

FIT dominates ITE & Hong Kong Outbound Generate More Sale in Trade & Public Days

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For over a decade, the annual ITE Hong Kong Public Visitor Survey has consistently shown a strong preference for Free Independent Travel (FIT), with approximately 80% of public visitors favoring this travel style. (i.e. independent travel but include private tour).

Specifically, ITE 2025 survey—which collected **4,242 online replies** around mid-year—revealing that **72%** of its public visitors prefer FIT for **long-haul** travel, rising to **87%** for **short-haul**.

However, a subsequent survey in year-end, which more focus on buying behavior, found even among those preferring FIT, some from time to time, they will also consider package tour.

Survey Findings Aligns with Destination Statistics

ITE survey findings echo well with official statistics! For example, Japan reported among arrivals from Hong Kong in 2023 who exceeded 2 million, **88.6%** were **FIT**.

Importantly, FIT getting popular too in Chinese Mainland! Comparing Chinese Mainland applicants for French visa in 2019 and 2024, **FIT applicants grew from 39% to 52%** while **group dropped from 47% to 22%**.

ITE Public Visitor Frequent & Affluent Travelers

ITE public visitors are affluent travelers as survey found **90.8%** either **increase or maintain travel spending** in coming year; **travel frequently**; **educated** as over half had university education and another 23% post-secondary, and many speak English! In short, public visitors are **Premium FIT!**

ITE 2025 Mid-Year Survey: Frequency of Outbound Overnight Leisure Trips

No. of O/B Leisure Trip	2025 (Jan – Jun)	2025 (Jul – Dec)
3 or more	48.2%	42.8%
0	6.2%	2.7%

The annual ITE Hong Kong in 2026 celebrates the 40th Anniversary, which also its 6th live edition since Covid-19. Since 2021, all ITE including those in pandemic years keep separate days and programs for trade and public visitors.

ITE 2025 Key Statistics

Exhibitors	Buyers & Trade Visitors	Public Visitors	Seminars & Audience
502 (87.8%*) from 64 countries & regions (1/3 from non-Asia)	7626 (53.2%*)	70212 (80% FIT)	135 seminars (9224 seated audience)

(*) From Outside Hong Kong / Overseas

International Sourcing Platform for Asian Travel Trade

Among ITE buyer trade visitor, 30% came from Chinese Mainland and over 20% from other parts of Asia. Some came individually, and there also were delegations by travel trade association from various Guangdong cities.

Some free and some optional, our **B2B program** includes **Business Matching** though free flow the main format, free pre-show **promotion for exhibitor's own trade seminar**, speaking opportunity and **Networking with KOL** etc.

Generate more Sale in ITE Public Days

Buying signal strong in public days, as survey found **43%** of visitors will / interest making booking and purchase in ITE! Also, many visitors use their mobile to book and pay for holiday or travel product in ITE, just like doing it at home or in a café, and exhibitor not involved in such process.

Exhibitors attending under a tourist visa can promote their offerings to visitors at the exhibition. This includes showcasing products, services, and distributing promotional materials such as discount QR codes.

Crowded travel seminars, another type of buying signal in public days! Held were 135 trade and public seminars with 9224 seated audiences of whom majority public; and the most popular one drew over 400 audiences including those standing!

Thus in public days, exhibitors can promote to premium FIT; and apply for free seminar session of 25 minutes to hold seminar.

Supplementary Survey on Buying Behaviors

To find out more about public visitor's buying behaviors, a supplementary survey which collected 224 replies, was held in November 2025. It found:

- a. In past year, 94.6% visitors had at least one FIT holiday, reflecting FIT dominance!

ITE 2025 Year-End Survey: Frequency of FIT Holiday

No. of FIT Holiday past 12 Months	PERCENTAGE
Five or More	11.2%
Three to Five	34.8%
One to Two	48.7%
Zero	5.4%

- b. FIT and Package tours not mutually exclusive! 43.3% (100-56.7) will also consider package tours, and only 5.7% (2.2 + 0.4 + 3.1) visitors have a 60% or higher chance choosing package tour.

ITE 2025 Year-End Survey: Travel Mode Preference

Mode	FIT			FIT Package	Package Tours		
	Ratio	100%	80-90%		60-70%	50-50	60-70%
Results	56.7%	17.0%	8.5%	12.1%	2.2%	0.4%	3.1%

- c. Comparatively, visitors taking package tour take shorter preparation time. Understandably, saving preparation time gives package tour an edge.

ITE 2025 Year-End Survey: Preparation Time Required

Time Horizon	FIT	Package
At least 3 Months	32%	25%
1 – 3 Months	43%	32%
Within 1 Month	17%	29%
Around 1 Week	4%	8%
Any Time	4%	5%

- d. Before deciding on destination, visitors usually use following channels to source information

ITE 2025 Year-End Survey: Channels to Source Information

Channels	ITE	Traditional Media i.e. TV, Guidebooks	Travel Portals (OTA / Airline / Hotel)	KOLs	Word of Mouth	Official channels (NTO etc.)	Social Media
%	52%	48%	47%	46%	39%	33%	28%

- e. Even with inconvenient transport (no direct flight or high-speed train access), factors that attract visitors to a destination:

ITE 2025 Year-End Survey: Major Factors

Attract visitors to a destination	PERCENTAGE
Scenic Area / Outdoor Adventure	63%
Cultural / Historical	49%
Exquisite / Unique Cuisine	28%
Festival / Mega Event	43%
Local Culture	28%
Wellness / For Relaxing	22%
Unique Accommodation	21%
Landmark	23%
Educational	11%

- f. Travel budget not the only nor the major concern to majority of visitors.

ITE 2025 Year-End Survey: Budgets

BUDGET IMPACT on CHOOSING DESTINATION	PERCENTAGE
Will affect choice of destination	36.2%
Occasionally over budget for ideal destination	42.9%
Minor, emphasize more on experiences	21.0%

- g. Hard to say if visitors' daily F & B budget is sufficient or not, for it depends very much on destination.

ITE 2025 Year-End Survey: F&B Expenses

Daily Spending on F&B, Meal & Snack (HK\$)	PERCENTAGE
Below \$500	26.8%
\$501 to \$1000	51.8%
\$1001 to \$2000	16.1%
Over \$2000	5.4%

The next ITE Hong Kong

Organized by TKS Exhibition Services Ltd., **ITE Hong Kong 2026**, which comprises the 40th ITE (Leisure) and 21st ITE MICE, will be held from **11 – 14 June, 2026** at Halls 1 of the Hong Kong Convention Exhibition Centre (HKCEC), with first 2 days for trade and last 2 days for public.

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<https://www.fabianmedia.net/article/fit-dominates-ite-and-hong-kong-outbound-generate-more-sale-in-trade-and-public-days.aspx>