

PRESS

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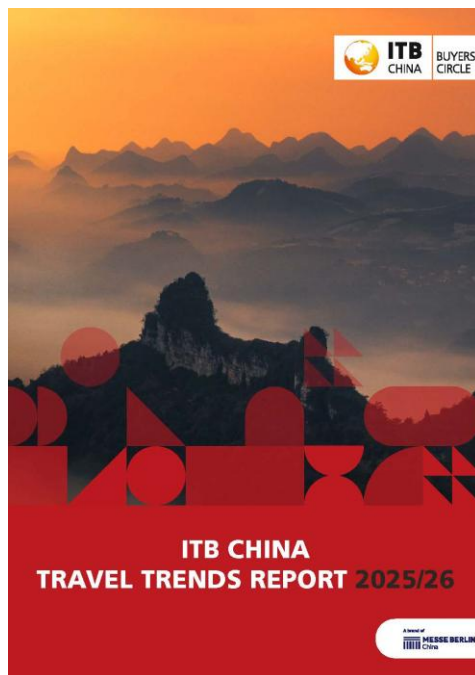


August 4, 2025

ITB China Travel Trends Report 2025/26 Launch: Diversification, Experience Upgrades & Technology are Reshaping Chinese Outbound and Inbound Travel

The ITB China Travel Trends Report 2025/26 has been officially released by ITB China in partnership with two leading data authorities —Tourism Economics and Trip.com Group.

The report examines structural shifts and evolving trends across three core areas of the China-related travel ecosystem: outbound travel, meetings, incentives & events (MICE), and inbound travel to China. Combining robust data insights with expert industry commentary, the report maps the next phase of growth and opportunity emerging across the Chinese travel landscape.



[Click to download the full report](#)

Tourism Economics, an Oxford Economics company, provides trusted industry research and forecasting to more than 500 travel businesses and destinations worldwide. Its projections are widely used in strategy, investment, and policy analysis. **Trip.com Group**, a leading global one-stop travel service provider, contributes deep transaction-level intelligence and consumer demand signals from its extensive outbound and inbound travel platforms.

Drawing on these data strengths, a quantitative survey of **1,400 ITB China Buyer Circle members**, and **in-depth interviews with senior industry stakeholders**, the report provides a thorough analysis of the future of travel in China, **helping global travel professionals adapt to a rapidly changing market.**

Lydia Li, Deputy General Manager of Messe Berlin China, said: “With this annual trends report, we aim to provide **actionable insights for global partners and industry professionals interested in the Chinese travel market.** Our goal is to help them better understand Chinese travel demand and industry dynamics, **identify opportunities, stay in step with market shifts, and make informed business decisions.**”

Outbound Travel: Two Core Segments Are Expanding — Is Generational Divergence Ahead?

Trip.com Group data show that travelers born in the 1980s and 1990s accounted for **67% of China’s outbound segment in 2024**, and their influence is expected to deepen. But another powerful wave is emerging: by the **end of 2025, more than 100 million “active seniors”** are expected to participate in travel, with the senior travel market projected to **exceed RMB 1 trillion (approx. USD 140 billion).**

Is the very definition of China’s “core outbound segment” shifting? Will young digital explorers and high-potential senior travelers create two distinctly different outbound maps? How should travel brands adapt product design, service packaging, accessibility, and marketing language to serve both ends of this widening demographic barbell?

The very definition of China’s “core outbound segment” appears to be shifting. Young, tech-savvy adventurers and experience-seeking senior travelers may soon define two divergent paths in outbound travel. This raises the question of how travel brands would need to adapt their products, services, accessibility, and marketing language to effectively serve both ends of this widening demographic spectrum.

High Spend + Strong Preference: Personalization and Non-Traditional Destinations Are Reshaping Demand

Chinese travelers are moving beyond “checklist sightseeing” toward emotionally resonant, lifestyle-driven, and culturally grounded travel. According to the ITB China Buyer Survey, **82%**

of respondents already offer customized destination programs. Yet, structured group formats remain relevant: **48% of Chinese travel agents still sell seat-in or small-group destination tours.**

When the desire for freedom meets real-world constraints — such as time, language, visas, and cost —identifying the inflection point becomes crucial. The innovation of the hybrid model that ultimately succeeds will rest with those who can navigate these challenges effectively.

