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ITB China Travel Trends Report 2026/27: Experience, Personalization and AI Transform China's Travel Market

ITB China, the premier marketplace for China's travel industry, has released the ITB China Travel Trends Report 2026/27. The new report highlights an increasingly diverse Chinese travel market, as travelers place greater emphasis on quality, authentic experiences and personalized services, while AI is rapidly reshaping the travel journey, from planning and booking to the in-destination experience. China's outbound travel market reached 167.92 million trips in 2025, while inbound international arrivals to China rose 31% to 35.17 million.



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Designed for global travel industry decision-makers, the annual report examines key trends across China's outbound and inbound travel markets, themed travel, MICE and AI, providing insights to support business and product strategies.

The report draws on research among **1,700 ITB China Buyer Circle representatives**, alongside market data and insights from **Tourism Economics, Fliggy and Ant International**, and interviews with senior representatives from tourism boards, industry associations, travel companies and technology companies.



Lydia Li, Deputy General Manager of Messe Berlin China, said:

"China's travel market is evolving rapidly, with travelers becoming increasingly diverse. Themed travel continues to gain momentum, while travelers are looking beyond functional needs towards emotional value and more meaningful experiences and personalization. At the same time, AI is reshaping the entire travel journey, from planning to booking and in-destination services. Through this report, we aim to help the industry better understand these shifts and make more informed, forward-looking business decisions. "

China's Outbound Market Grows as New Destinations Gain Ground

China's outbound travel market continued to grow in 2025, with mainland Chinese residents making **167.92 million outbound trips, up 16% year-on-year**. More than half of outbound travel companies surveyed by ITB China also reported 2025 turnover above **USD 3.5 million**.

Asia-Pacific continues to dominate destination choices, while long-haul markets across Europe, the Americas and the Middle East are also showing potential. Visa policies, air connectivity and bilateral relations are increasingly influencing where Chinese travelers choose to go.

Georgia has seen rising interest following the introduction of 30-day visa-free entry for Chinese citizens, while Egypt recorded **more than 20% growth in Chinese visitors in 2025**, supported by visa-on-arrival access and direct flights.

China Inbound Travel Surges 31% to 35.17 Million Visitors in 2025

China welcomed **35.17 million foreign visitors in 2025, up 31% from 2024**, as continued visa facilitation made the country increasingly accessible.

China's cultural heritage, distinctive cuisine and diverse natural landscapes remain key attractions. South Korea, Vietnam, Malaysia and Singapore are among the important Asian source markets, alongside long-haul markets including the United States, Canada, the UK and Germany. Russia, Italy and Australia are also showing particularly strong growth.

Travelers Look Beyond Price as Experiences Take Priority

Chinese traveler preferences are becoming increasingly diverse, making a **one-size-fits-all approach** less effective. Price remains important, but travelers are increasingly defining value through the **balance between cost and quality**, with authentic experiences, flexibility and personalization taking greater priority.

The report highlights four fast-evolving segments:

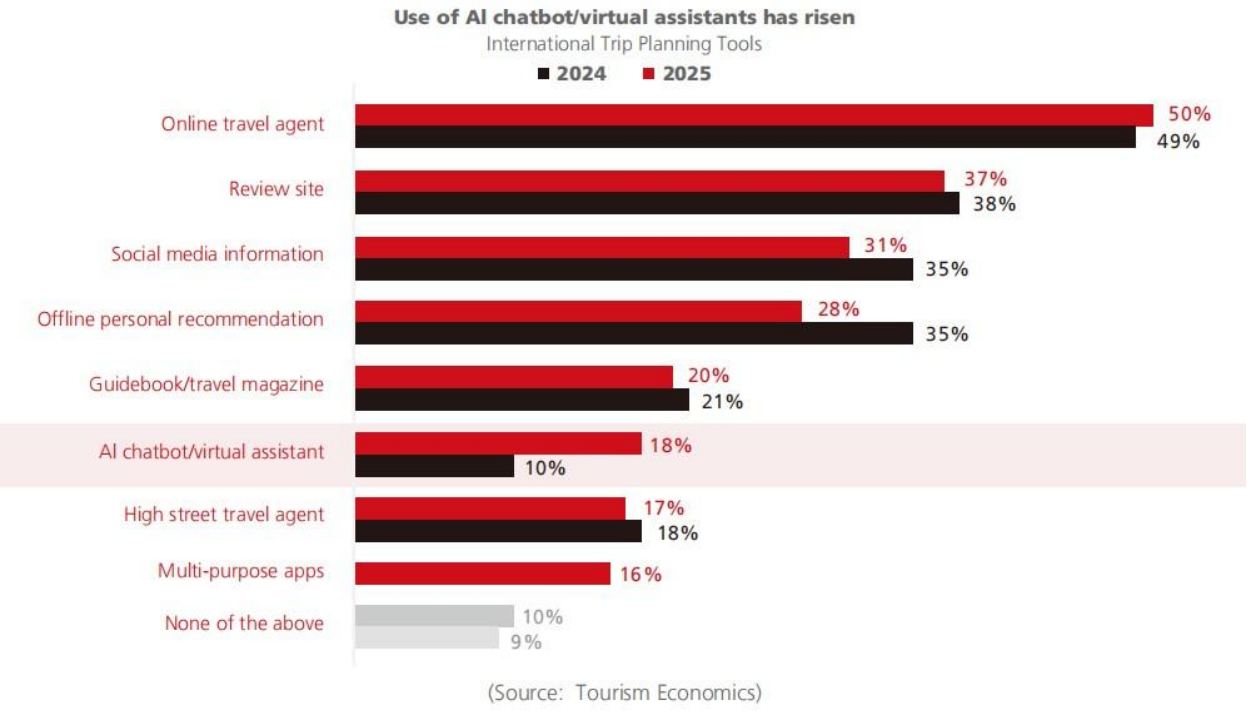
- **Luxury Travel:** High-end travel is shifting away from material expressions of luxury towards experiential value, with cultural immersion, exclusive access and highly personalized services becoming increasingly important.
- **Cruise Travel:** Personalized experiences and digital services are becoming key areas of competition across international, expedition and boutique river cruise products.
- **Cultural & Study Travel:** The market is moving beyond standard sightseeing towards deeper integration of travel and learning, immersive experiences and meaningful learning outcomes.
- **Outdoor & Sports Travel:** Specialized products increasingly require strong thematic design, community engagement, professional expertise and a long-term approach to sustainability.

