



NO STAYCATION NATION: INTERNATIONAL HOLIDAYS CONTINUE TO TRUMP DOMESTIC BOOKINGS

Thursday 15th October, London: International holidays continue to blow domestic getaways out of the water, according to new data from lastminute.com, putting promises that the UK could become a “staycation nation” to bed.

Despite a plethora of regional travel bans, the threat of enforced isolation and ongoing uncertainty across the industry, it seems nothing can keep sun-loving Brits from getting their sunshine fix, with many chasing it across international borders since they were opened by the UK foreign office at the start of July.

According to the online travel behemoth, in September, a massive 94% of all package holiday bookings (flight+hotel / flight+train) were for spots abroad – a drop of just 3% from 2019 – with the Turkish Riviera and Greek islands, including Cos and Rhodes, proving most popular with holidaymakers. The number of domestic hotel bookings, meanwhile, rose by just 3% in 2020 (67% from 64%).

Marco Corradino, CEO of lastminute.com, says that the successful trend is testament to the travel and leisure industry’s efforts to guarantee customer safety. “Consumer desires have evolved very rapidly in recent months. Rather than price, people are more preoccupied with their safety, and the industry has been pulling out all the stops to assure so many people of that.”

Corradino says that, rather than wane, he expects booking habits to evolve over the coming year, away from long-term decision making to a “last chance” mindset which could prove to be a boon for the industry.

“Although holiday booking numbers are much lower overall than last year, when we look at the share of bookings by lead time, the proportion of bookings departing within the week is 200% higher than last year, as people evaluate the level of risk associated with each location.

This “last chance” mindset could have a potentially positive impact on the industry with people leaping to take advantage of opportunities as they arise, rather than prioritising factors like cost.

Some EU destinations could see an uptick in visitors at more unusual times of the year, rather than a big concentration in the summer months - Kos and Cyprus have both experienced more than a 50% hyke in popularity since October last year, for instance. At lastminute.com, we’ve introduced measures that enable greater flexibility to accommodate this shift in behaviour, which we expect to continue for another year at least.”

Ends

Notes to editors

Lastminute.com group

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