# UK bookings rise in the Canary Islands despite escalating anti-tourism protests



Despite mounting tensions surrounding anti-tourism protests in Spain's Canary Islands, recent reports suggest that bookings for the region are on the rise among UK tourists. This trend unfolds against a backdrop of significant activism, with an estimated 123,000 protesters expected to rally under the slogan "The Canaries Have a Limit" this weekend. The protests highlight escalating concerns related to housing affordability and environmental degradation, driven by an influx of millions of tourists each year.

A number of British holidaymakers have expressed their experiences amidst this turmoil, reporting positive encounters during their stays in Spain. One individual shared their recent trip to Benidorm on social media, emphasising their enjoyment of the trip and praise for the Spanish hospitality. Other comments on social platforms mirrored this sentiment, suggesting that the difficulties highlighted by protestors did not translate into the experiences of most tourists.

However, the increasing anti-tourism sentiment cannot be dismissed. In previous months, tens of thousands of demonstrators have gathered in the Canary Islands to voice their opposition, citing issues such as rising living costs and declining quality of life resulting from mass tourism. Activists argue that areas inundated with visitors face challenges in maintaining affordable housing and preserving local ecosystems. The tourism industry, which welcomed a record 16 million visitors in 2023, has become a double-edged sword—driving economic growth while simultaneously alienating local communities.

The region's tourism minister has publicly urged visitors not to cancel their trips, asserting that the islands remain safe and welcoming despite the protests. This statement aligns with a broader response from officials who see tourism as a critical component of the local economy. They argue that blaming tourism for these social and environmental issues is simplistic and counterproductive.

Moreover, the broader context of rising tensions between locals and tourists is evident not only in the Canary Islands but across Spain. Reports of graffiti urging "Tourists go home" have emerged in major cities, further illustrating the growing discomfort with the changing dynamics of popular tourist destinations. Such sentiments reflect a growing 'tourism phobia' manifesting in various forms, as communities grapple with the strains associated with accommodating a vast number of visitors.

In the face of these challenges, some commentators suggest that adjusting travel patterns—such as altering school holiday lengths—could alleviate pressure during peak seasons. This proposal seeks to distribute tourism more evenly throughout the year, potentially easing the strain on both local infrastructure and communities.

For now, as travel bookings continue to increase despite the protests, it remains to be seen how this complex situation will unfold. The balance between economic necessity and community well-being is delicate, and the dialogue surrounding it is ongoing. Observers and participants alike will be watching closely to see whether the tourism landscape in the Canary Islands can adapt to these pressing challenges.

### Reference Map

1. [[1]](https://www.birminghammail.co.uk/travel/uk-tourists-fly-back-spain-31665107)
2. [[2]](https://news.sky.com/story/canary-islands-thousands-demonstrate-against-tourism-in-holiday-resorts-13238026)
3. [[3]](https://www.dw.com/en/spain-canary-islands-mass-protests-target-overtourism/a-68922697)
4. [[4]](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/world-news/2024/04/19/canary-islands-tourism-protests-britons/)
5. [[5]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/world/canary-islands-tourism-protests-british-holidaymakers-b1152625.html)
6. [[6]](https://inews.co.uk/news/world/british-tourists-spain-protests-anti-foreigner-graffiti-2945166)
7. [[7]](https://www.express.co.uk/travel/articles/1959603/brits-visiting-canary-islands-given-urgent-warning-amid-systematic-collapse-fears)

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

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.birminghammail.co.uk/travel/uk-tourists-fly-back-spain-31665107> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://news.sky.com/story/canary-islands-thousands-demonstrate-against-tourism-in-holiday-resorts-13238026> - In October 2024, thousands protested across the Canary Islands against tourism, citing housing affordability and environmental concerns. Demonstrations occurred in Gran Canaria, Tenerife, La Palma, Fuerteventura, Lanzarote, and El Hierro, with at least 8,000 participants under the slogan 'Canary Islands has a limit.' Activists argue that mass tourism leads to local residents being priced out of housing markets and environmental degradation due to the influx of millions of visitors annually. The protests highlight the need for a sustainable tourism model that balances economic benefits with residents' quality of life.
3. <https://www.dw.com/en/spain-canary-islands-mass-protests-target-overtourism/a-68922697> - In April 2024, over 60,000 people protested in the Canary Islands against overtourism, expressing dissatisfaction with the current tourism model. The protests were organized by various groups, including the Fundacion Canaria Tamaimos, and highlighted issues such as rising housing prices, environmental degradation, and low wages for locals. The Canary Islands experienced a record 16 million tourists in 2023, leading to concerns about the sustainability of the tourism industry and its impact on residents' lives.
4. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/world-news/2024/04/19/canary-islands-tourism-protests-britons/> - In April 2024, the Canary Islands' tourism minister urged British holidaymakers not to cancel their trips amid planned anti-tourism protests. Locals were protesting against issues like water usage, housing shortages, and pollution linked to overtourism. The minister emphasized that the islands remained open for business and that blaming tourism for these problems was unfair. Despite the protests, the Canary Islands aimed to continue welcoming tourists and maintain their status as a popular destination.
5. <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/world/canary-islands-tourism-protests-british-holidaymakers-b1152625.html> - In April 2024, the Canary Islands' tourism minister urged British holidaymakers not to cancel their holidays ahead of anti-tourism protests planned across the archipelago. Locals were protesting against excessive levels of tourism, claiming it caused overcrowding and high rental prices. The minister assured that it was still safe to visit the Canary Islands and that the region was open for business, despite the protests.
6. <https://inews.co.uk/news/world/british-tourists-spain-protests-anti-foreigner-graffiti-2945166> - In September 2024, British holidaymakers in Spain faced escalating 'tourism phobia' from locals over increasing pressures on services. Graffiti reading 'Tourists go home' appeared in resorts across Spain, including Tenerife and Barcelona. Residents felt their towns were being invaded by tourists who did not respect local customs. Despite a record 85.1 million foreign tourists visiting Spain in 2023, the protests highlighted growing tensions between locals and visitors.
7. <https://www.express.co.uk/travel/articles/1959603/brits-visiting-canary-islands-given-urgent-warning-amid-systematic-collapse-fears> - UK holidaymakers were encouraged to keep the Canary Islands on their travel radar despite rising tensions and anti-tourist protests in popular destinations like Lanzarote and Tenerife. Critics warned that unless the influx of tourists was curbed, the region could face a 'systemic collapse.' The local environmental group Ben Magec - Ecologists in Action voiced concerns about overexploitation of the territory. However, regional tourism official Jessica de Leon urged Brits to continue visiting, assuring that it was still safe to do so.