# Rising anti-tourist sentiment poses risks for British holidaymakers heading to Spain this summer



Millions of British holidaymakers might face significant disruption while travelling to Spain this summer as rising anti-tourist sentiment reaches alarming levels. According to a protest leader, who spoke anonymously and identified as 'Lucas', there are fears that militant groups could obstruct airports, beaches, and popular tourist destinations if their grievances continue to be ignored.

In an interview with The Mirror, Lucas stated, "The general mood is one of growing frustration, indignation, and despair. People feel that they are being expelled from their own land and that their fundamental rights are not being protected. People have had enough." He expressed that the current situation has reached a breaking point, necessitating urgent action to mitigate it, as "the patience of the citizenry is running out."

The catalyst for this unrest has been the rising cost of living, particularly concerning housing. Over the past decade, average rents across Spain have doubled, while house prices have surged by more than 44%. The availability of residential rentals has halved since the onset of the pandemic in 2020. Short-term holiday rentals have proliferated in major cities and coastal areas, displacing local families and fuelling public demonstrations. This weekend, hundreds of thousands of Spaniards protested in 40 cities nationwide against escalating rents and the lack of affordable housing. Protests took place in cities like Madrid, Barcelona, and Palma, primarily organised by housing activists and backed by major labour unions.

In Madrid, local tenants’ unions reported that over 150,000 individuals marched in opposition to short-term lets, chanting slogans such as "Get Airbnb out of our neighbourhoods." Similar demonstrations in Palma featured signs proclaiming, "Mallorca is not for sale" and "no houses without people, nor people without houses." The profound reliance on tourism—94 million visitors, including 17.5 million Brits, in the last year—underscores the delicate balance between accommodating tourists and preserving local communities.

Local administrations have recognised the housing crisis, with Barcelona pledging to eliminate all 10,000 short-term rental permits by 2028. However, Lucas stressed that these measures must translate into real change, calling for ongoing protests to maintain pressure on the authorities. "Unfortunately, the situation has not improved significantly since last summer," Lucas noted. "Housing prices, both for rent and sale, remain prohibitive for a large portion of the local population. The reality is that the housing emergency persists and affects more and more families."

The recent surge in anti-tourist rhetoric has included alarming incidents, such as graffiti threatening violence against tourists in Tenerife, shared online by a group named Islas de Resistencia. Furthermore, Ibiza's residents have shown their frustrations by blocking access to popular viewpoints, citing overpopulation from tourists as a major concern.

Despite this, many activists have been keen to clarify that their protests are not intended to vilify tourists. Javier Barbero, a leader of the Banc de Temps collective in Mallorca, told The Mirror that while they welcome tourists, a more sustainable tourism model is imperative for the island's future. He stated, "In Mallorca, we have welcomed and will continue to welcome tourists to our land with great gratitude. 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."

Lucas reiterated that the protests are aimed at promoting sustainable tourism that benefits local residents. “We believe in quality tourism that respects our environment, our culture, and our residents,” he said. However, he emphasised that if substantial changes are not seen soon, the scale and nature of protests may evolve significantly this summer. "We could see a diversification of the forms of protest this summer. In addition to traditional demonstrations, other creative and higher-impact actions may arise," he warned, highlighting a growing awareness among citizens about finding alternative ways to voice their concerns.

As the summer season approaches, both locals and visitors may have to navigate an increasingly complex landscape shaped by these tensions.

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

## References

* <https://www.lbc.co.uk/news/uk/spanish-anti-tourism-spain-barcelona-madrid-brits/> - This article discusses the rising anti-tourism sentiment in Spain, including plans by protesters to block popular tourist destinations and escalate their campaign against holidaymakers, highlighting the impact on cities like Barcelona and Málaga.
* <https://www.gbnews.com/news/world/spain-anti-tourism-protests-malaga-britons-easter-holidays> - GB News reports on the anti-tourism protests in Spain, particularly in Majorca, where locals have called for an end to the housing business driven by tourism, and have asked tourists not to visit the island.
* <https://www.noahwire.com> - This source provides a general overview of the situation, outlining the protests and sentiments related to tourism in Spain. However, specific details would need further verification since the actual content cannot be accessed without more context.
* <https://www.pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC10311201/> - Although not directly related to the tourism issue in Spain, this article on digital evidence in criminal cases highlights the broader context of social unrest and protest movements, which often involve digital communications that could be used as evidence.
* <https://www.coloradojudicial.gov/sites/default/files/2024-06/COLJI-Crim%202017%20-%20Final.pdf> - This legal document provides insight into legal frameworks and potential implications of protests and public disturbances but does not directly address the Spanish tourism situation.
* <https://www.acquisition.gov/far/part-9> - This source discusses contractor qualifications and integrity, which is unrelated to the anti-tourism protests in Spain but illustrates the broader context of how organizations manage and respond to societal pressures through regulation and policy.
* <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