

# Survey Report: Savoie Mont-Blanc For Italian Tourism

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## 1. Introduction

Savoie Mont-Blanc, the French Alps, is well known as one of the top destinations for winter sports, with 650 km of ski slopes, snow parks and a variety of winter events. The lakes situated in this region offer a wider diversity of sport activities especially in the summer. Cities like Albertville, Annecy and Chambéry and typical villages represent important cultural and historical heritages in France. With its abundant natural and cultural resources, Savoie Mont-Blanc embraces worldwide tourists every year, by providing a wide range of tourism products and services, e.g. skiing, cycling, trekking, spa and wellness, etc.

However, we must be aware that things might be very different when talking about a specific group visiting this region, in our case Italian Tourists. In order to research on Italian's Knowledge of Savoie Mont-Blanc and their motivation/reluctance to visit this destination, we carried out a consultancy survey, with some findings by data analysis. On the basis of the analysis, we try to give some suggestions to promote Savoie Mont-Blanc tourism targeting at the Italian market.

## 2. Data Analysis

This survey is designed with 19 questions in both English and Italian. It was open to any Italian who is interested, and it has been distributed both online and offline, in various cities around Italy, thus reflecting a wide range of experiences. As a result, it received 100 completed responses in total.

### 2.1 Sample Characteristic Analysis

The respondents are all Italian, with 38% of males and 62% of females. Figure 1 shows that a large part of respondents (42%) are young adults that range from 18 to 32 years old, and 28% of people are from 33 to 40 years old. Only 12% are over 50 years old.

**Figure 1**

Age	N. of respondents
18-25 y	27
26-32 y	15
33-40 y	28
41-50 y	18
Over 50 y	12

**Figure 2: Marital Status**

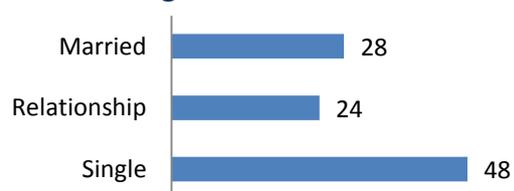
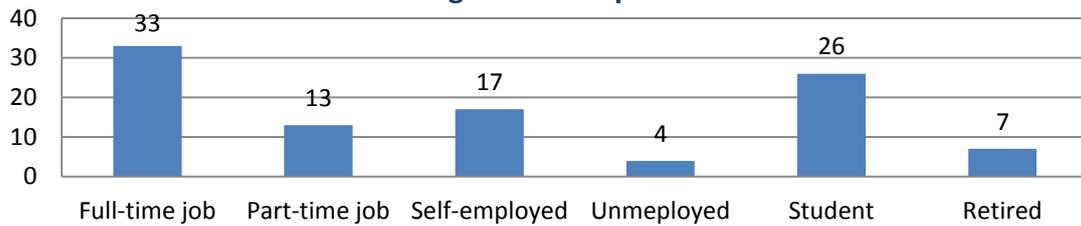


Figure 2 represents the marital status of the respondents: nearly half of them (40 out of 100 people) are single, with 52% of people married or with relationship.

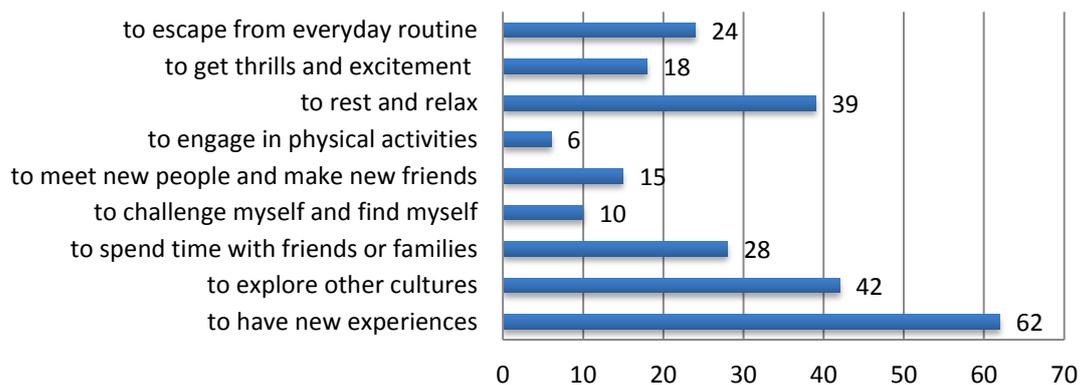
**Figure 3: Occupation**



Regarding occupation (Figure 3), 33 respondents are full-time employees, 13 people work part-time and 17 people are self-employed, so there are 63% people with employment. The rest are 26 students, 4 unemployed and 7 retired.

