

Types of Tourist Destinations

Tourist destinations can be divided into three broad categories. These are:

- Coastal areas – where tourists enjoy relaxing on the beaches and other activities connected with the sea.
- Countryside areas- where tourists can undertake a range of outdoor activities, including winter sports in mountain areas
- Tourist towns and cities – which may have significant historic or cultural attractions or be important for business travellers.

Coastal areas

Why do tourists visit coastal areas?

- In the UK early tourists believed that the sea air and bathing in seawater was good for a person's health and coastal towns such as Brighton became popular.
- Coastal areas are often cooler than places inland. So, on hot days people go to the beach to cool off and swim in the sea.
- Many people enjoy relaxing on a beach. In the past sunbathing was very popular, although today tourists are more aware of the dangers of too much sun.
- There is a wide range of activities which can be undertaken on a beach or in the sea.
- Coastal areas are appealing to many tourists, because of the landscape of cliffs and beaches.



Many activities can be enjoyed in coastal areas.

The United Kingdom

Brighton in West Sussex and Bournemouth in Dorset were amongst the first coastal towns to develop as tourism destinations, along with Blackpool in the north of England and Scarborough on the Yorkshire coast. These resorts have been tourism destinations for over 200 years.



Blackpool is a traditional British seaside resort, famous for its tower and beach as well as other attractions.

Apart from the major coastal resorts, many towns and villages along the coast of the United Kingdom have developed into seaside resorts. Examples of these include Tenby in south Wales, Llandudno in north Wales, Weston-Super-Mare in Somerset and Newquay in Cornwall.



Llandudno is the major coastal resort in North Wales, with a fine sandy beach.

In most cases, seaside towns such as those mentioned have a sandy beach as one of the main attractions. Early tourists arrived by train, stayed in hotels and other accommodation close to the beach and spend a great deal of their time there. More recently, tourists have become more demanding and are looking for a wider range of attractions, which have had to be provided by the resorts.



Tenby is a traditional seaside resort in West Wales.

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In the late 1930's the Butlins holiday camps brought a new type of tourist to coastal resorts. Today, Butlins holiday centres are still operating at three coastal resorts; Minehead, Skegness and Bognor Regis.

Away from the major coastal resorts and seaside towns, many other areas of the British coast are important tourism destinations. A number of National Parks, including the Pembrokeshire Coast, North Yorkshire Moors and Exmoor include coastal areas within them.



Part of the Dorset Coast is a World Heritage Site.

Europe

Millions of tourists visit the coastal areas of Europe each year, with some 200 million people visiting the coast of the Mediterranean Sea!

Many United Kingdom residents travel to European coastal areas and resorts each year. The coastal areas of Europe receive significant numbers of domestic visitors each year as well.

The important coastal destinations in Europe are:

- The Mediterranean coast and islands
- The Atlantic coast of Portugal, Spain and France



There are a number of tourist destinations around the coast of the Mediterranean Sea.

The Mediterranean Coast and islands

The Mediterranean coast receives millions of tourists each year and over the last forty years many towns and villages along the coast have developed into tourist resorts. This is especially true in the case of Spain where settlements which were once small fishing villages, such as **Marbella**, **Benidorm** and **Lloret de Mar**, are now popular destinations.

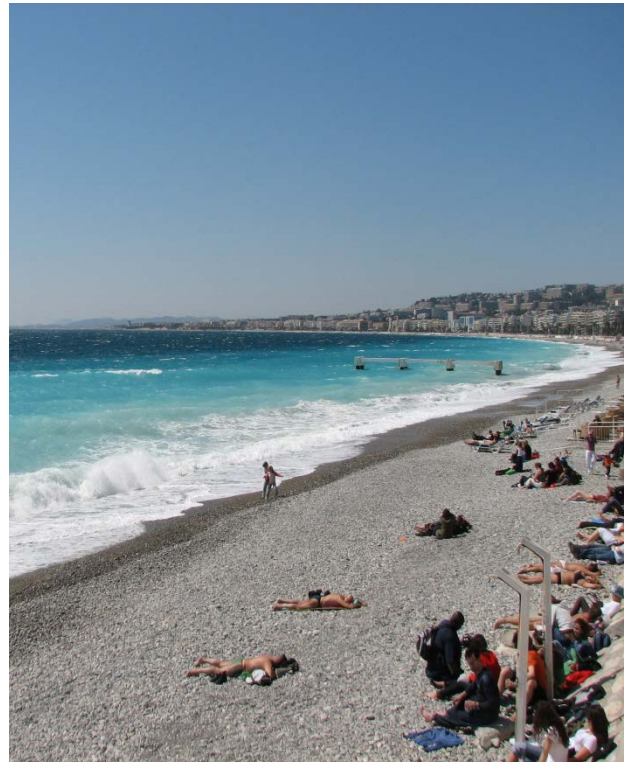
Although there are resorts all along the Spanish coast, a number of specific 'costas' or coastal areas are identified. These include, the **Costa del Sol** in the south and the **Costa Blanca** centred around Alicante.

