

SPAIN'S NEW TOURIST TAX MAY DRIVE AWAY POTENTIAL HOLIDAYMAKERS



Sustainable tourism might become unsustainable for Spain soon, as a decision to launch a new tourists tax on visitor arrivals, allegedly with the sustainability of the industry in mind, is angering those with plans to visit places like Ibiza and Majorca in the summer.

The new fee, which can reach up to £70 for a family of four for two weeks of holidays, will be added to the visitors' checks whether they made reservations before or after it takes effect, only adding fuel to the tourists' rage.

The tourist tax, which will take effect starting July 1, will require holidaymakers to pay an extra fee to the hotels directly. This extra charge will add one or two euros to every person's check for each night - one euro for hotels with one to three star ratings and two euros for the higher end four and five star hotels and resorts.

While this might not seem like a lot for one person staying overnight, it can easily add up for families over the course of a longer summer vacation.

The solution could be to spend these vacations in a private rented house, villa or a campsite, some would think. However, this is not an option, as the tourist tax applies to these accommodations as well, discouraging tourists. The experts believe that this is Spain's way of taking advantage of the decline in their usual competitor countries' popularity, from trying to find holidaying alternatives.

Spain isn't the only summer hotspot following in the footsteps of countries like Germany and Greece and introducing a tourist tax. In fact, **in June Malta will also start charging an extra 40p to tourists for every night they spend on the island, supposedly to help preserve its natural resources.** The difference is that this fee will be capped at five euros per person, adding a much smaller burden to tourist's expenses than the Spanish initiative.

Tourist fees are applicable in major cities all over Europe already. The difference is that they are added to a hotel's initial cost and not paid on top of it, which is why tourists remain mostly unaware that they are already paying extra for their vacations, even in Spanish cities like Barcelona.

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