



PRESS RELEASE
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Families travelling further afield for half term break

Egypt, Orlando and Dubai are some of the favourite destinations for travellers for the forthcoming half term break, reports leading independent travel company Travel Counsellors.

The company has seen a rise in popularity for medium and long haul travel amongst its customers with many travellers looking to escape the euro zone and get better value for money. During half term week last year (24 - 31 May 2008) customers opted for short haul destinations, with the top five holiday hotpots being Turkey, Cyprus, Mallorca, Greece and Portugal. This year's half term week (23 - 30 May) shows that Turkey, Mallorca and Cyprus are still the most popular destinations but for the first time medium and long haul destinations are closing in as firm favourites behind these.

Travel Counsellors Managing Director Steve Byrne comments; "We are seeing a definite change in booking trends amongst our customers. They are finding they are getting much better value for money if they travel outside of the euro zone to destinations such as Egypt. Plus the continuing improvement of the pound against the US dollar makes destinations such as Orlando a very popular choice for families. There has also been major tourism boosts for destinations such as Dubai, which are focusing heavily on development and have some great family offers at the moment, with many resorts offering free child places over the coming months."

The company has also reported that customers are booking much later than in previous years, with late bookings in May for the half term break up 11% compared to 2008. The average holiday duration has also risen by a day to six days, and the average booking value has increased from £1,479 to £1,819 during this period. A reason for this increase can be attributed to the fact that many families are now opting for all inclusive holidays so that they are able to better budget for their holidays. Also with many people are now travelling further afield, they are spending more on their travel as a way of getting better value for money whilst they are away.

Mr. Byrne adds; "People still want and need to go on holiday. But we are seeing that they are holding onto their money for longer and are booking nearer to the time of travel. They are also seeing the advantage in medium and long haul travel and options such as all inclusive accommodation. Plus with the weather being so unpredictable in the UK it's no wonder people want to escape to the sunshine over the half term holiday."

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About Travel Counsellors: Travel Counsellors is the world's largest home-based travel company with turnover at the end of its last financial year (Oct 31 2008) of £245 million, a 16% increase year on year. Founded in 1994 it currently has over 1,000 travel consultants who work from home with the support of over 200 staff at the company's UK headquarters in Bolton and overseas offices. The company operates in the UK, Ireland, the Netherlands, South Africa, Australia, Canada and the US. In the UK, the Travel Counsellors Trust financially protects everything booked by the customer free of charge. Travel Counsellors was the winner of the prestigious Queen's Award for Enterprise in 2003-2008, the technology category of the 2005 CBI Growing Business Awards and was voted Travel Agent of the Year by readers of the Guardian, Observer and Guardian Unlimited in 2006 & 2007.

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