Artificial Intelligence Moves Deeper into the Travel Journey

AI adoption is accelerating across both the travel industry and the traveler journey. Tourism Economics' **2025 Travel Trends Survey** found that the share of global travelers using AI chatbots or virtual assistants had almost doubled year-on-year, with nearly one in five using these tools to plan international trips.

From customer service and operations to content production, AI is helping businesses improve efficiency and reduce costs. For travelers, it is becoming embedded across planning, booking and the in-destination experience.

As adoption accelerates, the report also highlights the importance of balancing **technology with the human element of travel**, particularly as travelers place greater value on personalization, trust and high-quality service.



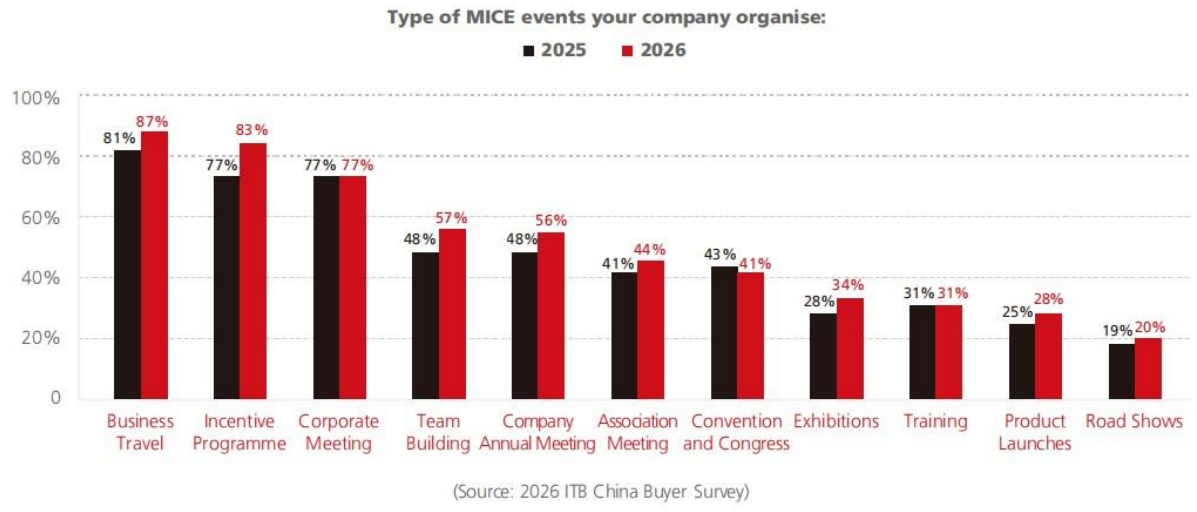
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China's MICE Market Adapts to New Clients and Budget Pressures

China remains an important global market for MICE and corporate travel, both as an inbound destination and an outbound source market.

Finance, insurance and property, and pharmaceuticals and medicine remain leading client sectors, while **technology, new energy, robotics, major internet companies and advanced manufacturing** are emerging as important growth areas.

Event strategies are also changing. Major technology, financial and multinational companies are increasingly concentrating resources on **fewer, higher-impact strategic events**, while SMEs and companies undergoing transformation favor **smaller, more frequent and targeted events**.



(Source: 2026 ITB China Buyer Survey)

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With budgets under pressure and expectations for high-quality, personalized services rising, delivering greater value and efficiency remains a key challenge for the MICE industry.

Download the Full ITB China Travel Trends Report 2026/27

Discover more insights into China's outbound and inbound travel markets, changing traveler behavior, themed travel, AI and MICE in the **ITB China Travel Trends Report 2026/27**.

[DOWNLOAD THE FULL ITB CHINA TRAVEL TRENDS REPORT]

Join ITB China 2027 for Its 10th Anniversary

ITB China 2027 will take place from 25 to 27 May 2027. As ITB China marks ten years of working alongside global travel partners, next year's edition will feature even more on-site highlights, industry exchanges and cooperation opportunities, further strengthening two way connection between China and the global travel market.

Join ITB China 2027 now