# Foreign Office warns British travellers of cultural norms in Greece



The Foreign Office has issued a warning for British travellers planning to visit Greece this summer, highlighting the importance of understanding local laws and cultural expectations, particularly concerning "indecent" behaviour. This advisory comes in response to the increasing number of UK tourists visiting popular party locations in the Mediterranean country, where nightlife can often lead to misunderstandings of acceptable conduct.

The guidance, accessible under the 'Safety and Security' section of the Foreign Office's website, outlines specific laws that may differ significantly from those in the UK. It stresses that tourists should be mindful of their conduct, particularly in relation to alcohol consumption, as Greek authorities are empowered to arrest individuals for behaviour deemed "rowdy or indecent." This warning is particularly relevant for those attending bachelor and bachelorette parties, as the potential for inappropriate conduct can lead to serious legal repercussions.

A notable point of concern mentioned in the guidance is the attire often worn during such events. The Foreign Office explicitly advises against "fancy dress" costumes that may be perceived as offensive under Greek decency laws. It states, "The Greek police will arrest you for any behaviour they find rowdy or indecent, especially where excessive drinking is involved. Some fancy dress costumes may be regarded as offensive and therefore against decency laws." Violating these laws could result in heavy fines or imprisonment.

The potential consequences extend beyond legal troubles; travellers may also find that incidents affecting their travel plans, such as flight cancellations due to alcohol-related arrests, could render their travel insurance invalid. The advisory underscores the importance of maintaining decorum and compliance with local laws, noting that absences from flights related to arrests may not be covered by insurance policies.

Incidents from the past have further highlighted the need for caution. In 2009, a group of 17 British men from a Bristol football team were arrested in Crete while wearing fanciful costumes as "naughty nuns," reportedly causing a disturbance by flashing other tourists. Although charges were eventually dropped due to a lack of complaints from those who were allegedly offended, the case illustrates Greece's strict approach to behavioural standards.

As UK tourists plan their leisure activities and festivities in Greece, they are encouraged to familiarise themselves with local customs and laws to ensure an enjoyable and incident-free holiday. The Foreign Office's advisory serves as a reminder of the cultural differences that exist and the necessity of respectful behaviour while abroad.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/greece/safety-and-security> - This URL provides general travel advice and safety information for Greece, which includes understanding local laws and cultural expectations. It serves as a resource for British travelers planning to visit Greece.
* <https://greekcitytimes.com/2025/03/20/uk-travel-warning-issued-as-spain-greece-france-and-more-prepare-for-new-eu-border-system/> - While not directly addressing behavioral laws, this article highlights the broader context of travel advisories and changes affecting British travelers in Greece and other EU countries.
* <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories.html/> - This website lists various travel advisories globally, which can include information on safety and security concerns for tourists in different countries, including Greece.
* <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1995/42/part/V> - This link provides a general overview of UK legal frameworks regarding public order offenses, which might inform understanding of similar laws abroad, like Greece's decency laws.
* <https://www.britishairways.com/en-gb/information/travel-advice/tips-and-inspiration> - While not specific to Greek laws, this page offers general travel advice that includes respecting local customs and laws when traveling abroad, which is relevant for British tourists visiting Greece.