

HOW DOES TOURISM AFFECT COASTS?

Coastal areas are very known to all geographers for being classified as ideal erosional and depositional land-features. But, they are also very known to attract tourists. Coasts in England still to this day retain a special atmosphere; very much akin to the continental coasts which are bestowed with great beauty. No doubt tourism affects coasts in adverse and beneficial ways. Many people spend their annual holidays at the seaside. Coasts are fascinating places because of their wild life, scenery and opportunities for water sports, such as boating, fishing, swimming, water skiing and wind surfing.

Yet coastal resorts hardly existed before the seventeenth century. However, as travelling became easier in the nineteenth century, more people came to regard coasts as places of pleasure. Most visitors were wealthy and they wanted comfortable places with fine hotels and other services. Gradually, resorts sprang up and many coastal people found work in the growing tourist industry. After the Second World War (1939- 1945) as you know increased Annual Holidays and rising income caused a new development -more and more people living in cool, rainy countries chose to spend their holidays abroad, where the summers were always tropical and hot, unlike the unpredictable English summers. Some coasts such as Torremolinos in Southern Spain has been transformed by tourism. In Europe, the countries around the Mediterranean Sea benefited as visitors from Northern Europe began to encroach on their beaches. Spain, a popular destination, received six million tourists in 1960. The Spanish Government induces the tourist industry and trains people in the industry including hotel managers, guides and chefs among others. The government also scrutinises the services offered to tourists, trying to ensure that they enjoy themselves. As a result, tourism has become Spain's leading industry as Chadi mentioned before. By the mid 1980's Spain was entertaining over 40,000,000 visitors a year, and the tourist industry employed 10% of the Spanish workforce.

The growth of tourism has unfortunate side effects such as pollution and the construction of obscene buildings on once scenic coasts. Pollution even extenuates to the green and pleasant shores of England. For example, Brighton is a vivid scene of pollution and litter, no doubt, caused by tourists.

However, many magnificent coast line are now protected for future generations in such sanctuaries as the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park in Wales and the Acadia National Park in Maine, in the great USA. Also Great Britain boasts one such sanctuary called Torquay. (A continental flavour)

A special atmosphere is the continental legacy of Torquay, reflected in it's white buildings atop seven green hills and an atmosphere that tells you this is the place to be. It's intricate style stems from a town developed as a fashionable haven for visitors in the last century and can be seen in modern guise (pretence) in its thriving marina and smart shopping centres amid the elegant Victorian terraces and

its sweeping promenades hemmed in by sandy beaches and manicured gardens. But it's a place of contrasts too...

The casual daytime delights of sun - worship or visiting the numerous attractions give way naturally to evenings filled with entertainment ~ to the theatres and their famous shows, to the night-clubs, discotheques and casino, to the restaurants and hotels each offering their own speciality and to the lights illuminating the promenade and reflecting across one of Europe's most beautiful bays. And Torquay is no place to bask in former glory. New developments are making it a place with a future. There are new shopping facilities and restaurants like the elegant Pavilion convened from an Edwardian theatre and overlooking Torquay's international yacht marina, and the stylish Fleet Walk Shopping Centre with the finest of clothes shops, its winter garden and an entertainment programme that maintains that special continental feeling all the year round.

The new Hollywood Bowl brings a taste of America to Torquay's harbour side with the very latest technology in ten-pin bowling appealing to young and old alike. While the English Riviera Centre invites you to sample its leisure pool, complete with flume ride, spa pool and wave-making machine or its programme of top line entertainment.

On the other hand, there are some quandaries (difficulties) in Tor quay. Like most of Great Britain's 690 beaches, Torquay is affected by untreated domestic sewage. This problem could be cured either by treating the sewage before discharging in the sea, or, building longer outflow pipes. At present 85% of sewage is discharged within 100 metres of low water mark enabling tides and currents to bring the waste. Normally sunlight, oxygen, salt and bacteria in the sea can soon break down all the effluent deposited in it. Oil is frequently affecting beaches, but it only makes headlines after a serious accident such as the wreck of the Torrey Cannon (1967) and Amoco Cadiz (1978). These are two variables, which do affect coasts adversely; tourists do not incidentally cause these. Tourists do however affect coasts directly by littering. Tourists, themselves, do leave broken glass, disused cans and litter. So in actual fact tourists can contribute to destroying coasts.

Tourism is one of the fastest growing industries in the world today. It is an important factor in the economy of most developing nations (e.g. Spain) as the one possible way to obtain income and to create jobs. In Great Britain in the 18th Century, spa towns developed for the wealthy to "take the waters". By the late 19th Century or early 20th Century, many industrial labourers enjoyed a few days by the seaside. The annual holiday has become part of most families' way of life. My family makes sure we travel on holidays twice a year at the least, to "get away from it all." Over the last 20 years an increasing number British people including me are travelling abroad. The increasing pressures of modern life and for many an unattractive local environment, which encourages people to "get away from it all." People take holidays, when the foreign exchange rates are advantageous to us, which duly makes certain overseas holidays cheaper. Also there is the desire to experience other cultures (Long-haul holidays). The most important factor why people travel abroad is the unpredictability and unreliable British weather and the desire to find hot, dry, sunny places.

Meanwhile in Britain tourists can affect our coasts diversely. They can create jobs in the tourism industry, give the town a more prestigious name and liven up the atmosphere. On the other hand, seasonal workers come to the town and are a nightmare to the authorities. For come winter, they will be unemployed and on the government benefits. Elderly people also come to the coastal towns for the climate is more suited to them; there is less air pollution and less noise unlike the hustle and bustle of the cities. Tourists and elderly people also attract a more sinister minority. Crime is a menace wherever you go but in the seaside towns like Eastbourne and Bournemouth crime rates highly. Also another factor to consider is overcrowding. Traffic Congestion results so truly speaking the councils will have a hard task containing these dilemmas. In essence, coasts cannot survive without tourists and tourists cannot survive without coasts, wherever you are in the world! !
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