

PRESS RELEASE

Extension of WeChat Pay and Alipay cashless payment solutions in Poland and Italy for Chinese New Year

Paris, January 31st, 2019 – Lagardère Travel Retail marks the Chinese New Year with the extension of cashless payment solutions WeChat Pay and Alipay in Poland and in Rome.

With a view to always better cater to its passengers' needs and to offer them a seamless shopping experience, Lagardère Travel Retail has accelerated the implementation of Chinese payment methods right in time for the Chinese New Year. Already implemented in France at Paris-Charles-de-Gaulle and Nice Côte-d'Azur airports, this initiative is part of Lagardère Travel Retail's Asian client base growth strategy.

Launch of WeChat Pay and Alipay launched for the first time in Poland in Warsaw, Kraków and Gdańsk

Lagardère Travel Retail is the first company in Poland to introduce mobile payments using WeChat Pay and Alipay. These are dedicated to tourists from Asia, where the adaptation of new technologies takes place with an immediate effect.

WeChat is one of the largest internet communicators in the world, created in 2011. It also serves the function of a quasi-social network. Alipay, however, undeniably is the leader in the world market of online transactions. The application co-operates with over 65 financial institutions, such as Visa and MasterCard.

"Both WeChat and Alipay applications are considered "SuperApps" in which the Chinese can do anything - pay bills, book cinema tickets, arrange dates, make payments. Therefore, we use the "natural environment" of users to implement quick transactions," commented Paweł Opałko, IT Director at Lagardere Travel Retail Poland.

According to iResearch, WeChat currently holds about 40 percent of the Chinese market, and Alipay over 54 percent.

"The dynamics with which the number of clients using these applications is growing proves that mobile payments are the future. Airports are a place where everyone is in a hurry, no one wants to stand in queues, stressed that he will miss the plane. Every saved second which is not lost looking for a wallet is worth a lot. Contactless payment or a telephone application significantly improves this process both from the point of view of the client and the store," added Paweł Opałko.

Last year, Poland was visited by a record number of people from Asia and China - over 130,000.

"Airports are the first point where tourists meet our country, they are places which, in a way, represents Poland. That's why we offer payment service via WeChat Pay and Alipay in our stores at airports in Warsaw, Kraków and Gdańsk. At the moment, there is still no other company which is able to offer this type of solution in the Polish market. We are the first and for the moment the only one," added Paweł Opałko.

"We follow trends and use modern technologies to guarantee our clients the highest standard of service. Our analyses show that we have more and more clients from Asia, where cash and cards are no longer the preferred means of payment. That is why we have introduced a solution tailored to the needs of this group of travelers. This also matches the current market trends, where new forms of payment displace cash and cards. These types of solutions are most willingly used by the youngest generations, but not only."

"The introduction of the application follows the "smart shopping" trend. This allows us to reach our customers in a geo-targeted manner, i.e. if the customer is near a store from the Aelia Duty Free chain, he can receive promotional offers, including directions. The whole retail business is heading in this direction. In the near future, shopping will take place only in a non-cash form," concluded Paweł Opałko.

Launch of WeChat Pay at Rome Fiumicino Airport

As of January 28th, Chinese passengers can make purchases with WeChat Pay at Rome Fiumicino airport.

The airport is becoming increasingly "Welcome Chinese" with the inclusion of this platform amongst its payment methods, resulting from a partnership with Natixis Payment, a company engaged in creating innovative payments such as digital transactions. All of Lagardère Travel Retail brands at the airport have joined this program – from Aelia Duty Free to Relay, Montblanc, Pandora, Sunglasshut, Ermenegildo Zegna, Lacoste&Superdry, The Fashion Place and Michael Kors, and to the restaurant Ajisen Ramen, located in the food court in the international boarding area E.

The first WeChat Pay payment was made on January 28th at the Michael Kors store, in the Tax Free Mall in boarding area E - a shopping area measuring over 10,000 m², offering the most prestigious national and international brands excluding VAT at 22%. At the time of purchase, Chinese passengers were given a gratitude tag by Aeroporti di Roma's Aviation Marketing and Development Director, Fausto Palombelli, ADR's Sales Manager, Giorgio Moroni and Lagardère's CEO, Lucio Rossetto.

"With the activation of WeChat Pay at Fiumicino Airport, the first in Italy and one of the few Europe to do so, ADR intends to consolidate its leading position in terms of customer experience for Chinese passengers", commented Fausto Palombelli, Aeroporti di Roma's Aviation Marketing and Development. "These efforts have fully paid off in recent years, with the growth of the number of carriers operating between Rome and Greater China totalling 6 and with as many as 10 Chinese destinations directly connected to Rome".

"It is a real pleasure for us to be present today at the first purchase made with WeChat Pay, one of the most popular electronic payment systems in China", said Giorgio Moroni, Aeroporti di Roma's Sales Manager. "As of today, Fiumicino Airport will be enriched with a new electronic payment option fully dedicated to Chinese passengers. With this method, passengers will be quickly and securely able to make payments in their own currency."

Lucio Rossetto, CEO of Lagardère Travel Retail Italia emphasised the importance of the new payment system: *"The primary and distinctive role of Lagardère Travel Retail is to build an offer tailored to the specific needs of the airport in which we operate in order to ensure the best service and the broadest purchase options. As of today, Chinese passengers at Fiumicino will be able to pay using the method that best suits them, be it a lunch at our Chinese restaurant, Ajisen Ramen, a fashion accessory or a Duty Free gift".*

Shopping with WeChat Pay is very simple: the transaction is, in fact, structured so that Chinese passengers can pay comfortably in Renminbi (the currency of the People's Republic of China), whilst the store will receive the payment in euros.

Fiumicino, Italy's first airport to accept WeChat Pay, further strengthens the welcome also given to them by the Platinum level Welcome Chinese certification.

Leonardo da Vinci is the European hub with the most connections to and from China. Ten locations in Greater China are directly connected to Rome. In fact, in 2018, approximately 760,000 passengers flew between the Capital and Greater China, with a growth of +2% compared with 2017.