

Package vs Independent Holidays - UK - May 2011

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What is this report about?

Despite the faltering recovery seen in the UK economy, the overseas travel industry remains in recession. At just over 36 million holidays abroad in 2010, the market recorded its lowest annual level of trip volumes since 1999. Both package and independent holidays declined by a fifth between 2008 and 2010.

This report analyses market trends and consumer attitudes towards package and independent holidays, investigating the core market factors, strengths and weaknesses, key players and products in the industry.

What have we found out?

- Trip volumes for both package and independent holidays fell by a fifth between 2008 and 2010. Package trips declined to 14.1 million trips, a level not seen since the mid-1990s.
- However, 2010 has seen package holidays outperform independent trips largely thanks to all-inclusive package growth. Half of those who took a package holiday in the past 12 months prefer the all-inclusive format. Support for all-inclusives peaks amongst under-35s and C2s.
- For holidays beyond Europe, the package sector has performed better than independent travel since 2008. The most successful package destinations in 2010 were Tunisia (28% growth) and Mexico (63% growth).
- Two thirds of consumers agree that packages save a lot of time and effort when booking a holiday. Six in ten say package holidays remove all the hassles so you can just relax and enjoy the holiday.
- Over half of consumers see package holidays as 'a bit too samey' with little differentiation between products and resorts. Nearly half also feel there are too many Brits on package holidays.
- Six in ten consumers enjoy the freedom, flexibility and choice of independent holidays. However four in ten say that putting together your own holiday can be time-consuming and too much hassle and four in ten are worried they might lose money or get stuck if an airline or hotel goes out of business when booking independently.

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