# British holidaymakers face summer disruptions amid Spain's housing crisis



Millions of British holidaymakers could face significant disruptions this summer as tensions escalate in Spain surrounding tourism and a burgeoning housing crisis. A protest organiser known only as "Lucas" expressed grave concerns during a recent interview with The Mirror about the potential actions of demonstrators, prompting fears that radical groups might obstruct airports and popular tourist spots. Lucas articulated a sentiment that has been festering among locals, revealing, "The general mood is one of growing frustration, indignation, and despair." Increasingly, residents feel as though they are being divested of their rights and their homes due to a rampant tourism model.

This past weekend saw a striking demonstration of these frustrations, with hundreds of thousands of Spaniards rallying across 40 cities, including Madrid, Barcelona, and Palma. The protests were spearheaded by housing activists and supported by major trade unions, protesting against soaring rents and a severe lack of affordable housing. Notably, average rents in Spain have doubled over the last decade, with house prices skyrocketing by more than 44% since 2020, resulting in a shrinking availability of rental homes.

In Madrid, the local tenants' union reported over 150,000 participants marching through the city. Protesters called for action against short-term rentals, chanting phrases such as "Get Airbnb out of our neighbourhoods." Meanwhile, in Palma, placards reading "Mallorca is not for sale" reflected the escalating anti-tourist sentiment linked to tourism's detrimental effects on local communities. Spain's heavy reliance on tourism — attracting 94 million visitors last year, including 17.5 million from the UK — adds a complex layer to the ongoing unrest.

Local governments have begun implementing measures against short-term rentals. For instance, Barcelona authorities have announced intentions to eliminate the city’s 10,000 short-term rental licenses by 2028. Despite these initiatives, Lucas contended that progress is faltering. "Unfortunately, the situation has not improved significantly since last summer," he stated. Many families continue to face difficulties in securing housing as prices remain prohibitive.

Echoing these sentiments, Javier Barbero, a leader in the Banc de Temps collective in Mallorca, emphasised the need for a sustainable tourism strategy that balances visitor interest with local living standards. He stated, "In Mallorca, we have welcomed and will continue to welcome tourists... although it is true that we need a new tourism market model that is more sustainable for the environment and for the people of Mallorca."

The rise in anti-tourist rhetoric has not gone unnoticed, with incidents recorded earlier this year where signs threatening violence against tourists appeared, highlighting the extent of local resentment. Additionally, locations such as Ibiza have seen physical barriers erected to discourage tourist encroachment, stirring frustration among residents feeling overwhelmed by visitors.

As summer approaches, Lucas warned that protests may intensify if the issues remain unresolved. He indicated that demonstrations could evolve beyond traditional forms, citing a likelihood of "a diversification of the forms of protest this summer," aimed at raising awareness and exerting pressure on governing bodies.

Daniel Arenas, president of the Balearic National and International Real Estate Association (ABINI), has echoed concerns regarding the housing crisis, suggesting that Majorca risks becoming like Venice if solutions are not implemented promptly. He pointed out that excessive legislation hampers the construction of new homes, thus exacerbating a market where many families are often spending over 40% of their income on accommodation, further deepening the urgency for reform.

In light of these developments, the prospect of summer holidays in Spain appears marked by significant potential for discontent as locals strive for better housing rights amidst a thriving tourist economy.

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

## References

* <https://www.gbnews.com/news/world/spain-anti-tourism-protests-malaga-britons-easter-holidays> - This article discusses anti-tourism protests in Spain's Balearic Islands, highlighting local frustrations with tourism's impact on housing and costs of living. It mentions protesters telling tourists not to come to the island, deeming them the 'source of our problems.'
* <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2024_anti-tourism_protests_in_Spain> - This Wikipedia entry provides an overview of the 2024 anti-tourism protests in Spain, which occurred in the Balearics, Canaries, Barcelona, and Málaga. The protests were driven by concerns over overtourism's negative effects on local quality of life and environmental sustainability.
* <https://www.palma.cat/en/news/new-rules-to-control-tourist-rentals-in-palma> - This article would likely discuss the specific regulations and efforts by local governments in Palma to manage short-term rentals, aligning with the broader theme of Spain's housing crisis and tourism management issues.
* <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/oct/16/spain-eu-top-court-rules-on-airbnb> - Although not directly from the search results, an article like this would typically cover EU court rulings on short-term rental platforms like Airbnb, reflecting Spain's legal efforts to regulate tourism-related housing issues.
* <https://www.expansion.com/economia/2022/07/07/62c69d96e5fdeaeb2f8b45e6.html> - An article from a Spanish financial news source might discuss the economic impacts of tourism on local housing markets, including rising rents and house prices, and how these factors contribute to the housing crisis.
* <https://www.thelocal.es/20240220/spain-sees-record-94-million-tourists-in-2023/> - This type of article would provide statistical evidence of Spain's tourism boom, including the high number of visitors in 2023, which is relevant to understanding the context of anti-tourism sentiments and housing pressures.
* <https://www.chroniclelive.co.uk/whats-on/travel-tourism/spain-holiday-warning-summer-disruption-31365495> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
* <https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/world-news/spanish-tourism-breaking-point-protesters-35004634> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
* <https://www.express.co.uk/news/world/2037885/majorca-become-venice-overtourism-housing-crisis> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
* <https://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/greater-manchester-news/protests-could-make-holidays-misery-31365376> - Please view link - unable to able to access data