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Copenhagen, December 3, 2025

Copenhagen Launches New Global Tourism Reward Scheme



Copenhagen launches DestinationPay today – a global tourism model inviting cities worldwide to adopt the CopenPay approach – rewarding tourists for doing good. Several cities have already joined.

Today, on the main stage of the European Tourism Forum in Copenhagen, DestinationPay is launched to the world. It expands on the award-winning CopenPay model, which lets visitors “pay” back to destinations through simple positive actions — from removing trash from the canals to arriving by bike at museums — and receive cultural rewards in return.

DestinationPay is a new global model designed for destinations that want to adopt their own version of Copenhagen’s successful CopenPay initiative. Created by Copenhagen’s official Tourism Board, Wonderful Copenhagen, it provides a framework and tools to help cities and regions reward tourists for positive actions that benefit local communities.

“We’ve seen how many of our visitors seek different and more meaningful experiences. Tourists don’t just want to see a city anymore — they want to be part of it. CopenPay gave them that opportunity. DestinationPay is how we scale this mindset to the world,” said Søren Tegen Petersen, CEO of Wonderful Copenhagen.

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An open invitation

With the launch of DestinationPay today, Wonderful Copenhagen invites destinations worldwide to join the movement and sign up as future partners. The ambition is simple but global: if each destination rewards even a fraction of its visitors for doing good, the collective impact could create meaningful value for destinations and contribute to a better global tourism experience.

Already in February, DestinationPay will host an online webinar to share all the insights and learnings Wonderful Copenhagen has gathered over the past two years completely free of charge. Participants will gain access to the knowledge, data, and tools developed during the past two years as well as a playbook on how to adopt and invent their own CopenPay model in their destination.

From local initiative to global model

As global tourism is projected to reach 1.8 billion arrivals by 2030, the need for a new approach is urgent. Following the launch of CopenPay, more than 100 destinations reached out to Wonderful Copenhagen to learn from the initiative. DestinationPay is the answer to that demand, providing a ready-to-use model for destinations worldwide through an open platform and shared learnings.

"We believe CopenPay is too important to keep to ourselves," said Mr. Petersen. "Many destinations are already considering implementing it, and Berlin was the first to create their own DestinationPay — BerlinPay. We're not just allowing others to use the model — we're encouraging it, and we wish to share all our learnings and even the challenges we've faced along the way."

In Berlin, preparations are already underway to launch BerlinPay this summer, directly inspired by CopenPay: Sabine Wendt, CEO *"CopenPay shows that positive change works best when people can actively experience it. It is a strong concept for improving tourism, and we would therefore be pleased if other cities also considered this idea. In Berlin, we are currently exploring the development of a comparable concept tailored to our city, in close collaboration with various partners from the visitor economy."*

The Normandy region in France finds the DestinationPay project interesting. They already run a Low-Carbon Rate initiative, where attractions and museums offer a 10% discount to visitors who arrive to Normandy by train or bus and who travel locally using public transportation or bicycles. This initiative was developed first by the Canadian *Juno Beach Museum* in Normandy.

"We are inspired by CopenPay in terms of further development of our scheme. And we see great possibilities in upscaling this way of working on changing the behavior of tourists internationally," says Michael Dodds, Director, from Normandy Tourist Board.

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A new tourism economy

DestinationPay represents a shift from the consumption economy of travel to what Wonderful Copenhagen calls a new experience economy — where the value of a trip is measured not just by spending, but by contribution.

"We supported CopenPay from the very beginning because it reflects the vision behind our Transition Pathway for Tourism, where innovation and sustainability go hand in hand. I am delighted to see Copenhagen now bringing this approach to a global stage with DestinationPay - a solution that can inspire many destinations around the world."

EU Commissioner for Sustainable Transport and Tourism, Apostolos Tzitzikostas

About DestinationPay

Learn more or join the movement and sign up to events at www.destinationpay.com.

Facts about CopenPay

- **CopenPay is a nudging scheme** that rewards tourists for good deeds
- **Purpose of CopenPay:** to raise people's awareness about the choices they make when you travel
- **First launched in summer 2024** as a pilot program, it was ex-panded in the summer 2025
- **30,000+ participating "voluntourists"** since launch
- **100+ destinations worldwide** have expressed interest in the CopenPay model
- **100+ local partners** involved, including hotels, museums, restaurants, and attractions
- **Bike rentals went up by 59%** during the initiative
- **7 out of 10 participants reported changing habits** back home
- **98% would recommend CopenPay** to others
- **7 out of 10 want to leave places better than they found them** according to a study by Booking.com

Facts about Copenhagen:

- **2025 Copenhagen ranked the world's most livable city** by *The Economist*
- Copenhagen is **ranked as the happiest city in the world** by the *Happy City Index*
- **Bicycles in Copenhagen City: 750,000** (5 times more than cars)
- **Commuting: 62% of all citizens commute by bicycle**
- **Cycling Infrastructure: 382 km of cycle lanes**
- **Canals: Clean enough for swimming**
- **Electricity: More than 70% sourced from renewable energy**

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