

one street back

One Street Back: where tourism has taken over 82 city centres

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The premise: travellers want the sights and the real city

City-break travellers want two things at once: the cathedral, and the café where the people who live there drink their coffee. Most are only ever offered the first.

- **The demand is there.** In a 2026 survey of 2,000 Britons for Lloyds, 71% called themselves travellers rather than tourists, 39% preferred immersing themselves in local culture to visiting tourist hotspots, and 31% said they only eat at local restaurants ([Lloyds, February 2026](#)).
- **The supply sends them to the wrong place.** Booking sites and guides sort by distance to the sights, so that wish ends up in the tourist core: the streets this survey finds losing their everyday life.
- **Travellers eat and are served worse there.** Restaurants in tourist areas of Paris, London and Sydney are rated lower than those elsewhere, and visible corners on main avenues in tourist areas score over 0.2 stars lower ([Dall'Orso, Page and Gauriot](#)). The reason is repeat business. A restaurant whose customers leave in three days has little reason to be good; a neighbourhood restaurant that slips loses its regulars.
- **Cities need visitors spread out.** The UN World Tourism Organization's first recommended strategy for managing urban tourism is to "promote the dispersal of visitors within the city and beyond" ([UNWTO](#)). Staying one street back moves beds, meals and spending out of the overloaded core into neighbourhoods with the everyday economy to absorb them.

The findings below show where that balance still holds, and where it has already gone.

What we found, and why it matters

One in six neighbourhoods within 15 minutes of the sights of 82 popular cities has tipped over to visitors, and another one in seven is close. Travellers come for the life of a place, and the places they come to first are the ones losing it. Of 1,194 neighbourhoods within 15 minutes, 189 (16%) are lost and 178 (15%) are On Watch. Counting the wider reach we give 17 cities, mostly the largest (20 to 25 minutes), 1,662 neighbourhoods are measured and 12% are lost: their outer districts pull the share down.

Six cities have nowhere left near the sights that passes. Venice, Bruges, Dubrovnik, Marrakech, Cusco and Cartagena have no neighbourhood within reach of their sights where everyday shops outnumber hotels, souvenir shops and attractions. *What it means:* in these cities a visitor cannot stay among residents near the sights at all. The centre has become somewhere people visit, not somewhere people live. Venice shows where that ends: its historic centre fell below 50,000 residents in August 2022 ([ANSA](#)).

The districts sold as authentic are the ones going first. Rome has lost 13 of its 16 central neighbourhoods, Trastevere and Monti among them. Florence's Oltrarno, Lisbon's Bairro Alto and Prague's Malá Strana are lost too. *What it means:* being recommended as "the real" part of a city is what tips it. Each guide that points visitors to the authentic quarter adds to the pressure that ends it.

The numbers can be extreme. Marrakech's medina has 401 visitor places and 35 everyday shops, eleven for every shop that serves residents. *What it means:* at that ratio the everyday economy is a remnant. Residents who stay shop elsewhere, and the streets are run for visitors.

Everyday life is usually close. In half the cities it starts within 800 m of the centre. Berlin (3.3 km), London (3.2 km), Washington DC (2.5 km) and Rome (2.4 km) are the exceptions. *What it means:* the crush is concentrated in a small core. In most cities, moving visitors one street back needs no new transport or hotels, only different advice.

Fame alone does not decide it. Lyon, Bordeaux and Montpellier are major destinations, yet have 11 to 16 visitor places per 100 everyday shops; Venice has 249. Paris and Berlin, two of Europe's busiest capitals, come out at 22 and 17: their centres are big enough for everyday shops to outnumber visitor places, though Paris's Quartier latin and 1er Arrondissement are On Watch. Barcelona's Gràcia carries 35 visitor places easily because it has 469 everyday shops around them. *What it means:* what matters is the balance, not the number of tourists. A neighbourhood with a large everyday economy absorbs visitors; a small one is overwhelmed. Why French cities keep that balance is a question worth putting to them.

