

20 Per Cent Rise For 2008 Vacations

Almost as frequently as Santa coming down the chimney at Christmas, the travel industry gives a dire warning of hard times for the year ahead, prices rising, and bookings looking poor.

But 2008 has been an exception with what could be record numbers booking for not just winter holidays but putting deposits down for a summer holiday.

Nearly all traditional travel agents and on-line travel sites report a surge of interest with many translating into bookings around the Christmas period.

ABTA, The British Association of Travel Agents, who safeguard consumer interests for the travelling public in the UK, put the rise in holiday bookings down to the awful weather in the country last summer.

The weather ABTA refer to were floods that affected large parts of England, claimed four lives, and left a hundred thousand homes without water for two weeks in parts of Gloucestershire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire.

Insurance companies have warned that the floods will ultimately cost small businesses millions, and insurers have processed tens of millions in claims from homeowners. The British government has given emergency aid to the worst affected areas to help with the cost of the clear-up. Yorkshire in the north of England saw some of the heaviest flooding, with thousands of homes left without power and three people dying.

Included in the holiday areas that have benefitted from the booking surge are Malta, Tenerife, Menorca, Majorca and Lanzarote - some of the favourites from previous years.

Early reports from Malta suggest that the holiday island had a best ever year for tourism in 2007, and is now considering how she can broaden her appeal to entice more tourists to the Mediterranean sunshine isle. Malta Airport saw a record number of passenger flights arriving in 2007 thanks to the low cost airlines bringing in extra visitors, and 2008 looks set to be busier still as more competition arrives.

The Canary Islands are hosting a winter festival of classical music and hopes to boost its visitors before the summer begins. The fourth largest island of Lanzarote, named for its red mountains, will host several of the festival's upcoming concerts. Lanzarote is well known for its picturesque volcanic landscapes. It is perhaps also just as well known for its futuristic appearance and controlled development of wildlife and plant life.

Another of the Canary Islands, Tenerife, is known for its great winter climate and attracts nearly three and a half million tourists a year to its scenic 2,034 square kilometers. Most of Tenerife's tourism comes from the United Kingdom, followed by Germany, Belgium, The Netherlands, Finland, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Italy and France, among many others. The island is home to many beautiful resorts, including the Playas de las Americas and Los Cristianos. In fact, recent legislation was passed to ensure that any future Tenerife holiday resort construction must either be of five-star status or offer holiday resort luxuries like golf courses or banquet facilities, but some [cheap holidays in Tenerife](#) will no doubt come up as last minute travel deals.

It is likely that both Tenerife and Lanzarote will see their first quarter tourism numbers up for 2008, and if bookings continue as they have been can look forward to a good 2008 summer holiday season.

About the Author

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