for the first time in the next 12 months, an increase from 3rd place last year. Apart from natural beauty and landscapes, Chinese travellers to Canada are interested in experiencing music festivals and quirky or modern art.

Travelling on the edge

Keen to let their hair down and inhibitions go, over a third of Chinese travellers were drawn towards the indulgent atmosphere of party playgrounds like Bangkok, Amsterdam and Las Vegas. Meanwhile spontaneous travel-savvy millennials hunting international festivals are leading a new wave of off-peak travel, with a shorter planning period than in the past.

Chinese millennials may have wholeheartedly embraced technology and edgy experiences, but they are surprisingly superstitious, much more so than their elders, with 40 per cent of them not wanting a mirror opposite the bed, compared with 35 per cent for the generation of their parents. They also wouldn't like to stay at the end of a corridor and are more reluctant to stay on a 4th or 7th floor.

Despite this, they don't avoid activities traditionally frowned upon, and the desire for the new extends to taboo areas, with almost a third of Chinese travellers intending to try legal marijuana when visiting Canada.

Ever-edgier trips weren't complete without unique accommodation. Staying in atypical accommodation was important to over half of travellers, who opted for out-of-the-box and independent hotels with local flavor (55 per cent) over star ratings. Another 33 per cent booked boutique hotels, 23 per cent eco-friendly hotels and 21 per cent hotels with cutting edge technology.

Keen to get down with authentic experiences, Chinese travellers are putting their money where their mouth is when it comes to spending choice – tasting exotic local delicacies (69 per cent) and scouring the streets for authentic local items (43 per cent) over shopping for luxury items (38 per cent).

Hedonists give tips to hoteliers

Chinese travellers might be ready to take on the world, but international destinations are not

always ready for them and there are areas for improvement. The ability to QR code scan via WeChat and acceptance of mobile phone payment were particular points for development for Chinese travellers. Meanwhile booking and reservation methods were not up-to-scratch for a third of travellers and local transport arrangements along with Mandarin speaking guides and hotel staff were also areas for improvement.

Johan Svanstrom, President of the Hotels.com brand, comments: “Every globe-trotter likes to feel welcome in a new country – it’s no secret we all crave human connection which is especially true when we’re in a new environment. We know from the CITM report Chinese travellers feel comfortable and most welcome in destinations when shop assistants speak Mandarin, Chinese mobile wallet is accepted, and there is signage they can understand.

“Accommodation providers can get excited about the new wave of edgy and energetic Chinese traveller, tapping into this lucrative market by catering to their ever-curious travel desires. It’s all fun and freedom for the future of the Chinese traveller, and Hotels.com can’t wait to come along for the ride!”

Top ten destinations Chinese travellers are excited to visit for the first time in the next 12 months:

RANKING IN 2018	DESTINATION	INCIDENCE 2018	YOY DIFFERENCE
1	Australia	19%	+3%
2	Canada	18%	+2%
3	France	14%	-4%
3	New Zealand	14%	+4%
5	USA	12%	-6%
6	Maldives	10%	-1%
7	Germany	9%	-3%
7	Singapore	9%	-1%
7	Japan	9%	- 1%
10	Korea	8%	+1%

Ends

For full report, please visit www.citmhotels.com.

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Notes to Editors

This is the seventh edition of the Hotels.com™ Chinese International Travel Monitor (CITM), which takes a comprehensive look at the impact on global travel by mainland Chinese travellers.

Hotels.com engaged Ipsos, a world leader in market research, to conduct interviews during May 2018 with 3,047 Chinese residents, aged 18-58 years, who had traveled overseas in the past 12 months. A computer-assisted web interviewing technology was used for the different-tiered cities.

Chinese cities are classified into different tiers based on the populations, economic size and political ranking. Tier 1 includes cities such as Beijing and Shanghai, Tier 2 provincial capitals such as Chengdu, Tier 3 medium sized cities such as Zhuhai and Tier 4 smaller sized cities. In this survey 51 per cent of participants lived in Tier 1 cities, 33 per cent in Tier 2 cities and 16 per cent in Tier 3.

The travellers were asked about their spending patterns, travel preferences, booking methods, accommodation choices and future plans, along with many other aspects of their travel.

When analyzing their responses, researchers divided travellers into four age categories, those born after 1960, 1970, 1980 and 1990, to provide further insight into choices and preferences of different generations. Those born after 1980 and 1990 are referred to as millennials throughout the report.

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