

Co-op reports Egypt half-term boost

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The Co-operative Travel is seeing a huge increase in demand for Egypt for the October half-term. Holidays to Sharm El Sheikh have increased by 142% compared to last year's autumn half-term period, according to a report based on more than 1,000 bookings.

This rise has gone hand-in-hand with a significant fall in the cost of holidays to the resort, with the average selling price for a family holiday dropping by 20.7% from the same period last year, from £2,394 to £1,898 while the price of holidays to Tenerife have risen by 14.7%.

Sterling's fall to a six-month low of 1.0628 euros to the pound is also cited as contributing to the shift in destination choice for families, with Spain in particular losing out. Majorca for example has been knocked off the top spot into fourth place.

Director of retail distribution Trevor Davis said: "Holiday destinations such as Tenerife will always be popular in October as they offer good weather with relatively short flight times.

"However, there has been a shortage of late deals this year and with the euro still high, families are looking further afield for value for money.

"Resorts such as Sharm El Sheikh also benefit from having a large selection of all-inclusive hotels, so families can budget for their holiday before they travel."

Trevor also warns that the holiday industry must do more to help families wanting to travel further to find better deals.

"Our research shows that 82% of families stick to European destinations because they are worried about the complications of travelling with children and also because of family unfriendly practices like low baggage allowances that fail to account for the extra needs of family groups," he said.

"We've made sure that families travelling with us will get a better service, extending free kids' places and giving a 20kg luggage allowance on selected holidays.

"Our aim is to encourage parents to feel more comfortable taking children abroad and we hope the rest of the industry will follow our lead."

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