## 2.2 Content Analysis

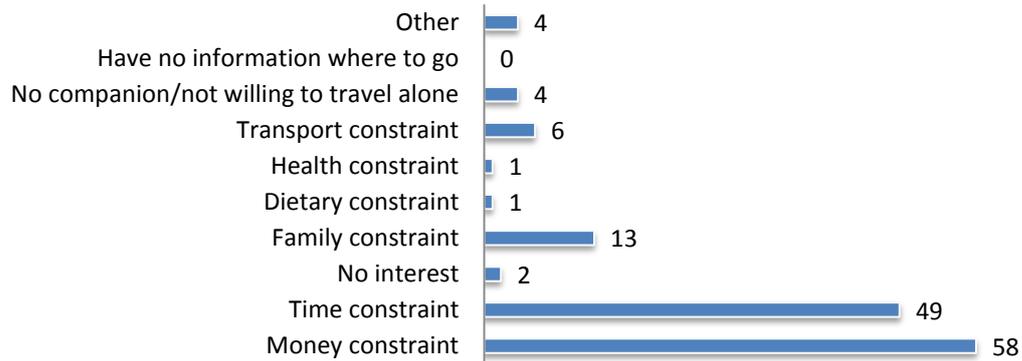
**Figure 4: Which are your reasons for traveling?**



Our first question aims to understand Italian's motivation to travel in general, which is designed as a multiple-choice question with 9 options, and respondents could choose 1 to 3 answers among these options. According to the responses (Figure 4), the answers with the highest frequency are: 1. To have new experiences (62 times), 2. To explore other cultures (42 times), 3. To rest and relax (39 times). Noticeably, "To engage in physical activities" are the least mentioned, with only 6 respondents choosing it as a reason for traveling.

On the other hand, we try to find people's travel constraints by proposing another multiple-choice question. As Figure 5 reveals, money and time are chosen respectively by approximately half of the respondents, as the most significant factors that influence people's attitudes towards travel. Family constraint is also a factor that has been mentioned 13 times. On the contrary, constraints like health and dietary are concerned very little, while 2 people says they are not interested in travelling, and other 4 claim that they do not have any constraint mentioned above (Other).

**Figure 5: Travel Constraint**



Furthermore, in order to evaluate Savoie Mont-Blanc’s competitiveness with other famous French regions, a question regarding Italian’s propensity and preference to visit France is brought forward, and Provence-Côte d'Azur ranks the first place with a very high percentage (44%), whilst Savoie Mont Blanc is chosen as a destination by only 5 respondents.

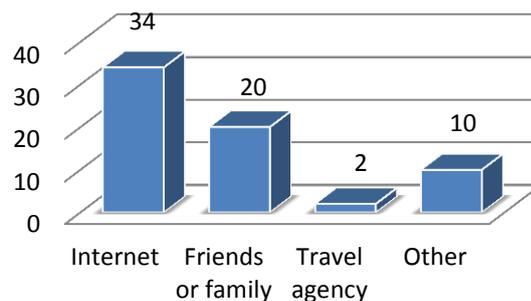
**Figure 6 : Which regions in France do you want to visit the most ?**

<b>Alsace</b>	2	<b>Lorraine</b>	3
<b>Brittany</b>	14	<b>Île-de-France</b>	16
<b>Provence-Côte d'Azur</b>	44	<b>Savoie Mont Blanc</b>	5
<b>Corsica</b>	17	<b>Pays de la Loire</b>	2

Surprisingly, the survey shows 34% of respondents have never heard about Savoie Mont-Blanc region, although it’s a famous tourism destination and is a border region next to Italy. This implies there is a lot to do relevant to marketing and to strength the brand image of Savoie Mont-blanc, especially targeting Italian tourists.

According to Figure 7, the channels people get to know about Savoie Mont-Blanc are Internet (34%), friends or family (20%), travel agency (2%), and other (10%) which includes television and geography study. This fact indicates Internet and world of mouth are becoming the most important channels for marketing, while traditional travel agencies and tour operators are disappearing and losing their influences.

**Figure 7: How did you know Savoie Mont-blanc?**



Another question is “what kind of tourism experience do you expect to get from Savoie Mont-Blanc”, and the result (Figure 8) shows, almost half of respondents (49%) regards this destination as an ideal place for winter sports, with nature considered as the second important attractiveness. Meanwhile, culture and spa/wellness are much less expected by respondents.

