

Holiday Review - UK - January 2011

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What is this report about?

This report considers the impact on holidays of the recession and the (official) post-recession period of 2010, analysing the strengths and weaknesses of the market and the challenges and opportunities operators face as a result. It examines consumer behaviour and attitudes towards holidays, relevant trends, key market factors and possible future developments.

What have we found out?

- The number of overseas holidays continued to fall in 2010, dropping an estimated 5% following 2009's 15% decline. Some 36.4 million such trips were taken across the year. Domestic holidays, up so dramatically in 2009 as people switched to the UK in order to save money, also fell back year on year with the overall result that fewer than 94 million holidays (domestic plus overseas) were taken.
- While overseas holiday volume fell, average expenditure on these trips rose – again. At no point throughout the 2005-10 period has average spend dropped, as more affluent consumers have continued to head overseas while the less well-off have become more likely to switch to the UK or hold off on holidays altogether.
- Mintel's exclusive consumer research reveals that over seven in ten people took some form of holiday in the 12 months ended November 2010. They were significantly more likely to opt for an independent holiday than a package trip (six in ten did the former; three in ten did the latter).
- The recession has not brought an end to the era of multiple holiday-taking – in the 12 months ended June 2010, holidaymakers were most likely to take 2-3 trips.
- Overall, two in five people now consider holidays a luxury; contrasting with the one in four who say they are a "necessary spend" or a "right". Two in five people state that they would go on holiday less if their financial situation worsened; twice the proportion that would instead cut back on other things. Cutting out holidays altogether would be the choice of one of five in that situation; the same proportion say they would switch to holidays is the UK.
- Three in ten state that they want to relax and not be bothered with ethical or environmental issues on holiday; one in ten admits to feeling travel guilt but only approximately one in 20 agrees that 'green' taxes should be levied on travelling.

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