Root causes

Our data shows the result, not the cause. Three mechanisms are well documented elsewhere and fit what we see.

- **Shops convert.** When a bakery becomes a souvenir shop, the ratio moves twice: one fewer everyday shop, one more visitor place. Where visitors outspend residents on a street, landlords let to the shops that serve visitors.
- **Homes become holiday lets.** Short-term rentals raise rents; one study found Airbnb's arrival raised rents in Barcelona by about 4% ([Segú, 2018](#)). Residents who leave take their custom with them. Holiday flats are not on the map, so where they are common our figures understate the problem.
- **Everyone is sent to the same streets.** Guidebooks, review sites and map apps rank places by what other visitors liked, so the busiest streets get busier. Reviews in a tourist core are written by visitors for visitors, which is how well-rated but poor restaurants survive there.

Knock-on effects

- **A loop for residents.** Fewer everyday shops make a neighbourhood harder to live in, more residents leave, and more shops turn over to visitors.
- **Quality and service fall.** With no regulars to keep, a business in the core is judged by passers-by who will never return. Prices rise, portions and service slip, and good reviews from one-off visitors keep the queue coming.
- **Cities start to look alike.** The same coffee chains, souvenir lines and "local" menus replace the shops that made each place different.
- **A loss for travellers.** The thing they came for, a city's ordinary life, retreats as they arrive. Visitors to the core increasingly meet only other visitors.
- **A risk in the fix.** Sending visitors one street back spreads their spending into neighbourhoods that can absorb it. Sent in large numbers, it could tip those neighbourhoods too. That is why we recheck every neighbourhood monthly and move any that start to tip onto Watch, then off the list.

Why now: residents are pushing back

Several cities near the top of our table are where residents have taken to the streets. On 15 June 2025, protests against overtourism ran on the same day in Barcelona, Palma, Venice, Lisbon, Granada, San Sebastián and Ibiza. Signs in Barcelona read "One more tourist, one less resident" and "Your Airbnb was my home" ([ITV News](#)).

- **Canary Islands, April 2024:** about 57,000 people marched against the islands' tourism model, which brought some 14 million foreign visitors in 2023 to 2.2 million residents ([Al Jazeera](#)).
- **Barcelona, June 2024:** the mayor announced that all 10,101 licensed tourist apartments will lose their licences by November 2028, after rents rose about 68% in a decade ([SBS News](#)).

What our data adds: the protests name a feeling; the survey shows where it is measurable. Venice has no neighbourhood near its sights that passes. Lisbon has lost 6 of 9. Palma has lost 3 of 14 and Granada 4 of 15, the Albaicín and Sacromonte among them. Barcelona's old town and el Raval are On Watch, while Gràcia still passes easily.

The other side: tourism pays for a great deal. It accounts for about 12.8% of Spain's economy, and in the Canary Islands for 36% of output, with around four in ten residents working in it. The case is for spreading visitors to where everyday life can carry them.

All 82 cities, most touristified first

Visitor places (hotels, guesthouses, souvenir shops, attractions) for every 100 everyday shops, across all the neighbourhoods measured near each city's sights. Lost = left out, because visitor places outweigh everyday life. Tipping = On Watch, close to that line. Recommended = passes every test.

#	City	Country	Visitor places per 100 everyday shops	Neighbourhoods measured	Lost	Tipping	Recommended
1	Marrakech	Morocco	746	8	6	0	0
2	Venice	Italy	249	5	5	0	0
3	Cusco	Peru	213	10	8	2	0
4	Bruges	Belgium	189	5	4	0	0
5	Cartagena	Colombia	168	8	4	1	0
6	Rome	Italy	167	16	13	1	2
7	Cancún	Mexico	130	13	8	1	1
8	Prague	Czechia	129	8	5	1	1
9	Dubrovnik	Croatia	127	4	3	1	0
10	Lisbon	Portugal	112	9	6	2	1
11	Porto	Portugal	107	11	4	4	2
12	Florence	Italy	104	6	3	1	2
13	Bangkok	Thailand	104	26	8	6	3

