

Information release

ECC-Spain commemorates World Tourism Day by calling for sustainable and responsible travel

The European Consumer Centre in Spain offers recommendations on how to avoid unexpected charges and save money during the holidays.

Madrid, 27 September 2024. The tourism sector is a key driver of economic growth in many countries, including Spain. Moreover, tourism is experiencing a new boom, with more and more travellers choosing to visit other cities and countries in search of new cultures, experiences and landscapes. It is undoubtedly a driving force that not only plays a key role in boosting the economy. It also encourages interaction with other cultures and people, helping to break down negative prejudices and promote tolerance. In this way, travel has become a pleasure to which millions of people around the world aspire, generating massive displacements that can cause some inconveniences, such as urban overcrowding, problems related to gentrification, and unsustainable or polluting consumption and transport.

For this reason, the European Consumer Centre in Spain (ECC-Spain) celebrates World Tourism Day, held every year on 27 September, by raising consumer awareness of the need for sustainable and responsible tourism that brings long-term benefits and development to countries. In addition to this awareness-raising work, ECC-Spain also supports the need to develop a global basis for sustainable Tourism.

On the other hand, the European Centre offers travellers a series of recommendations in order to avoid unexpected charges for additional services in accommodation or transport that can blow the budget.

Tips for identifying and avoiding additional costs when travelling

- ✓ Before booking, read the offers and check which services are included. If in doubt, contact the [hotel](#) or tour operator.
- ✓ Read reviews and opinions of other customers and check if there are any complaints related to unexpected additional costs.
- ✓ Use price comparison platforms.
- ✓ If [renting a car](#), check the fuel policy as well as possible additional charges for extra driver or drop off the car at another office than the office where it was picked up.
- ✓ Use public transport.
- ✓ Before the end of the trip, ask for the pro-forma invoice in order to detect possible extra charges in advance.
- ✓ If there is a charge for check-in or check-out, contact the hotel management or organiser as soon as possible.
- ✓ Reservations with cancellation without penalty, although they may be somewhat more expensive, are an interesting option to save money if the trip is cancelled in the end.
- ✓ Before taking out travel insurance, check your credit card coverage.
- ✓ All-inclusive bookings help to keep food and drink costs down.
- ✓ Booking well in advance is often cheaper.
- ✓ Using secondary airports is often cheaper.
- ✓ Book out of season or on off-peak days to get cheaper rates.
- ✓ Use free public car parks, rather than the hotel car park which is usually paid for.
- ✓ Avoid [charges](#) for currency exchange, card payments or cash withdrawals abroad.

World Tourism Day 2024: Tourism and Peace

The theme of this year's World Tourism Day 2024 is "Tourism and Peace". With this theme, the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) highlights the potential of tourism as a tool to promote peace and understanding between cultures and as a bridge between nations, allowing people from different parts of the world to connect, share experiences and build bonds that promote tolerance and global cooperation.