



PRESS RELEASE
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Families booking last minute breaks for the school holidays

Families are booking later the ever to go on their summer holidays, reports leading independent travel company Travel Counsellors.

The company has seen a surge in late bookings for the school holiday period with the majority of pupils in the UK breaking up over the coming week. Bookings made in June to travel during the holidays (25 July – 29 August) were up 5% and for July are already up 8%, with company expecting this to rise considerably over the coming weeks.

Travel Counsellors Managing Director Steve Byrne comments; "We are seeing sales pick up considerably as we approach the summer holidays, which is a promising sign in the current climate. There are so many good offers in the marketplace at the moment and people are seeing the value in holding onto their money for longer and are booking nearer to the time of travel. Plus with the weather being so unpredictable in the UK parents want to treat the kids and themselves to a bit of sunshine."

The company has also 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. Orlando and Egypt have become firm favorites for most popular destinations alongside regular favorites Turkey, Mallorca and Cyprus, knocking destinations such as Greece and Portugal off the top spots compared to the same period last year.

Byrne adds; "This shift in booking trends can be attributed to the fact that people are finding they are getting much better value for money if they travel outside of the euro zone to destinations such as Egypt. The continuing improvement of the pound against the US dollar makes destinations such as Orlando a very popular choice for families, plus there is more late flight availability to this destination compared to previous years."

Families are also opting for added value options such as all inclusive holidays so that they have more control over budget, which has attributed to the fact that the average booking value has increased from £2,139 to £2,618 during this period, as travellers opt to pay more up front in order to save in the long run. The average holiday duration has also increased from seven to nine days.

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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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