

## China-Europe Tourism Set for Quality Growth: ETC Chief



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China and Europe are expected to deepen tourism cooperation with a stronger focus on quality, experience, and mutual benefit, according to Eduardo Santander, CEO of the European Travel Commission (ETC), in a written interview with Xinhua News Agency.

Santander described China as a strategic market for European tourism in both scale and value,

noting that recent years have seen solid recovery in air connectivity and improvements in payment systems, making travel smoother and more accessible.

He said the global tourism sector continues to face uncertainty due to geopolitical tensions, high energy prices, and rising aviation costs, though travel demand remains resilient as consumers continue prioritizing travel spending.

According to ETC data, Europe recorded a strong start to 2026, with international arrivals rising around 6 percent. Growth is expected mainly from short-haul markets, with Southern and parts of Central and Eastern Europe performing strongly.

Santander said China remains a key inbound market, with nearly 10 million Chinese travelers recorded in 2025. Chinese tourists are also among the highest spenders, with daily budgets of 100–200 euros on travel, food, and experiences.

He noted a clear shift in travel behavior toward personalized trips, wellness, cultural experiences, and lifestyle tourism, moving away from traditional group travel.

Visa facilitation was highlighted as a major driver of future growth, improving accessibility and strengthening people-to-people exchange between China and Europe.

Santander said stronger cooperation, connectivity, and improved visitor experience will support sustained tourism growth and deepen economic and cultural ties between both regions.

