

## Low Cost Airline Takeover Slashes 2008 Malta Flight Prices

As low cost flights to Malta started two years ago, one notable absentee for the battle of the skies was missing, Europe's leading low cost airline easyJet.

Competition was keen between the airlines to take up the lucrative UK to Malta route, and Dublin based Ryanair was chosen over rivals easyJet to take up the route, and the island benefitted last year with a sharp increase in tourists, reversing six years of decline.

Since then the island's tourist authorities have finally woken up to the fact that competition in the skies could bring more benefits to the country than protecting her national airline, and new routes have opened between Malta with Germany, Spain and Scandanavia.

But of all the low cost carriers the best known UK one, easyJet, had been unable to fly to Malta having not reached an amicable agreement with the island's tourist authorities. This is about to change however, and could see lower cost flights to Malta in 2008, a year when the Malta holidays industry is hoping to augment a successful 2007.

easyJet recently bought GB Airways who were franchised by British Airways to fly many of their European routes - including to Malta, with convenient afternoon slots out of London's Gatwick Airport.

'When we checked recently to book a BA flight from Gatwick to Malta for early next summer, it was showing a flight at under 100 sterling, which is pretty competitive for a good time of day flight', comments one travel guide for Malta.

Rival low cost airlines might view easyJet's entry to the [flights to Malta](#) market as a back door method, while others in the aviation industry will view the development as nothing out of the ordinary when one company takes over another, and the new routes are part of why a company would want to buy another in the first place.

The UK market for the Malta holidays industry, despite the diversification the island has enjoyed with more visitors from Germany and Italy, remains a vital one and provides more visitors than any other country.

Currently for London and the Home Counties, the economic powerhouse of the UK economy, low cost airlines fly from Luton, convenient for the northern counties and North London. Gatwick, which is more convenient for wealthy Surrey and South London, is served by regular carriers.

But it is Gatwick that easyJet will be flying from to Malta, and potentially is the most lucrative UK route for a low cost carrier.

Figures recently released by the tourist authorities in Malta show an overall increase in tourists of over ten per cent for, and it's the island's highest number of Brits for some six years.

The increase is an impressive rise on the 2006 visitors, and it is largely thanks to the introduction of cheap Malta flights that has fuelled the increase.

'The figures confirm that low cost flights are good for the Malta holidays and hotels industry', add the Malta travel guide, 'The launch of low cost flights from Ireland and the UK was always going to mean an increase in visitors from those countries. The existing route from Gatwick to Malta operating as a low cost route can only be good news for Malta this summer.'

### About the Author

Travel guide YourMalta.com offers potential visitors information about Malta, including videos, photographs, a five day weather forecast and today's [Malta weather](#) plus for those visiting Milan as well today's [Milan weather](#)

Source: <http://www.spivo.com>