Tourism Economics' analysis shows that **Chinese outbound travelers spent more per night in 2024 than travelers from any other major source market.** Which traveler segments are willing to pay a premium for deeper, non-traditional destination experiences? And how can suppliers scale emotionally rich travel offerings without compromising authenticity?

Global Expansion of Chinese Enterprises Is Fueling MICE Demand — Bleisure Emerges as a Growth Engine

In the ITB China Buyer Survey, **83% of respondents identified “business + leisure” (bleisure) as a key growth opportunity.** This signals a shift in corporate travel priorities: companies are looking beyond pure meeting logistics toward integrated experience value for delegates, teams, and clients. As organizations place greater weight on employee well-being, engagement, and brand storytelling, the growth engine for MICE may be shifting from cost management to value creation.

What do Chinese corporate clients now expect from destinations? Better connectivity? Deeper cultural immersion? Flexible options for leisure extensions? The full report explores these questions in detail, analyzing relevant data, industry verticals, and the key drivers behind destination choices.

Technology & Policy Are Unlocking New Momentum for Higher-Quality Growth

More than **half of surveyed ITB China buyer circle members report using AI tools** in current operations—most commonly for product recommendations, customer service applications, and market or data analysis. AI is now impacting every link in the travel value chain, from personalization to dynamic pricing to service automation.

How can travel companies balance AI-driven efficiency with human-centered experiences? As visa easing, digital payments, and rebuilding of air connectivity lower friction across borders, what structural changes—product redesign, segmented revenue models, full-journey data integration—will be required to convert infrastructure and technology readiness into sustained, high-quality growth?

Inbound Recovery: China's Attractiveness to International Travelers Is Rising

Inbound travel to China is entering a **new phase of expansion**. Tourism Economics projects China's share of global inbound overnights will continue to rise as **visa facilitation improves, air capacity rebuilds, and cities expand product depth and service readiness**. At the traveler level, behavior is shifting: demand for FIT (free independent travelers) is strengthening; social media is increasingly influential in trip planning; immersive, lifestyle-led, and culturally authentic experiences are gaining ground over traditional landmark "checklist" touring; and **non-traditional destinations** across China are attracting more attention.

Questions arise for destinations, DMCs, and product developers: how should marketing, distribution, and on-the-ground experience design evolve to match this changing demand mix? Should providers continue to prioritize legacy source markets, or move earlier to cultivate fast-emerging ones? In the next wave of international source-market competition, who will spot the inflection first—and win the traveler relationship?

Download the Report

The *ITB China Travel Trends Report 2025/26* is an annual industry intelligence resource that goes beyond topline data. It explores the forces reshaping demand, supply, product strategy, channel behavior, and policy impacts across China-related travel. For travel leaders seeking signals, opportunities, and context to guide forward planning, this year's edition offers evidence, interpretation, and actionable direction.

[Download the full report here](#)

About ITB China

ITB China 2026 will take place from 26 to 28 May in the Shanghai World Expo Exhibition & Convention Center. ITB China is the B2B exclusive travel trade show focusing on the Chinese travel market, bringing together hand-selected top buyers with industry professionals from all over the world. The show provides various networking events and a unique state-of-the-art matchmaking system to maximize business opportunities. The ITB China Conference takes place in parallel with the show and is co-organized by the leading conference organizer TravelDaily.

About ITB Global Brand Family

For more than 50 years the name ITB has stood worldwide for the travel industry knowledge 365 days a year, networking and trendsetting events - in a virtual, in-person, or hybrid format alike. As the travel industry resurges, the ITB brand family is among the first to come back to offering on-site

in-person events. ITB India will be held in Mumbai from September 2 to 4, 2025. ITB Asia will take place in Singapore from October 15 to 17, 2025, covering the broader regional market. ITB Berlin, the world's leading B2B trade show for the travel industry, will take place in Berlin from March 3 to 5, 2026. ITB China, the premier marketplace for China's travel industry, is scheduled for 26 to 28 May 2026, in Shanghai. The inaugural ITB Americas will be held in Guadalajara, Mexico, from 10 to 12 November 2026, covering the American market.

More details are available at [Homepage](#)

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