The Balearic islands of **Majorca**, **Minorca** and **Ibiza** also have many resorts, as do the Spanish owned **Canary Islands**.

Parts of the Mediterranean coast in France have long been associated with tourism. The '**French Riviera**' which includes the resort towns of Antibes and Saint Tropez as well as the towns of **Nice**, **Cannes** and the principality of **Monaco**, is well-known for being 'up-market', sophisticated and expensive and a traditional coastal destination for the rich and famous. The Mediterranean coast of France receives many domestic tourists as well as international visitors each year.

The French Riviera has a number of established 'up-market' resorts.

Italy has a long Mediterranean coastline but tourism along much of the coast is not as developed as it is in France and Spain. The north east coastal areas on the Adriatic Sea have developed resorts, the largest of which is Rimini. Smaller coastal resorts are found around the coast of Italy as well as the islands of **Sicily** and **Sardinia**.



Greece has been one of the most popular European countries for United Kingdom tourists over recent years with more tourists visiting the many islands rather than going to mainland Greece. **Corfu** and **Kos** have been amongst the most popular with package holidaymakers and increasingly with independent travellers and second home owners.

Kos is typical of many of the islands of Greece.



Types of Tourist Destination

The countries of Spain, France, Italy and Greece have between them most of the important coastal destinations of the Mediterranean. All of these countries have summers which are reliably hot and dry as well as attractive coastal scenery with sandy beaches in many places.

Other countries along the Mediterranean coast which receive tourists include **Croatia, Slovenia** and **Turkey**. Croatia in particular has seen an increase in tourism in recent years along the Dalmatian coast of the Adriatic Sea. The islands of Cyprus and Malta are also important destinations.



Tourism to Croatia has increased in recent years.



Malta is popular UK tourists because of the historic connections with the island. Red post boxes and telephone boxes can still be found.

The Atlantic Coast

The Atlantic Ocean is colder than the Mediterranean, so the temperature of the sea, as well as many of the coastal areas, is not as warm.

An important destination in the south of Europe on the Atlantic Coast is the **Algarve**. This area, stretching approximately 100 kilometres west from the main gateway of Faro, is an established destination, with small resorts and excellent sandy beaches and rocky headlands.

The Atlantic coast of France is an important destination for tourists from the United Kingdom because it is easy to drive to, using cross channel ferries. In the south, the Landes area is virtually one long beach stretching 200 kilometres.



The Atlantic coast of France has long beaches and waves for surfing.

The area has many campsites and mobile homes with small resorts which only come to life in the summer months. Unlike the Mediterranean, the Atlantic coast provides opportunities for **surfing**, which is becoming increasingly popular.

The northern coast of France has a long tradition of tourism. Resorts such as **Deauville** and **Le Touquet** developed because they were amongst the closest coastal areas to Paris. These resorts have casinos and grand hotels which are not as popular now as they were in the past. The area is still popular with domestic tourists and towns such as **Boulogne**, **Calais** and **St Malo**, are popular with United Kingdom tourists on short breaks and even day trips, using cross-channel ferries and the **Channel Tunnel**.

Countryside Areas

Throughout the United Kingdom and Europe there are a number of countryside areas which attract a large number of tourists, mainly because of the quality of scenery and the range of natural attractions such as lakes, mountains and hills found within these areas.

Very often, countryside areas also contain attractive towns and villages. In popular areas these settlements provide accommodation such as camp sites, small hotels and bed and breakfast. The farming landscape of fields, crops and animals can also form part of the attraction of certain areas.



The appeal of Dartmoor, as in many National Parks, is added to by the farming landscape and pretty villages.

Most areas of countryside which are identified as tourism destinations provide a range of activities for their visitors. These activities include adventure tourism options such as mountaineering, rock climbing, caving and abseiling.

Climbing is a popular activity in some countryside areas.



Water-based activities including sailing on lakes and canoeing or rafting on rivers are also common. Cycling and walking are other popular activities. Additionally, winter sports destinations can also be classified as countryside areas. These are found mainly in **France, Austria and Switzerland**, although there are a few ski resorts in the highlands of **Scotland**.



Winter sports resorts are found in countryside areas.

