

# Europe's most popular holiday destinations

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The latest results from GfK EURO BUSÂ®

Nuremberg, 25 June 2003 - Sun, sand, picturesque scenery and nature, art, culture and history. These are what the most popular holiday destinations in Europe - Italy, Spain and France - have in common. This is what a GfK EURO BUSÂ® representative survey carried out in twelve European countries and the USA has revealed.

There are a number of reasons for this: of course, the weather plays a large part in the equation, with hot summers and sun, sand and sea among the decisive factors. However, nature and scenery and the art, culture and history of a particular country also attract tourists. Curiosity about the country and its people constitutes another important aspect.

## The sun-seeking Germans

It is hardly a surprise to learn that Germans prefer to holiday in the sunnier climes of Southern Europe. When asked in which country they would most like to spend a ten-day holiday, one in six replied Spain and one in eight, Italy. Around ten per cent like spending their holidays in the mountains of Austria, while other popular holiday destinations are Greece, France, the Netherlands, Portugal, Turkey and Ireland - although these are much further down the list than the countries in the top group.

So why are Germans so keen on these countries? More than half give the decisive factors as weather, sun, beaches, along with nature and scenery. The art, culture and history of a country are less important to Germans than to other Europeans. The typical German on holiday is looking for rest and relaxation and this is what clearly distinguishes Germans, as indeed, Austrians, from the average European.

Other Europeans do not have nearly as clear preferences. When deciding where to go for their next holiday, aspects such as lovely, friendly people, the culture and gastronomy of the country, curiosity about a particular country and the fact that they have been there several times before are also important.

## Germany as a holiday destination?

As a holiday destination, to European holiday-makers, Germany comes somewhere in the upper middle of the league table.

Most visitors to Germany come from the Russian Federation, with one in ten Russians considering Germany their ideal holiday destination. However, with 15 per cent, France is even higher in the Russian ranking. A desire to travel, along with art, culture and history is what attracts the Russian holiday-maker to France and Germany.

The Poles, Portugese, Americans and Dutch also give Germany the thumbs up as a holiday destination, although it does not come at the top of the list of any of these nationalities.

## Britain does it for the Americans

Whereas Europeans prefer to spend their holidays in Italy, France and Spain, one quarter of all American tourists choose the UK. And those who are put off by the British weather head for Italy.

In third place, but way behind on the American list of top holiday destinations, are France and Germany.

More than half of holidaying Americans are keen on nature and scenery, as well as art, culture and history. Those going in for the arduous journey to Europe opt to visit countries they have not been to before. As could be expected, the climate, sun and beaches are of lesser importance.

## The survey

These and other findings from the survey of the most popular holiday destinations in Europe, with particular reference to the Germans, were produced by the GfK EURO BUSÂ® network. Each of the 13 participating GfK subsidiaries surveyed approx. 1,000 representatively selected respondents in their own countries by telephone or face-to-face interview. The

total number of respondents selected at random amounted to 14,399 in Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Spain, Sweden, the UK and the USA.

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