

Holiday firms expect 'Sunshine Saturday' bookings to return to pre-Covid levels

Holiday companies expect bookings to reach or even exceed pre-coronavirus levels on Saturday.

The first Saturday of the year is known as Sunshine Saturday by the travel industry as it is typically the most popular day to book a foreign trip.

Trade association ABTA said tour operators and travel agents expect this Saturday will be "one of the busiest for a number of years" due to the UK scrapping Covid restrictions except for arrivals from China.

It commissioned a poll of 2,000 consumers which indicated that 61 per cent of people are planning to take an overseas holiday this year.

Some 31 per cent of respondents to a separate survey of 500 people said they plan to book a holiday earlier than normal in an attempt to get the best price.

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Abta chief executive Mark Tanzer said: “The start of the year usually brings lots of enthusiasm for booking holidays and we know many people will be really looking forward to getting away in 2023.

“People’s appetite for holiday taking has remained remarkably resilient despite the ongoing pressure on people’s finances, though there’s definitely a strong focus on securing great value for money.

“Our number one piece of advice is to book with a reputable travel company, such as an ABTA member travel agent or tour operator, who can help you find the holiday you’re looking for at the price you want to pay.”

Abta said there is a trend for more people choosing holiday locations closer to home this year.

[Spain](#) is expected to retain its position as the most popular foreign destination for UK holidaymakers this year.

There is also strong demand for [Greece](#), [Turkey](#) and Italy.