#	City	Country	Visitor places per 100 everyday shops	Neighbourhoods measured	Lost	Tipping	Recommended
14	Naples	Italy	97	10	5	2	3
15	Kyoto	Japan	91	28	11	8	8
16	Edinburgh	United Kingdom	70	16	4	4	6
17	Lecce	Italy	67	15	5	3	5
18	Brisbane	Australia	67	12	4	3	4
19	Palermo	Italy	64	5	1	3	1
20	Istanbul	Turkey	63	93	17	6	20
21	Amsterdam	Netherlands	62	15	5	1	9
22	Arles	France	60	8	1	1	1
23	Chicago	United States	60	24	4	3	10
24	Hamburg	Germany	57	8	2	3	3
25	Lille	France	56	7	2	1	4
26	Dubai	United Arab Emirates	56	8	2	2	4
27	Granada	Spain	56	15	4	0	9
28	Seville	Spain	53	16	3	3	9
29	Washington DC	United States	53	33	6	3	9
30	Wellington	New Zealand	53	15	2	3	5
31	Athens	Greece	52	14	4	1	9
32	Kraków	Poland	51	11	0	3	7
33	San Francisco	United States	51	22	5	1	12
34	Bologna	Italy	50	6	0	2	4
35	Boston	United States	50	14	2	5	5
36	Cologne	Germany	49	9	1	3	5
37	Philadelphia	United States	48	15	2	2	8
38	Leipzig	Germany	47	8	0	2	5
39	Málaga	Spain	46	10	1	2	7
40	Auckland	New Zealand	43	10	0	3	5
41	Split	Croatia	42	8	0	3	5
42	Dublin	Ireland	40	8	0	1	5

#	City	Country	Visitor places per 100 everyday shops	Neighbourhoods measured	Lost	Tipping	Recommended
43	Manchester	United Kingdom	39	13	0	1	8
44	Brussels	Belgium	37	10	0	2	8
45	Palma	Spain	34	14	3	2	6
46	Rotterdam	Netherlands	33	11	1	3	6
47	Genoa	Italy	32	9	0	1	6
48	Sydney	Australia	32	36	1	3	15
49	Milan	Italy	31	43	1	5	15
50	Turin	Italy	30	9	0	1	8
51	Glasgow	United Kingdom	30	22	1	4	10
52	Melbourne	Australia	30	30	3	3	13
53	Valencia	Spain	29	14	1	1	10
54	Ghent	Belgium	29	11	0	1	10
55	Antwerp	Belgium	28	8	0	1	6
56	Brno	Czechia	28	8	1	2	5
57	London	United Kingdom	27	114	5	13	20
58	Budapest	Hungary	27	47	1	3	15
59	Barcelona	Spain	26	21	0	5	10
60	Thessaloniki	Greece	26	7	0	0	7
61	Madrid	Spain	26	81	5	3	20
62	Łódź	Poland	24	11	0	0	4
63	Leeds	United Kingdom	23	9	1	1	4
64	Copenhagen	Denmark	23	28	2	1	15
65	Nice	France	23	11	0	2	7
66	Zaragoza	Spain	22	8	0	1	6
67	Paris	France	22	85	0	4	20
68	Bristol	United Kingdom	20	14	0	1	10
69	Cork	Ireland	20	13	1	3	2
70	Toulouse	France	20	12	0	2	10

#	City	Country	Visitor places per 100 everyday shops	Neighbourhoods measured	Lost	Tipping	Recommended
71	New York	United States	20	58	3	3	20
72	Vienna	Austria	20	53	0	1	15
73	Marseille	France	19	11	0	1	7
74	Munich	Germany	19	50	0	4	15
75	Bilbao	Spain	18	14	0	0	10
76	Leuven	Belgium	18	15	0	1	7
77	Berlin	Germany	17	108	4	7	20
78	Bordeaux	France	16	14	0	1	10
79	Liège	Belgium	16	9	0	1	4
80	Nantes	France	15	17	0	1	10
81	Lyon	France	12	14	0	1	10
82	Montpellier	France	11	8	0	0	8

Famous districts: lost, tipping, holding up

Many districts sold to visitors as authentic now have more visitor places than everyday shops. Others with the same reputation still pass comfortably.

