

Title:

Malta - Tackling The Timeshare Reps

Word Count:

790

Summary:

Visitors to Mediterranean holiday destinations are often confronted in their resort by timeshare reps, and for some it can spoil a hard earned break.

Malta is leading the fight to reclaim the streets for the holiday maker...

Keywords:

Malta, Malta hotels, holidays in Malta, Malta weather, Malta Map, Malta property, cheap Malta flights, Air Malta

Article Body:

Repeated incidents of visitors being confronted in the street while on holiday in Malta has led to the Maltese authorities taking action against the timeshare companies who employ sales staff to seek out possible visiting buyers.

Complaints have risen in recent years from holiday makers who have had their time on the island spoiled by being approached on a daily basis to attend presentations - that can last up to four hours - in the hope that some will buy into holiday property ownership and timeshares.

The Malta tourist authorities have seen the damage it is doing to the island's economy, and have decided to act.

'It has come to the stage in Malta', comments Roger Munns of Malta's travel guide YourMalta , 'that some holiday makers are being approached on a daily basis - sometimes twice a day - by timeshare touts who get paid a commission for every potential buyer they persuade to take to a presentation. As well as the feeling of not being able to go out without being accosted by these people some were giving verbal abuse to those who declined, or simply followed them down the street after being told no - and hounding tourists'.

With the holiday market vital to the Malta economy, the Malta Tourist Authority recognised that some visitors would be so put off the island by high pressure sales people that they wouldn't return - potentially losing Malta millions in lost revenue from repeat visitors.

'In today's world,' explain YourMalta, 'Malta has to compete with new destinations in Europe as well as Spain and her islands. Cheap Malta flights aren't in themselves enough to sustain tourism at reasonable levels anymore, although this will be welcome, but the trick of sustained tourism is to have repeat business, and timeshare touts bothering visitors to the island are enough in some cases to make sure that repeat visits don't happen.'

The legislation the tourist authorities needed to be able to protect the tourists has recently been passed, and the Malta Tourist Authority is planning to outsource security patrols to police the timeshare touts. And in a clever move designed to enforce the legislation effectively, the Malta Tourist Authority are being paid around 3000 Euros for each rep the timeshare companies employ for a bond that will allow them to work in a regulated way. Instead of waiting to take each incident through the courts the MTA will be fining the companies found breaking the rules and taking the money out of the deposited bond money, with the timeshare companies having to make it up immediately to the required amount.

Hotels In Malta

YourMalta say they welcome the stance the Malta Tourist Authority are taking to protect the visitors to the island, and cite recent examples of why action has become necessary.

In two recent cases, British tourists have been targetted, by young male and female timeshare reps, and while some were based outside hotels in Malta others were driving around in cars and stopping tourists as though they were going to ask for directions pointing to a map of Malta before delivering their sales pitch, with some more persistent than others.

The timeshare reps are predominantly from the UK and targetting UK tourists who visit the island for the good weather in Malta, and the UK is a main market for Malta. On occasions the British tourists have had to resort to threaten violence to be left in peace, with the timeshare reps retorting that they were only trying to make a living.

'In truth', comment YourMalta, 'While the timeshare reps are trying to make commission, for every penny they earn they could be losing the Malta economy far more with every approach they make as the tourists soon get fed up with the persistent efforts to sell them something they don't want. Those tourists are sometimes having their whole holiday spoiled and are less likely to return.'

The last thing the island needs is for tourists to step off their Air Malta

flight to be accosted before they even reach their hotel with a sales pitch that reminds them of double glazing salesmen back home. The Malta Tourist Authority tell us they will come down on any culprits like a ton of bricks.

We welcome the pro-active stance taken by the Malta Tourist Authority to protect the British visitor and to ensure that they can enjoy their holiday, which will hopefully be the first of many to Malta. The Malta Tourist Authority is to be commended for not only recognising the problem, but taking action to ensure the Maltese economy doesn't lose millions in lost revenue from unhappy Brits who might otherwise take their spending money elsewhere in the future'.

Time alone will tell if Malta can protect her visitors.