

# Long queues, protests as Apple's iPhone X hits stores

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Apple's iPhone X hit stores around the world Friday, drawing crowds in many locations and protests in others as the new flagship device hit stores in some 50 markets worldwide.

Apple enthusiasts around the globe were lining up to get their hands on the new device which features [facial recognition](#), cordless charging and an edge-to-edge screen with technology used in high-end televisions—and an eye-popping price tag.

The new gadget marks the 10th anniversary of the first iPhone release and was released in about 50 markets on Friday, starting in Asia and then followed by Europe and the Americas.

The launch came a day after Apple announced a 19-percent jump in net profit to \$10.7 billion in the fiscal fourth quarter to September 30. Revenues were up 12 percent at \$52.6 billion.

## 'Cool and beautiful'

Guilherme Rossi, 23, came from Brazil with a friend to be at the Apple shop in San Francisco when the doors opened at 8:00 am on Friday.

The self-described iPhone collector said there were Apple stores in Brazil, but they were in malls where spending nights in queues wasn't an option.

"Yes it's expensive, but I love the brand because it's cool and beautiful and because of all the technologies," Rossi said of the device with a starting price of \$999.

Also at the opening of the Apple [store](#) in San Francisco was 40-year-old local Francisco Rivera, who said he was there to "get it first" and "show it off." He took up position in the queue on Thursday afternoon.

It appears thieves opted not to wait, stealing more than 300 iPhones valued at some \$370,000 from a delivery truck outside an Apple store in San Francisco, according to local reports.

Even though California is home to Apple, it was among the last locations for the iPhone X to become available given a global roll-out that started with the dawn of Friday in New Zealand.

"If I don't get it on the first day, I may as well wait until next year's model—I don't like waiting," said Mathew Kam, a 21-year-old film student who queued outside the Apple store on London's Regent Street over night.

## **French buyers, protests**

In Paris, where a queue had also formed in front of the Apple Store near the French capital's Garnier Opera house, 21-year-old engineering student Jeremy said he had worked throughout the summer to save for a new phone.

He bought the most expensive version of the model costing 1,300 euros (\$1,500)—more than the minimum monthly wage in France.

But protesters in France used the launch to highlight Apple's tax dispute with European authorities.

French activists dumped a load of freshly picked apples—the fruit—as demonstrators carried signs saying "Apple, pay your taxes" in the southern city of Aix-en-Provence.

"We want Apple to feel the impact on its brand," protester Annick Coupe said.

In Frankfurt, Germany's financial capital, Apple fans had been lining up since the early hours.

Tim, a teacher, had traveled around 80 kilometers (50 miles) from

Heidelberg to collect the phone he had ordered online.

"All the reserved models were sold out within 10 minutes," he recalled.

The wait for delivery stretched to an unprecedented six weeks shortly after Apple began taking pre-orders.

The new device was not creating such a buzz in the Greek capital of Athens, however, where no queues formed in front of the licensed Apple dealer in the city's chic Kolonaki quarter. But the company's marketing officer in Athens, Natalia Revela, insisted she was expecting "strong demand" and a "successful launch" for the phone.

Vyron Hatzidromou, a 38-year-old lawyer, said he "never missed" a new Apple launch. "I always buy the latest models when they come out for the hype and the fun," he said.

Earlier in Asia, buyers who had pre-ordered the phone online queued to pick up their purchases, saying they were willing to pay for what they saw as a landmark model.

"It's the 10th anniversary phone—anyway, other phones like the Samsung are not much less," said banker Tony Yeung, 35, as he queued outside the Apple store in Hong Kong's Festival Walk mall.

## **'It's worth it'**

Around 300 customers waited overnight outside Singapore's Apple store, the first shop in Southeast Asia to sell the new model.

Supakorn Rieksiri and Kittiwat Wang, both 22, said they had flown in from Bangkok on Thursday to pick up pre-orders of two phones each.

"With all the different features like facial recognition and the bigger screen, it's all quite worth it," said Rieksiri, adding that the second handset was a gift for his mother.

Apple is setting an ambitious goal for itself to reinvent the smartphone as it strives to fend off fierce competition from rivals, especially in China.

The iPhone is its main profit driver, accounting for more than half its revenues.

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