

Cheap Malta Flights Hope For Holiday Numbers

2007 is looking brighter with an upswing expected in holidaymakers and weekend visitors after a considerable period of declining visitor numbers.

But where the government's tourist board has failed to promote Malta as a destination, private enterprise Ryanair, the Irish based low cost airline, has transformed the island's chances of staying a mainstream vibrant destination in 2007.

'There have been some complaints from islanders', comment Malta travel guide YourMalta.com, 'that the government or the airport authorities have helped Ryanair, and that their costs could be lower than other airlines have had to pay in the past. But to be honest, compared to the millions poured into the tourist board that has produced declining visitor numbers, it's a drop in the Mediterranean and money well spent compared to the authorities past lame efforts of their own.'

Official statistics appear to bear this out.

Ryanair started their London Luton to Malta service in November. Tourist numbers have picked up year on year since then. In the month before Ryanair started cheap flights to Malta tourist numbers dropped by some ten per cent.

'If promoting Malta was left down to the tourist authority, the island would disappear from UK travel agent brochures and Malta would be relegated to niche travel status. The tourist authority has spent a lot of money on ineffective campaigns, and it has taken a private enterprise company like Ryanair to reverse the trend of less and less visitors. Perhaps Ryanair could offer to take some of the people who work at the Malta Tourist Authority on a six month secondment to teach them how to be effective at their jobs.'

Malta Real Estate Prices Rise

With the arrival of more holidaymakers, the possibility of increased property sales to overseas buyers becomes more of a reality.

Tribune Properties, a UK company specialising in Malta property, agree that property prices could rise in 2007.

'With lower fares, Malta becomes a destination viable for 3 and 4 days trips a few times a year from the UK, and that will attract buyers to look at Malta in the same way they do France and Spain when considering where to buy a holiday home abroad. The [Malta weather](#) and low fares could be a magnet for buyers.'

There is a warning however from YourMalta that property prices on the island might not necessarily escalate in the same way that regions of France have seen when low cost airlines have started flying to their region.

'The Malta government has allowed more land to be used for property, and we anticipate a lot more apartment blocks being built short and medium term. Supply might well meet demand. Unless the Malta map changes politically and with it a change of policy towards her environment, there is a danger of Malta becoming the Tower Hamlets of the Mediterranean, or 1970's Spain where development spoiled much of the coast.'

Concern has also been expressed on the island about the infrastructure, with some tourists and potential property investors berating the state of the roads and - compared to mainland European and UK standards - dangerous construction sites.

'The real winners from the low cost flights could be the Malta hotels rather than the property industry', conclude YourMalta. 'We envisage a lot more people taking short three and four day Malta holidays, often booking their flights and hotels on the internet rather than via a traditional high street travel agent chain'.

About the Author

For [Malta flights](#), a map, the weather and [Malta holidays](#) visit YourMalta.com

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