**Figure 8 : Tourism Expectation from Savoie Mont-Blanc**



**Figure 9: Are you interested to visit Savoie Mont-Blanc? ( level from 1 to 5)**

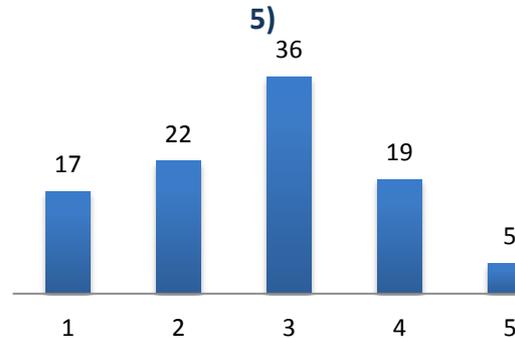
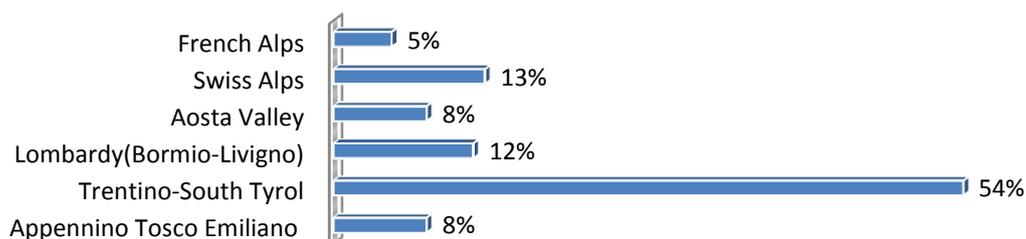


Figure 9 above shows only 5 people out of 100 are highly interested (marked as 5), and 39 people are not very interested (marked as 1-2). The reasons why they are not interested are stated as follows, high price (18%), accessibility (23%), attractiveness (38%), information (10%), substitution (11%).

According to the survey, a large number of respondents (88%) have never been to Savoie Mont-Blanc and only 12 people have been there. Among these 12 people, their willingness to revisit are marked from 1 (low) to 5 (high), and the result reveals 2 respondents have very low willingness (marked as 1), 4 people with moderate willingness (marked as 3), and 6 with high willingness (marked as 4-5). For the reason of revisiting this region, 5 people mentioned the diverse activities, 5 voted for the beautiful landscapes, 1 people chose good tourism facilities, and 1 thinks it's economic. Additionally, talking about the barriers they have encountered in this region, 7 people said they never met any barrier, 4 with language barrier and 1 with cultural barrier.

**Figure 10: If yes, where do you usually go for winter sports?**



It is also interesting to point out that 60% of respondents are interested in winter sports, but most of them (82%) choose only the domestic destinations, among which Trentino-South Tyrol is the most popular one. Besides, 13% of people have a tendency to visit Swiss Alps and people who go to the French Alps only count the

lowest percentage (5%), which demonstrates competitive advantages of Savoie Mont-blanc are very weak and it can be easily substituted.

### 3. Conclusion

This analysis indicates that although Savoie Mont-Blanc is able to offer different types of tourism to attract tourists with different ages and tastes, its main strengths are winter sports activities and nature. As it is stated above, attractiveness, accessibility, and price are the most significant factors that affect Italian's interest to visit Savoie Mont-Blanc. Given the fact that a certain amount of Italians have never heard but this region and most people have never been there, and part of them think this region is not appealing, it is crucial to spread a deeper knowledge of Savoie Mont-Blanc and build a clear and well-defined tourism image among the Italian people, by using various channels. As Internet becomes the most important source of information, several suggestions are given:

- Enhancement of its official website, e.g. adding Italian language.
- Online promotional activities, teaching and learning, marketing, advertising, etc. Create user generated contents by taking advantages of diverse social media networks to make the potential Italian targets feel part of the community of Savoie Mont-Blanc and spread the voice, e.g. Special contest of sharing your experience campaign on Facebook.

In terms of accessibility, Savoie Mont-Blanc region is perceived as a far destination from South Italy, and is not well connected. Should transportation efficiency be improved, e.g. creating new bus routes and creating more direct buses and trains, travel length can be reduced and comfort can be increased.

In order to improve the competitive advantages of Savoie Mont-Blanc, two price strategies are proposed. One is to provide some specific tourism products and services at a lower price, to meet the needs of budget travelers like students and people with less income. The other is to promote niche tourism and experience tourism at a higher price, e.g. eco tourism and culinary tourism. Proved by the result of survey, Savoie Mont-Blanc, the French Alps faces a serious threat of substitutes: on one hand, most Italians choose other destinations (e.g. Provence-Côte d'Azur) in France for vacation rather than Savoie Mont-Blanc; on the other hand, Italian's propensity to choose Savoie Mont-Blanc as a place for winter sports is unexpectedly low, instead, they prefer domestic spots like the Italian Alps (e.g. Trentino-South Tyrol). Therefore it is also necessary for Savoie Mont-Blanc tourism stakeholders to make a competitor analysis for the first step to understand its strengths and weaknesses, to enhance the quality of their core products and services (winter sports activities and nature), and to differentiate itself from other competitors, finally achieve the goals of creating a high level of satisfaction and memorable experiences for Italian Tourists.