

Inbound Tourism - UK - November 2009

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What is this report about?

This report considers the future prospects for inbound tourism to the UK, examining what is being done to appeal to overseas visitors, what the significant innovations in the market are, how the UK competes with other countries in worldwide tourism and current trends at play. In addition, Mintel's exclusive consumer research investigates the attitudes of consumers from key incoming markets, identifying positive and negative responses and their (country) destination preferences.

What have we found out?

- In 2008 there were almost 900,000 fewer visits to the UK from overseas, the first reduction in inbound travel since 2001 (when foot and mouth and 9/11 made for a particularly difficult period).
- However, in 2009, there has been a marked increase in holidays to the UK. Mintel estimates that there were 11.2 million such trips in 2009, up almost 300,000 on 2008.
- The growth has come entirely through an influx of Europeans. For the second quarter of 2009, holiday visits from Europe rose by over 250,000, while holiday trips from North America and other countries fell by over 100,000.
- This was particularly driven by the Pound/euro exchange rate. In 2008 the euro gained 30% against Sterling. In September 2009, VisitBritain estimated that 160,000 additional bookings for travel to the UK were a direct result of the exchange rate.
- Reinforcing these trends, in 2008 France overtook the US to become the primary inbound holiday market to the UK.
- Mintel's exclusive consumer research identifies Italy, France and Spain as the UK's biggest rivals, with approximately two-in-ten respondents across five key markets choosing these European destinations instead.

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