

《五一小长假迎来旅游高峰》

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Thursday was the beginning of the May Day holiday in China. Many tourist cities have seen a sharp rise in the number of visitors, causing the usual problems of overcrowding.



More than 36 million journeys expected during May Day holiday

A record number of May Day visitors arrived in Guangzhou on Thursday.

"There are famous tourist sites here, I come here on vacation every year," said a tourist in Guangzhou.

But not everyone is a tourist. Some have come back to visit family.

"It's been two months since I was home last time, I want to see my parents, and go out with them if there's time," said a passenger.

In Wuzhen, a historic water town , over 4,000 tourists arrived within half an hour.



More than 36 million journeys expected during May Day holiday

"There are ten times as many visitors as usual. There are usually only about 300," said Dong Jinqi, staff member of Wenzhou Tour Site.

A subway station at the West Lake in Hangzhou was nearly paralysed. As these pictures show, people were even climbing over barriers to escape the crowd. Outside, at the West Lake people had practically nowhere to stand.

In Shaoxing, another historic town in Zhejiang, temperatures of 30 degrees Celsius didn't deter the tourists.



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It was the same in Beijing. A 50-kilometer traffic jam paralysed a 70-kilometer highway on Thursday morning. That continued for hours, even after all the tollgates were opened to allow cars to pass.

At the Forbidden City, more than 20,000 tickets were sold within two hours of opening.

Railway authorities were expecting 36 million journeys to be made, nearly 15 percent more than this time last year. According to the data analysing company IZP Tec. , Beijing, Shanghai, Suzhou and Hangzhou are the most popular tour destinations during the holiday. The company says tourists going to the Forbidden City are most interested in sculptures of animals and birds, with people showing great interest in the cultural significance of the statues.