

# 3

## Travel destinations

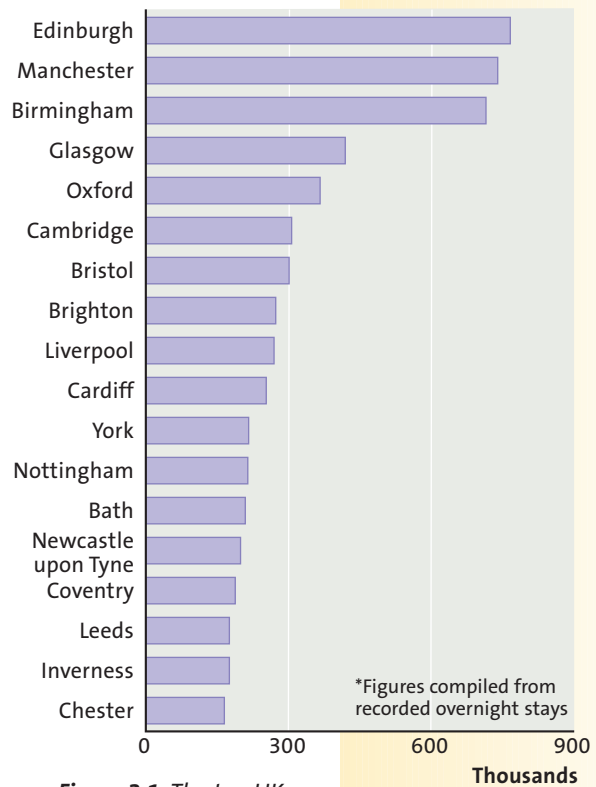
### Starter: where tourists go

People travel mostly for leisure (e.g. on holiday), for business reasons or to visit friends and relatives (VFR). The places tourists visit are tourist destinations. Destinations for business tourists are predominantly cities, often capital cities, and certainly places where industry and commerce are concentrated. In capital cities like London, the transport and accommodation provider sectors of the travel and tourism industry cater for business (as well as leisure) tourists, who use the city as a central place to meet colleagues from around the UK and beyond.

#### Types of destination

Leisure tourist destinations include cities too. London is a major UK destination. Figure 3.1 shows the UK towns most visited by overseas visitors (excluding London) in 2003. London alone had 11.7 million overnight stays by inbound tourists that year – more than 13 times as many as Edinburgh, the second most-visited city by overseas residents.

Many cities are holiday destinations. World cities much visited by leisure tourists from the UK include New York, Paris, Barcelona, Rome, Amsterdam, Prague, Cape Town and Bangkok. The locations of these cities are shown on Figures 3.2 and 3.3.



**Figure 3.1** The top UK towns visited (excluding London) by number of overseas tourists, 2003\*

#### Discussion point

Over half of all inbound tourist visits to the UK include at least one night spent in London. Why should this be so?



**Figure 3.2**  
Some major long-haul destinations

Types of destination other than cities include:

- Coastal areas, including seaside resorts — for example, Cancun, Palma, Mallorca, Cannes, the Greek Islands, Goa, the Maldives, Phuket and Australia's Gold Coast. Not all coastal areas that are destinations for leisure tourists are resorts — for example, Australia's Great Barrier Reef.
- Countryside regions such as mountains, lakes and forests. Winter sports resorts in mountainous areas such as the Rockies and the Alps become centres for climbers, walkers and tourists wanting to see spectacular scenery in the summer months. Countryside destinations include the National Parks of western USA and Canada (including spectacular sights such as the Grand Canyon), and the UK (including the Lake District). Uluru (Ayers Rock) in Australia, the safari destinations of Africa and the Black Forest in Germany are also countryside destinations.
- Historical and cultural destinations, including regions like the Peruvian Andes, where Inca ruins like Machu Picchu are a major draw.
- Religious centres such as Rome and Makkah.
- Purpose-built resorts such as Disneyland Paris and Sun City in South Africa.

Classifying holiday destinations is, like all classification systems, not entirely straightforward. Some destinations clearly belong to more



than one classification. For example, Rome is a major city tourist destination, much visited for historical and cultural reasons (Figure 3.4) as well as religious ones. However, it is useful to understand the range of tourist destinations that UK leisure travellers visit.

**Figure 3.3** Some major short-haul destinations

### Short-haul and long-haul destinations

Travel destinations visited by UK tourists are domestic if they are within the UK, short-haul if they are in Europe and in North Africa (for example, Morocco, Tunisia and Egypt), or in near Asia (examples include the Israeli Red Sea coast and most of Turkey), and long-haul if they are beyond that. Figures 3.2 and 3.3 show some major short-haul and long-haul travel destinations.

UK tourists travelling abroad are outbound from the UK. Inbound tourists to the UK are people visiting from abroad. Figure 1.2 (see the Starter in Unit 1) shows the top ten countries from which inbound tourists came to visit the UK in 2003.

## Scale

The scale of tourist destinations varies. At the smallest end of the range are single settlements such as resorts, which are usually towns or cities. UK examples are Brighton, Harrogate and Edinburgh. Villages can also be leisure tourist destinations, e.g. Grasmere in the Lake District or Bourton-on-the-Water in the Cotswolds.

