

Tourists More Put Off by Epidemic than by Terrorist Attack or Natural Disaster Reveals Skyscanner Poll



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What are the biggest deterrents for travelers when choosing a destination? New research from [cheap airfare](#) comparison site Skyscanner.com reveals that a third of travelers (31%) felt an epidemic would be the biggest reason to avoid traveling to a vacation destination; followed closely by a terrorist attack (21%), civil unrest (20%) and natural disasters (17%).

While Thailand, which is currently experiencing conflict in the capital of Bangkok, would be pleased to know that recent protests may not prove to have a direct, negative- impact tourism this year, they may be less pleased by the fact that the study also revealed travelers are likely to postpone travelling to a destination hit by civil unrest by up to a year.

The survey, carried out on over 300 Skyscanner users, showed they would also wait 12 months to visit an area hit by an epidemic, while most tourists would feel comfortable returning to somewhere hit by natural disaster or terrorist attack, after just three months.

Following the swine flu outbreak in Mexico during April 2009, interest in the country immediately plummeted. However, one year on, in April 2010, thoughts of swine flu appear to have been long gone with flight searches up by 164%.

In some cases, evidence even shows that a natural disaster can actually lead to an increase of visitors in the long term due to raising the profile of a destination. New York, for example, claims that after an initial dip in tourists following 9/11, visitor figures have now surpassed original numbers, with Ground Zero becoming a tourist attraction itself. The city of Madrid also reported a similar pattern with hotel bookings up, following the 2004 Madrid bombings.

Scot Carlson, Country Manager for the US and Canada states: "Considering the eminent threat the current oil spill poses to Louisiana and Alabama's coastal cities -many of which depend on, among other things, the revenues-earned from local tourism- hopefully this study will prove encouraging. This spill not only threatens the local wildlife and environment, but the economic livelihood of the people as well. I hope that the attention brought to the region by both Katrina, and now the oil spill helps to raise national interest in protecting and preserving this beautiful part of the country for future generations."

About

Skyscanner:

Skyscanner is a leading travel search site, providing instant online comparison on flight prices for over 670,000 routes on over 600 airlines, featuring the best [airfare deals to Europe](#), as well as [cheap airfares to Bangkok](#), London and many of the world's major cities.

Users can browse without having to enter specific dates or even destinations, and Skyscanner offers a choice of 23 different language sites including French, German and Spanish.

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