**KAYAK reveals best island holidays in Europe**

* *Flight searches for European islands increased by 11% compared to pre-pandemic summer 2019*
* *Malta beats 50 other European islands as a holiday destination*

[KAYAK](https://www.kayak.co.uk/), the world’s leading travel search engine, has today unveiled its ultimate ranking of the best island holiday destinations in Europe, with Crete, Greece, topping the list. Malta took 20th place in the big competition among 70 islands.

As European borders reopen, it appears many are hoping for a seaside escape. Flight searches across Europe for island destinations have surpassed pre-pandemic 2019 levels by 11%\*. And with so many beautiful and diverse islands in Europe to choose from, [KAYAK’s new ranking](https://www.kayak.co.uk/c/best-european-islands/) helps travellers narrow down their searches to find their ideal destination.

To develop the ranking, KAYAK collected data on 70 islands across Europe based on seven different categories: weather, flight accessibility, pricing (hotels, car hire, restaurants and local food and transport costs), things to do, child-friendliness, COVID-19 safety and sustainability. These categories were then measured against 19 unique sub-factors to determine which islands offer tourists the best all-round experience as well as those that are best suited to travellers’ specific needs, including best family holidays, budget-friendly destinations, off-season favourites, secluded holidays and more.

So without further ado, the top rankings are:

**The best island holiday in Europe:** Crete, Greece

With warm high-season temperatures, sandy and sustainable beaches, and reasonable prices for hotels, restaurants and local food and transport, Crete steals the show when it comes to the perfect island holiday. Tenerife came in close second with great temperatures, cheap hotel prices as well as an amazing number of natural trails for outdoor travellers.Cyprus followed in third place, with good ratings across the board including good weather and high quantity of sights to explore.

Top five overall best island destinations in Europe are:

1. Crete, Greece
2. Tenerife, Spain
3. Cyprus
4. Lanzarote, Spain
5. Gran Canaria, Spain

Sub-category winners for KAYAK’s European island ranking include:

**The best islands for an active holiday**

The top ten ranking for active holidays included a diverse set of countries including Iceland, France and Italy, but it was Tenerife, Spain that came out on top due to endless natural scenery and mesmerising hiking trails. Malta took 12th spot in this category.

**The best islands for seclusion**

For those wanting to escape the crowds, the island of Hiiumaa’s low population density and comparatively low popularity make it the perfect place to enjoy your island get-away and take in the magnificent sights in a secluded environment. Scotland’s Lewis and Harris island came in at number two for secluded getaways, followed by the Lofoten Islands in Norway. These islands are in the biggest contrast to Malta and Mallorca.

**The best islands for off-season vacations**

The Canary Islands are perfect for an off-season get-away, mainly due to the fantastic year-round weather. For those seeking winter sun, Cyprus and the Greek Islands also scored highly for warm and dry off-season weather. Malta kept a strong 11th position when it comes to off-season travelling thanks to its mild temperatures and low precipitation in the off-season months.

**The best islands for a beach holiday**

While there are several European islands boasting beautiful beaches, Crete is the overall winner for beach holidays due to its high in-season temperatures, Blue Flag certified sandy beaches, and low precipitation levels.

**The best islands for families with kids**

The overall number one ranking Crete scores again on top when it comes to family friendly islands, due to the island’s high number of amusement parks, beach hotels and sandy beaches. Sardinia, Italy and Cyprus rounded up the top two and three spots.

**The best island budget destinations**

Bozcaada takes the top spot as the best budget island destination due to its relatively low cost for things like hotel prices, local shopping, and transport. Next to the Turkish islands, other budget destinations include Greek, Spanish and Portuguese islands, all of which offer travellers the chance to enjoy their holiday to the fullest while keeping average expenditure down.

To view the full breakdown of European island rankings, visit [kayak.co.uk/c/best-european-islands](https://www.kayak.co.uk/c/best-european-islands/).

Before planning your journey, be sure to check the latest travel restrictions in your destination. Our [travel restrictions map](https://www.kayak.co.uk/travel-restrictions) provides real time updates on COVID-19 restrictions and entry requirements of individual countries around the world.

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\*Based on searches made on KAYAK between 1 June and 14 July 2021, for travel between 1 June and 30 September 2021, compared to searches made between 1 June and 14 July 2019 for travel between 1 June and 30 September 2019.

\*\*\*All sources have been accessed and data retrieved between 15 June and 18 July 2021. The numbers collected are based on the latest available data. For full details on the European Island ranking, please see [Methodology](https://www.kayak.co.uk/c/best-european-islands/#methodology).

**ABOUT KAYAK**

KAYAK, part of Booking Holdings (NASDAQ: BKNG), is the world's leading travel search engine. With billions of queries across our platforms, we help people find their perfect flight, stay, hire car, cruise, or holiday package. We’re also transforming the in-travel experience with our app and new accommodation software. For more information, visit [www.KAYAK.co.uk](http://www.kayak.com).