



## **MARKET: UK, leisure**

*Per 25th May 2020*

# CHALLENGES

## Operational challenges

- Many staff are on furlough which puts a **lot of pressure on the rest of the staff**. It's been a huge job contacting all customers who were due to travel and advise them on their options.
- Most tour operators **have not received any refunds from airlines** since March and are still waiting.

## Booking challenges

- **Flights:** Norwegian and SAS schedules are **available ONLY 1 year in advance** which makes things difficult. Ryanair and Wizzair have now published more than a year in advance which helps a lot.
- **Accommodation:** Many hotel rates are **not available yet for 2021** via booking systems, but it usually works to contact the hotel directly.
- **Re-booking:** There are **availability issues for next year**. Tour operators wish to book customers that are re-booking for summer 2021 asap as they think big demand might be an issue.

# BOOKING SITUATION

- Most have cancelled all departures up to 30 June and **suspect they will cancel July and August** in due course.
- Many customers are **happy to re-book** (but mainly for same time next year). Priority now is to get the packages for 2021 priced and ready. One tour operator say 'most of the Norwegian summer itineraries finish in September so we don't have may bookings as yet for these later season dates. They tend to come in late spring but haven't due to the corona crisis.' **Norway winter holidays will be on websites soon.** They think the winter season will be quieter than usual but **hoping to get some Norway bookings in.**
- **There aren't many new bookings** as customers are unsure about the future. Norway's travel ban until 20 August will not only affect Norway but the trips that go to Scandinavia which include Norway.
- Tour operators haven't really had any new bookings to Norway during lock down but on the other hand **no cancellations for the autumn/winter season yet.**

# OTHER

## Positive image of Norway:

Another tour operator says “It’s been wonderful to see the **travel industry working together** to get a good and fair solution for everyone”.

- One tour operator sates ‘**Norway has done well this year** especially given the public positive perception of how Norway handled the pandemic.’
- **Space, nature and outdoor activities** will be of high demand.

## Information for the Norwegian travel industry:

- Encourage local suppliers, hotels and activity providers, to have **the rates ready for 2021 and keep the rates the same as this year** for those who are postponing their holidays to next year.
- **High end, self-contained cabins/apartments and chalets style accommodation** and possibly self-cater can be on high demand once people start to book again. We anticipate people wanting to base themselves ideally in a self-contained unit for their family.
- One tour operator speaks of the great success they’ve had with their rail itineraries from London and would like to develop similar road-trips from London even to Scandinavia as **people begin reviewing their relationship with flying**. They are searching for the best options for **traveling to Norway by road, rail and sea**.



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