# Anti-tourism protests in Tenerife escalate amid rising visitor numbers



Anti-tourism protesters in Tenerife have announced plans to escalate their demonstrations this summer amid growing concerns over the impact of rising visitor numbers on the Canary Islands. The archipelago experienced a significant increase in tourism, with visitor numbers rising from 16 million in 2023 to 18 million in 2024, heightening tensions among locals who argue the islands are nearing a breaking point.

The protests, which began in early 2024 and initially concentrated in Tenerife's capital, Santa Cruz, have since expanded to target key tourist hotspots such as Playa De Las Americas, a popular destination for British holidaymakers. The demonstrators, primarily Canary Island residents including members of environmental group ATAN, claim that the local government has failed to address the challenges posed by mass tourism, despite numerous calls for action.

Ivan Cerdena Molina, an activist involved in the movement, expressed his frustration over the government’s inaction. Speaking to Wales Online, he said: “We had 16 million tourists [in the Canaries] in 2023 and 18 million in 2024. In 2025, the number is increasing again. The government didn’t do anything; it just spoke nice words with no real action.” He added a stark warning to prospective British visitors: “The situation is really critical, no-one who wants to enjoy holidays with peace would come to a collapsed and congested island, it’s simple there are too many people everywhere. Local people are really tired and angry, they are showing it. If we can ask something, it would be, please don’t come, we cannot take it anymore.”

The protest movement has vowed to intensify activities as the peak tourist season approaches. On 18 May, activists planned to launch a series of demonstrations across the islands, aiming to disrupt public events, confront political leaders, and occupy prominent tourist locales to press for policy changes. A press release issued by the campaign on 18 May declared: “From now on, we will take our fight to the very spaces where their predatory model is perpetuated. The Canary Islands can no longer be a postcard backdrop for the enjoyment of a privileged few. We are the Canarian people – a people who will not give up until we achieve the change we deserve. On May 18, the fight continues in the streets. What comes next will be impossible to ignore.”

This wave of local activism is part of a broader regional reaction against overtourism. Similar protests are planned elsewhere, including a major demonstration in Mallorca on 1 May. Thousands are expected to gather to oppose the Balearic government’s handling of housing and tourism policies, with trade unions preparing what they describe as “the most militant demonstration in years.”

The developments highlight growing unrest in key Spanish island destinations as residents grapple with balancing economic benefits from tourism against environmental sustainability and quality of life. The protests in Tenerife and Mallorca underscore calls for a reassessment of tourism management to address overcrowding, housing shortages, and environmental degradation.

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