On a larger scale, whole areas, regions or countries can be tourist destinations, e.g. in the UK, the Antrim Coast, Snowdonia and Scotland are tourist destinations at a regional and national scale. Outside the UK, the French Riviera, the Costa del Sol and Mauritius are also tourist destinations. Much larger countries such as Australia and the USA can be referred to as tourist destinations, although in reality many tourists spend much or all of their stay in a part, or several parts, of such large countries so their actual destinations are on a smaller scale.

For study purposes, resorts, cities, defined regions (such as the Algarve or the Norwegian Fjords) or small countries (e.g. islands such as Barbados) are a manageable scale of destination.

## Itinerant tourism

Tourists may arrive at a particular destination and stay there, perhaps with a few excursions, for the duration of their holiday. Such single-centre holidays are often resort-based main holidays (e.g. 2 weeks in Bodrum, Turkey) or city-break short stays (e.g. a long weekend in Budapest, Hungary).

*Figure 3.4 The Colosseum — Rome is a popular tourist destination for historical and cultural reasons*



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**Itinerant tourists** do not do this. They move around during their holiday, staying at several settlement destinations (resorts, villages or towns) within a larger destination area. A sightseeing tour of Australia, a cruise around the Greek Islands or a backpacking trip through Southeast Asia are examples of itinerant tourism. Independent travellers are often itinerant tourists. Tourists booking flight-only to an American **gateway** such as Miami and hiring a car to drive along the Gulf of Mexico coast to New Orleans, staying in roadside motels en route, are an example. A gateway is a point of entry into a country. Gateway airports are those that accept international flights bringing incoming tourists. Other gateway points of entry to a country include ports and land frontier crossings (both road and rail).

An example of a package holiday tour that is also itinerant tourism is shown in Figure 3.5.



**Figure 3.5** An example of an itinerant tour route in Italy

## Tourist-generating and tourist-receiving areas

**Tourist-generating areas** are regions where tourists normally live and work and from which they travel for business or leisure purposes, or to visit friends and relatives (VFR). **Tourist-receiving areas** are regions which people visit for business or leisure purposes or to visit friends and relatives. It is possible for an area to be both a tourist-generating and a tourist-receiving area. One such example is London. Londoners travel throughout the UK and the world for leisure and business tourism and to visit friends and relatives. At the same time, the 11.7 million nights spent in London in 2003 by overseas tourists alone brought £5.9 billion of spending to the city — a major economic benefit.

Traditionally, densely populated urban areas in industrialised countries were tourist-generating areas. In the early development of mass travel and tourism following the Industrial Revolution (see Chapter 1.3), many tourists travelled from the polluted cities to seaside resorts such as Blackpool, Scarborough and Brighton in the UK, and Coney Island near New York in the USA. Countryside destinations such as the English Lake District (Figure 3.6) and the Peak District also became tourist-receiving areas.

As travel and tourism further afield developed in the twentieth century, with higher disposable incomes, paid holidays, the introduction of package holidays and the development of jet aircraft, Florida in the USA and Mediterranean resorts in Europe became popular tourist-receiving areas. In the case of Florida, US tourists travelling south for the warmer weather first fuelled this growth. By the late twentieth century, Florida had become a long-haul tourist-receiving area for tourists from other parts of the world, including from the UK.

The growth of mass tourism to Mediterranean Europe created a north–south divide, with colder, northern European industrial and

*Figure 3.6 Keswick town centre: the English Lake District became a tourist-receiving area following the Industrial Revolution*



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urban regions being tourist-generating areas and warmer, southern European seashores being tourist-receiving areas. The expansion of long-haul tourism changed this pattern, at least to some extent, making the more economically developed countries (MEDCs) tourist-generating areas and the less economically developed countries (LEDCs) tourist-receiving areas. However, the real picture is more complicated, with tourists flowing in both directions.

**Discussion point**

To what extent is it true that the industrial North is made up of tourist-generating areas and the warmer South of tourist-receiving areas?

**Support your learning****Information sources**

- 1 Tour operator brochures and websites, travel guidebooks and travel atlases are sources of information about travel destinations.
- 2 Up-to-date sources of statistical information include the National Statistics website at [www.statistics.gov.uk](http://www.statistics.gov.uk) and the accompanying *Travel Trends* report that can be downloaded from it.

**Skills builder**

Graph and analyse statistics accessed from up-to-date sources.

**Activities menu**

- 1 Compile a table giving travel destinations. Classify your destinations by type and by whether, for UK tourists, they are domestic, European, other short-haul or long-haul destinations.
- 2 *Vocational scenario*  
Imagine a short-haul tour operator has decided to introduce a limited number of long-haul destinations into its programme. You are employed as a consultant to propose these destinations.
  - a Produce a map showing the locations of your chosen destinations. Briefly justify the choices you make.
  - b Research and analyse the travel options open to the tour operator to transport its customers from the UK to one of your chosen destinations.
  - c Evaluate the appeal of one of your chosen destinations to any one customer type.