District	City	Visitor places	Everyday shops	Verdict
Medina	Marrakech	401	35	Lost
Bairro Alto	Lisbon	245	169	Lost
Psiri	Athens	203	186	Lost
Plaka	Athens	183	124	Lost
Josefov	Prague	173	95	Lost
Monti	Rome	134	76	Lost
Malá Strana	Prague	129	36	Lost
Oltrarno	Florence	123	86	Lost
Trastevere	Rome	68	60	Lost
El Raval	Barcelona	196	275	Tipping

District	City	Visitor places	Everyday shops	Verdict
Ciutat Vella	Barcelona	173	179	Tipping
Jordaan	Amsterdam	64	150	Tipping
Cedofeita	Porto	59	84	Tipping
Rione Sanità	Naples	51	84	Tipping
Gràcia	Barcelona	35	469	Recommended
Triana	Seville	51	258	Recommended
Exarcheia	Athens	71	254	Recommended
La Croix-Rousse	Lyon	7	148	Recommended
Flagey	Brussels	14	142	Recommended
Brixton	London	3	133	Recommended
Petralona	Athens	2	96	Recommended

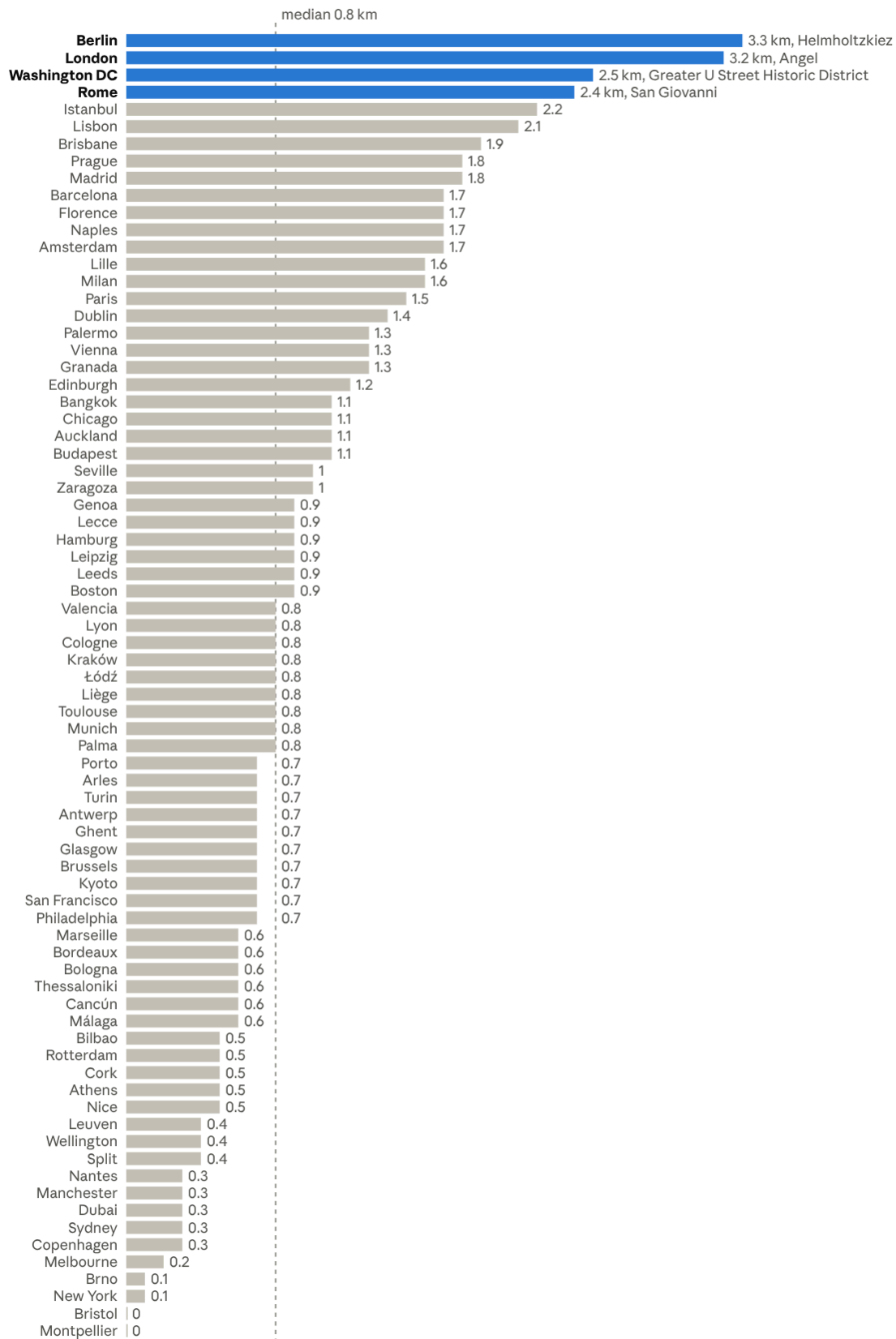
The verdict is a ratio, not a count. Trastevere is lost with 68 visitor places because it has only 60 everyday shops; the Jordaan's 64 visitor places sit among 150 everyday shops.

