

The Modern Wonders of the World and Dream Destinations: A Russian Perspective

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Source: RIA Novosti. Image courtesy: Allard Schmidt.

It probably should come as no surprise that, when we speak of "tourism", people first and foremost think of going abroad and gazing at the well-known sights. Russian tourists are no exception. According to the poll conducted by RIA Novosti together with Skyscanner, a provider of discount plane tickets, Russians would drop everything to go and have a walk along the Great Wall of China, explore the Machu-Picchu complex in Peru, and to stand in awe in front of Christ the Redeemer in Rio.

The fact that the poll focused on the world's most famous sights offers a fresh perspective to the known trends in Russian tourism abroad. Traditionally popular destinations have long been Turkey, Egypt, Eastern Europe (Czech Republic, Bulgaria, and the countries of former Yugoslavia), and Italy. In the recent years Thailand has made waves, due to its nature, relatively inexpensive holiday options, and certain exotic choices for intrepid tourists. It is clear that the opportunities for Russian foreign tourism are presently influenced by income, rather than by what the planet has to offer.

As for the modern 'hand-made' wonders of the world, the poll discovered that Russians consider the Great Wall of China, the Pyramids of Giza in Egypt, and the Indian Taj-Mahal as the top three miracles of the ancient civilisations currently existing on Earth.

Russian monuments also made it to the poll, albeit not to the top. The Peterhof palatial complex near St. Petersburg and the Kizhi complex of ancient wooden architecture in Karelia were named among the world's wonders. However, Russian tourists seem not to hurry to visit either. The reason is likely that both Peterhof and Kizhi are regarded as something that can be seen anytime, since they are located in Russia.

This is hardly different, say, from the attitude of some extra-capital citizens of the U.K. who don't hurry to visit London. Somehow it always feels that something worthwhile and prone to extinction is located outside your country, rather than within.

The top world wonders, according to Russian tourists:

The Great Wall of China (China)- 13%

The Pyramids of Giza (Egypt) - 11%

The Taj-Mahal (India) - 9%

The Machu-Picchu (Peru) - 8%

The statue of Christ the Redeemer (Brazil) - 7%

The Petra (Jordan) - 5%

The Tower of Pisa (Italy) - 5%

The Peterhof (Russia) - 4%

The Kizhi complex (Russia) - 4%

The Eiffel Tower (France) - 4%

St. Peter's Square and Cathedral (Vatican) - 4%

The top dream destinations, according to Russian tourists:

The Great Wall of China (China) - 9%

The statue of Christ the Redeemer (Brazil) - 9%

The Machu-Picchu (Peru) - 9%

The Taj-Mahal (India) - 7%

The Sydney Opera (Australia) - 5%

The Statue of Freedom (USA) - 5%

The Golden Gates Bridge (USA) - 5%

The Burj-al-Arab (Dubai) - 5%

The Kizhi complex (Russia) - 2%