Many people enjoy visiting countryside areas by car and it is generally the case that many of these visitors do not travel far from their vehicles. These visitors require car parking areas and picnic sites close to roads. This type of tourist activity is often referred to as 'a view, a brew and a loo!' Very often these represent day visits to the area as opposed to overnight staying visitors.



Many people require picnic sites close to car parks in countryside areas.

National Parks and protected areas

National Parks are areas of countryside which are protected because of their special qualities. These areas also provide visitors with leisure and tourism activities.

National Parks, such as Snowdonia in North Wales, are important tourism destinations.



All National Parks within the United Kingdom and Europe are areas of countryside and are popular tourism destinations. Although the precise purpose and definition of National Parks varies from country to country, all are areas of special landscapes with outstanding scenery. As well as the National Parks in the United Kingdom there are 22 in Italy, 15 in Germany and similar numbers in other European countries. The people who manage National Parks have to balance the need to protect the natural environment and scenery of the area with the needs of tourists who wish to appreciate and enjoy the landscape and special qualities of the parks. Very often, the communities living within the parks depend very much on the income from tourism, and so the needs of the local people also have to be taken into account.

The village of Llanberis in north Wales, relies very much on the income from tourists visiting Snowdonia National Park.





Reducing speed limits is one way in which the environment of Dartmoor National Park can be protected. Lower speeds cause less pollution and cars are less likely to kill the animals which live in the park.

Apart from National Parks, other countryside areas which are protected in some way, are also popular tourism destinations. Within the United Kingdom, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) have been established. These areas are similar to National Parks and contain special landscapes with a distinctive character. However, they are not subject to the same level of planning control as the National Parks.

Tourist towns and cities

All towns and cities attract some tourists. Even the most unattractive industrial towns will receive business tourists and people visiting friends and relations. So, it is not easy to say what a tourist town or city is!

The list of factors below will help to identify tourist towns.

- Tourist towns and cities are recognised as tourism destinations in their own right. Cities such as Barcelona and Paris are examples of cities which receive large numbers of tourists.
- Tourist towns and cities are mainly associated with leisure tourism.
- Tourist towns and cities have a range of major attractions within them, which appeal to a wide range of tourist types.



The London Eye is one of the major attractions in the city.

- Tourist towns and cities are often, but by no means always, capital cities with government buildings or royal palaces being amongst the attractions.
- Tourist towns and cities have a range of facilities to support tourist activities. These may include tourist buses providing tours, tourist information centres and restaurants catering for tourists needs.



Tourist buses are a good way for tourists to explore a city.

- Tourist towns and cities will have guide books written about them and guiding services will be available.
- Many tourist towns and cities have established entertainment areas with theatres and restaurants, such as the West End in London.
- Tourist towns and cities will have a range of accommodation available to meet the needs of different types of tourists.



A good range of accommodation is important for tourist towns and cities.

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- Tourist towns and cities may well be featured in the brochures of tour operators, providing package holidays and short breaks to the city.
- Tourist towns and cities may be associated with sporting events, facilities and stadiums. For example, most visitors to Barcelona visit the Olympic complex and the Nou Camp Stadium.



Cardiff is a good example of a tourist city.

- Certain tourist towns and cities are associated with leisure shopping which may be the primary reason for visiting the city. For example, visits to New York are popular for pre-Christmas shopping and Christmas markets are popular in European cities.



New York attracts many UK visitors for pre-Christmas shopping.

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Visits to tourist towns and cities are not weather dependent, so visits may occur all-year-round.



Bath is a tourist city with a range of heritage attractions.

Investigating Tourist Towns and Cities

The list below can be used to investigate tourist towns and cities.

Introduction – The location of the city and special qualities.

Climate – Temperature and rainfall information. How this might affect tourist activity.

Landscape - Hills, rivers and coastal features within and around the city.

Travel to the city

- By air – flight times, location of airports, airlines serving the city.
- By sea – ferry services.
- By rail – length of journey and costs, details of rail companies.
- By road – journey times and distances from other cities.

• **Travel within the city**

- Public Transport – details and costs of bus and metro systems.
- Taxis – typical costs.

- **Key Attractions** – The ‘must do’ attractions which many tourists will visit. Summaries of the appeal of each attraction, costs and opening times.

- **Other Attractions** – Smaller, perhaps unusual attractions which might appeal to particular types of tourists.

• **City tours**

- Tourist buses – routes and costs.
- Walking tours.
- Other tours – by boat or bicycle.

- **Excursions** - Day or half-day visits to places outside of the city.

• **Accommodation**

- Business accommodation.
- Luxury accommodation.
- Budget accommodation.

- **Eating out** – recommendations for places (restaurants and specific areas or streets) to eat for tourists on different budgets.