



Sixty-two percent of travellers intend to visit Europe in 2006 with Italy being the most popular destination, according to a recent TripAdvisor survey of more than 1,800 travellers worldwide.

When asked if they could choose just one Western European city to visit in 2006, Rome was the top destination among travelers, with sister Italian city Venice placing second. TripAdvisor suggest that the popularity of the Italian cities can perhaps be attributed to the local fare. Italy was overwhelmingly the top choice (54 percent) for best cuisine. Rome finished first among European cities for having the most attractive locals. Michele Perry, director of communications for TripAdvisor said: "With all of the incredible variety Europe has to offer, it was surprising that the top two cities according to travelers are both in Italy."

The West reclaims top spot

While Eastern Europe was the preferred European region last year according to a May 2005 TripAdvisor survey, it now seems the tides have turned. Seventy percent of respondents said they would rather travel to Western Europe this year, if money were not a factor. Forty-four percent cited spring as the best season to go.

Dublin is the city with the friendliest and most helpful locals, according to survey respondents. Americans gave London the edge for most affable citizens.

Among Eastern European destinations, Prague was the top choice.

Michele Perry said: "We are seeing a trend shift with travellers now favouring classic popular destinations such as Rome, Venice, Paris and London, while Eastern Europe was all the rage in 2005."

Top 10 Hotels in Italy Based on the TripAdvisor™ Popularity Index:

Hotel Davanzati, Florence, Tuscany

Residenza Il Villino, Florence, Tuscany

Hotel Al Ponte Mocenigo, Venice, Veneto

Residenza Cellini, Rome, Lazio

Hotel Antiche Figure, Venice, Veneto

La Villa Hotel, Asti, Piedmont

JK Place Hotel, Florence, Tuscany

Furore Inn Resort, Salerno, Amalfi Coast, Campania

Foscari Palace, Venice, Veneto

Palazzo del Selvadego, Venice, Veneto



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