Southern Europe braces for surge in Tourism protest

Published on May 1, 2025

Document Date: Mon, Apr 27 2026 10:20:44 am

Category: ,English,International -   ,Snippets

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BARCELONA – A wave of anti-tourism demonstrations is expected to sweep across popular

destinations in southern Europe this summer, as locals in Spain, Italy, Greece, and Portugal

express growing frustration over the strain mass tourism places on their daily lives and local

infrastructure.

From Barcelona to the Balearic Islands, and from Venice to Athens, residents and activist groups are organizing marches and sit-ins, aiming to draw attention to rising housing costs, overcrowded city centers, environmental degradation, and the disappearance of traditional communities.

Many locals blame short-term rentals and cruise ship arrivals for turning their hometowns into "theme parks for outsiders."

In Spain's Mallorca, protest organizers have called for restrictions on tourist arrivals and stronger protections for affordable housing. In Venice, activists are demanding tighter limits on cruise ship traffic and better regulation of Airbnb-style accommodations. Meanwhile, Greek islanders have voiced concerns about water shortages and ecosystem damage due to surging visitor numbers.

"Our towns are losing their soul. Tourism is no longer sustainable at this pace," said one protest leader from Lisbon, where gentrification has forced many families out of central neighborhoods.

Local authorities in several cities have acknowledged the grievances and say they are working on more balanced tourism policies, including visitor caps, increased taxes, and stricter licensing for rentals. However, many residents argue that government efforts have fallen short of solving deeper social issues.

With summer approaching and tourist bookings soaring, tensions are likely to rise further, prompting fresh debate over how Europe's most beloved destinations can preserve their identity

while remaining open to the world.