How far you walk to reach everyday life

How far from the centre everyday life starts

Straight-line km from each city centre to the nearest neighbourhood that passes every test

Median 0.8 km across 76 cities



One Street Back, from OpenStreetMap, October 2026 · 76 cities with at least one recommended neighbourhood

In most cities the answer really is one street back. The exceptions are big, heavily visited cities whose whole centre now serves visitors. Bristol and Montpellier pass right in the middle.

How it was measured

Every figure comes from OpenStreetMap, the open map edited by volunteers, rebuilt in October 2026. No AI step, no reviews, no paid placement.

1. For each city we take every named neighbourhood within about 15 minutes of the main sights, on foot or by one short ride. In 17 cities, London, Paris and New York among them, we look up to 20 or 25 minutes out.
2. Around each one we count, within a ten-minute walk, the places residents use every week: bakeries, grocers, cafés, markets, pharmacies, hairdressers, dentists, vets, driving schools.
3. We count the places that serve visitors: hotels, guesthouses and hostels, souvenir shops, and the well-known sights and museums.
4. A neighbourhood whose visitor places outweigh its everyday life is marked lost. One close to that line is On Watch. The rest are recommended, if they also have some life in the evening.

The simple test behind it: if a street has a dentist, a vet and a driving school, people live there, because nobody on holiday needs any of them.

Caveats

- **Holiday flats are invisible.** Airbnb and similar rentals are not on the map, so every figure understates tourism. In cities with many short-term lets, the real picture is worse.
- **Mapping varies.** OpenStreetMap is more complete in some cities than others. A thinly mapped neighbourhood can look quieter or more local than it is.
- **Hotels count once each.** A 400-room hotel and a three-room guesthouse weigh the same.
- **Distances are straight lines** from each city's centre point, not walking routes.
- **Cities were chosen as popular city-break destinations**, not as a random sample.
- **The figures move.** The data is rebuilt every month, so a city's numbers can change by a few points.

About One Street Back

onestreetback.org recommends where to stay in 82 cities: the neighbourhoods close to the sights where daily life still belongs to the people who live there. Why it exists: onestreetback.org/why. Editor: Siamack Salari, ethnographer and co-founder of EverydayLives and Food with Varinder. Contact: siamack@everydaylives.com.

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