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Italian Observatory: Greece among top European destinations for wedding tourism

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MarryAbroad notes that a ceremony in 2016 in Santorini costs just €1800, approx. £1272.

Greece ranks fourth among European destination of choice for couples wanting to get married abroad, according to figures from **Italy's observatory on international weddings** published last weekend.

Italy occupied the top place on the European level and globally second only to the Tropics and **Hawaii**, followed by **France, Greece and India**, the observatory added.

Marriages 'made in Italy' are largely preferred for the blend of **good food and wine, art, culture and beautiful scenery** the country has to offer.

It is the British who get married the most in Italy (25%), followed by Americans and Canadians (15.4 per cent), Russians (9.4 per cent), Japan (7.8 per cent), Australians (5.2 per cent), Saudi Arabia (6.3%), and Chinese (4.6 per cent).

Favourite destinations

Their favourite destinations are **Tuscany (43%), the Amalfi coast (38%), Umbria (8%), Venice and the Alpine lakes (6%)**.

Prestigious hotels, historic villas and castles are among the locations of choice, along with lemon groves, luxury

farmhouses, wineries and little-known and well preserved hamlets.

According to the report, “wedding tourism” is a substantial economic resource: in 2015, the turnover of this sector in Italy surpassed **€ 400 million** (compared to 350 million in 2014) and “nearly double the level recorded two years ago”.

The average cost of a wedding is **€ 50,000** for an average duration of three and a half days.

As far as “loyalty” of tourists, 90% of the couples married in Italy also chose this country for their honeymoon while almost half decided to return there to celebrate their second or third wedding anniversary.

Huge potential

“Italy has huge potential as a destination wedding and stars such as Sofia Coppola, George Clooney, Tom Cruise and Petra Ecclestone were not shortchanged by choosing to be married here,” notes **Suita Carrano**, co-ordinator of the Observatory and the director of a wedding organization network.

"The phenomenon is very important since we are talking about a sector of the economy in full boom, as demonstrated by the numbers. The authorities must commit themselves to helping businesses in the sector to grow, as they do on other instances. Weddings organization could be a good stepping stone to employment for the unemployed youth in the south of the country," she adds

The unemployment rate of young Italians (15-24 years) is 39.3%, well above the European average.

Read also: [Wedding tourism: Greece 12% more economical for the British in 2016](#)

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