

Title:

World Cup Creates Gripes, But Fans Set For Victory

Word Count:

420

Summary:

The television advertising is in full flow, football souvenirs are hitting the shops, and widescreen televisions are selling fast as UK fans try to get the best view of the matches, prior to the opening of the 2006 World Cup next month.

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Keywords:

airports, flying, travel. world cup, flights, hotels, credit cards

Article Body:

The television advertising is in full flow, football souvenirs are hitting the shops, and widescreen televisions are selling fast as UK fans try to get the best view of the matches, prior to the opening of the 2006 World Cup next month.

Current estimates indicate that about 100,000 British fans are expected to make the journey and travel to Germany at some point during the tournament. At the turn of the year, cheap airline tickets were selling out fast for the final stages, and predictions from BA for flights from London to Berlin (<http://www.britishairways.com/findaflight/europe/gb/flights/from/london-to-berlin.html>) around the final on 9 July were estimated to rise to £650 return, however, the addition of extra flights has meant that prices have been kept to a much more reasonable level.

Travel writer Simon Calder told the BBC that hotel costs could double in some cases, although short break hotel directory (<http://www.superbreak.com>) Superbreak has indicated that most hotels in the vicinity of each of the England matches are not surprisingly completely booked out by now. Many supporters have chosen to base themselves outside of the main hub of activity in Germany, by staying on the borders of neighbouring countries such as Luxembourg or France, where accommodation is still available and have not been hit by the spiraling costs within Germany.

Another common cause of complaint for UK supporters is the lack of tickets allocated for the England fans for their World Cup matches, which has been stirring up much consternation. With 8% of the tickets allocated to UK fans for each group game, making around 4,000-5,000 seats per match, while the sponsorship companies between them own about one in six of all the tickets for the entire tournament, approximately 500,000 seats. The chances therefore of getting a ticket are virtually non-existent, unless you manage to strike it lucky with a last-gasp chance through one of the sponsors' promotions like Barclaycard (<http://www.barclaycard.co.uk>).

This will not stop many of the fans however, who will still make the pilgrimage despite not having accommodation or match tickets, simply for the atmosphere. For those who decide not to travel to Germany there is still the opportunity to join in with the World Cup fever atmosphere as the UK pub, club and off-license trade is expecting to heavily reap the rewards of the competition through vastly increased custom especially by pubs across the country, with additional revenues of over £280million if England can make it through to the semi-final or higher.