

Anti-tourism protests sweep Europe

[theguardian.com/anti-tourism-protests-sweep-europe](https://www.theguardian.com/travel/2024/jul/28/anti-tourism-protests-sweep-europe) 28 July 2024



Hostile: Marchers have teamed up with Extinction Rebellion campaigners to block airports and squirt tourists with water pistols, according to latest news reports.

Do they have a point? Spaniards have taken to the streets to protest overtourism. They join a growing group of people angered by bad behaviour and rising prices.

What's happening?

Last Sunday, thousands of **Mallorcans** marched through the streets of **Palma** to protest the number of **tourists** travelling to their city. Tourists claim they were sprayed with water.

This is just the latest battle in a growing fight between locals and tourists in Spain. There have been huge protests in **Barcelona** too.

Find out more

But it is not just in Spain. Amsterdam now warns **drunk** tourists they will be **arrested**. **Venice** in Italy has introduced a tourist tax and limited group numbers.

There are several reasons for local anger. Tourists make cities more costly to live in.

They can bring bad behaviour. And there is a climate cost too.

Tourism is nothing new, but for hundreds of years it was only very rich people who travelled for fun. But in the **Victorian** times, **travel agent** Thomas Cook took people on tours of Britain, and then to **foreign** countries.

More recently, low-cost flights have made it easy for a huge number of people to travel. Mallorca, for example, has a population of 920,000 but receives about 14 million foreign

visitors a year.

But others point out that many of the city's businesses rely on tourists for money.

And tourism can open people's minds to new cultures, languages, arts and foods. The world might be a very boring place if no one ever left the place they live in unless they needed to.

Do they have a point?

Some say

Yes! Imagine walking down your local street to find only people you do not know, none of whom speak your language, having fun while you study or work. What could be more annoying?

Others think

No! Is it a crime to want to see the world? Most tourists behave well. Cities do not belong to the people that live there. Everyone is a tourist sometimes.

FOR YOUR SUMMER READING CHALLENGE CLUE GO TO STEP SIX IN THE SIX STEPS TO DISCOVERY BELOW.

Six steps to discovery

1. Connect

How do you feel about this story? - Have you ever been a tourist? Do many tourists come to where you live?

2. Wonder

Some people say

"The thing about tourism is that the reality of a place is quite different from the mythology of it."

Martin Parr (1952 –), British photographer and photojournalist

What do you think?

What questions do you have? - For example: Which country gets the most tourists?

3. Investigate

What are the facts? - Pick out one thing we know for certain about this story and one thing we cannot say for sure.

4. Construct

What is your point of view? - You are sitting in a Palma cafe and a protester sprays you with water. How would you react?

5. Express

What do others believe? - In groups, come up with a list of good things and bad things about tourism. Then make a poster encouraging tourists to behave well.

6. Reflect

What might happen next? - Summer Reading Challenge Day 6 Clue: Which "C" describes a person who makes dinner and a Victorian travel agent. Download your challenge entry form [here](#) and fill in the answers to the clues.

Glossary

Mallorcans - People from the Spanish island of Mallorca.

Palma - Palma de Mallorca is the capital city of the Spanish island of Mallorca.

Tourists - Somebody who is travelling to enjoy themselves.

Barcelona - A city in Spain's Catalonia region, known for its architecture and art.

Drunk - Somebody whose behaviour and body has been affected by drinking too much alcohol.

Arrested - Stopped by the police and taken to a police station.

Venice - A seaport in Italy. It is built on many small islands.

Tax - Money workers pay to the government to pay for services like roads and hospitals.

Victorian - The era when Queen Victoria was on the British throne, from 1837 to 1901.

Travel agent - Somebody whose job it is to organise travel for others, for example by booking plane tickets or hotel rooms.

Foreign - From a country which is not your own.