

Describe and explain the decline of traditional seaside resorts in many MEDCs in the past 30 years

Over the past 30 years the state of many seaside resorts in the UK and other MEDCs has been in a state of decline. Tourists are now travelling to cheaper LEDC resorts such as Northern Africa and Eastern Europe after suffering destination fatigue with traditional holiday resorts, as tourist numbers in destinations drop the income of an area begins to suffer and the multiplier effect from visitors stops, leading the whole area to suffer economic decline.



An example of a UK seaside resort in decline is Whitley Bay, Tyne and Wear. According to Butler's tourism model Whitley bay is in a state of sustained decline which is represented in its derelict hotels, arcades in a condition of disrepair and the vandalised and almost ruin-like remains of 'The Spanish City' a once busy amusement park in the late 1980's.

Butlers model of tourism for Whitley Bay, Tyne and Wear

Prior to the package holiday Whitley Bay attracted phsyco-centric tourists mostly from Northern England and Southern Scotland who would usually drive to the resort and spend up to two weeks enjoying all the beaches and attractions Whitley Bay had to offer.

Today with cheap weekend breaks to European resorts and better transport links to UK cities catering for even the most phsyco-centric tourists, Whitley Bay no longer receives tourists in the numbers it once did. As tourists declined so to did the state of many businesses who relied solely on the tourist sector e.g. hotels and arcades. With many buildings being left derelict from bankrupt businesses the area began to look untidy and, in some places unsafe, serving further to put off tourists from visiting, giving the decline of tourism a snowballing effect.

Despite £60 Million being invested in Whitley Bay by the government for the purpose of regeneration it is apparent that none of the redevelopment schemes ever really got off the ground. A revelation in local press was the report that over £40 000 had already been spent on consultancy with local contractors before any work had even begun.

An American example of a seaside resort in decline is Asbury Park, New Jersey. Throughout the late 1800's until the 1960's Asbury Park was marketed as the 'Jewel of the Jersey Shore' attracting near-phsycocentric tourists from across New Jersey and New York with its long stretches of beach offering sanitary bathing water to those from the city. Asbury Park, during the years to follow, played host to many movie premiers and concerts. Developments such as the large Asbury Park Casino and the Palace Amusements, containing a Ferris wheel and hand - carved carousel, along the resorts stretching boardwalk turned Asbury Park into an exclusive and expensive resort town during the 1920's. As the town continued to grow department stores were built in the new shopping district to cater for the needs of the New York tourists.

Several factors lead to the decline of Asbury Park, the sewage system under so much strain began to pollute the beaches in the 1980's sparking a health scare amongst tourists. Race riots in the early 1980's occurred in several cities in the USA and Asbury Park was no exception, due to the segregation and lack of opportunities for the Afro -American community in Asbury Park many participated in riots setting fire to stores, vandalising cars and diminishing the towns peaceful reputation . Access to air travel had increased over the years and the wealthy tourists originally attracted to Asbury Park though now suffering from destination fatigue could now afford to visit destinations worldwide. As tourist numbers dropped the multiplier effect ceased to function leading many businesses to compete amongst each other and inevitably many went out of business including the grand Asbury Park Casino and the Royal Amusements.

Today despite redevelopment attempts such as the

Butlers model of tourism for
Asbury Park, New Jersey

refurbishment of the boardwalk pavilion Asbury Park's tourist revenue has all but dried up with the exception of low -spending weekend visitors and elderly tourists who continue to visit the destination they can remember since childhood. The empty shell of the Asbury Park Casino still lies decaying as a reminder of the town's former grandeur however most hotels and amenities have been converted into flats and facilities for the towns now ageing population. Due to the redevelopment away from tourism to most areas of the resort the town in most places does not appear untidy or unsafe which is more than can be said for many seaside resorts in a state of sustained decline.

Although many seaside resorts in MEDC's are in a state of decline some, with the careful planning and aid of local authorities have managed to avoid falling into a state of decline. An example of this is Daytona Beach, Florida. From the early 1900's up until the 1990's Daytona Beach enjoyed huge revenue collected from a massive tourist industry. Daytona Beach attracted near-phsycocentric American families from all across the United States lured by its golden beaches, warm dry climate and prestigious hotels. The rise in tourism was aided by technological advances such as the dawn of the rail road allowing families to travel from all around America, Daytona itself was a centre for the testing of new automobiles along its wide, smooth beaches in the 1930's.

During the 1990's the development of cheap motel-like accommodation e.g. 'The Econolodge' began to attract less well off tourists especially students during the American 'Spring Break'. Although Daytona received record tourist numbers throughout the early 1990's the reputation of the city declined under the impression that Daytona was a 'party town' with high crime rates and a declining culture. As tourist numbers began to drop local government decided to take action. By investing in new developments of expensive hotels and amenities student numbers fell as they moved on to more affordable seaside resorts and by 2002 the number of spring breakers arriving in Daytona was insignificant enough to allow officials to stop estimating their numbers.

In order to restore Daytona Beach to its former years the local government set up the Daytona Bike Week in January 2000 and 'Biketoberfest' in the October of the same year. These rallies were intended to play on the cities history of vehicle testing and attract over 500 000 tourists from around the world for each 10 day event. In 2005 it was estimated that tourist numbers were around the same number as in

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1991 proving the development schemes had been successful in avoiding the sustained decline of the city.



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Daytona Beach, Florida