



Spain-Holiday.com
Holiday rentals in Spain

City Break Cost Index

Autumn/Winter 2017



Spain-Holiday.com

Holiday rentals in Spain

Executive Summary

Welcome to our **City Break Cost Index** for 2017.

As Spain's leading online holiday rental marketplace with over 10,000 holiday homes, Spain-Holiday.com has access to a wealth of data that can deliver insights into consumers' desires and demands when it comes to travel.

In our inaugural **City Break Cost Index** we investigate the top ten most popular Spanish cities and the key trends and spending patterns that affect the way consumers approach their travel choices.

According to the *World Travel Monitor Global Travel Trends 2016/2017* "sun and beach" holidays are still the number one holiday type with a market share of 28%. However, city trips are the fastest growing holiday market segment and have been steadily catching up with beach holidays over the past five years and they now represent 26% of all holidays.

This summer, "*overtourism*" has become something of a buzzword in the international media when talking about the

number of tourists visiting Barcelona and Mallorca. Both destinations have seen an above average increase in popularity in the past five years. This report reveals that Spain's "second cities" are growing in popularity as alternative city break destinations to Madrid and Barcelona, especially among travellers who have previously visited Spain.

The **Spain-Holiday.com City Break Cost Index** evaluates typical city break costs, including accommodation for two nights, airport transfer, eating out and typical things to do such as a tapas tour and entrance to top attractions. The report is based on a combination of Spain-Holiday.com's booking data as well as data from a range of reliable sources.

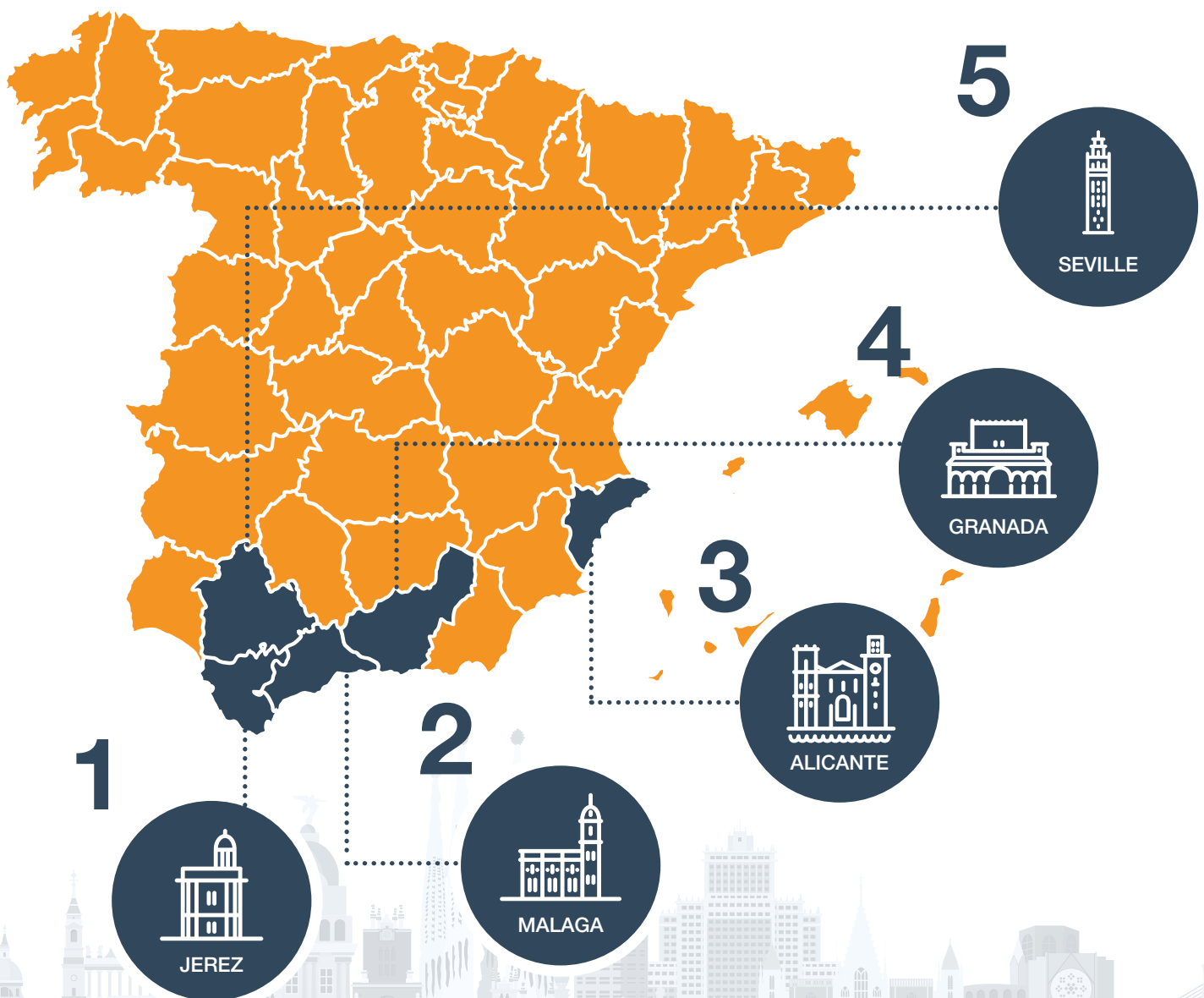
With the weakened Pound against the Euro, it pays to compare costs before booking. A cheap flight does not necessarily guarantee a cheap and cheerful weekend away. This guide aims to provide clarity for travellers to plan and budget for a memorable weekend getaway in Spain.

Jannich F. Petersen
COO, Spain-Holiday.com



Key Findings

- The Andalusian city of **Jerez** offers the overall best value for a weekend break.
- The cost of sightseeing varies greatly across the cities. **Alicante, Bilbao, Malaga** and **Seville** offer the best value, costing less than £30 to visit the top 10 tourist attractions. In comparison, entrance to **Barcelona's** top ten attractions costs more than double at £117 per person.
- In 8 out of 10 cities, staying in a rental apartment is cheaper than a double hotel room.
- Average savings of between £50-156 for a 2-night stay can be made by staying in an apartment instead of a hotel.
- A weekend in **Barcelona** costs more than double the cost of a weekend in **Jerez, Malaga, or Alicante.**
- Four out of the top five best value cities are in Andalusia - **Jerez, Malaga, Granada** and **Seville.**
- **Barcelona, Palma** and **Madrid** are the most expensive destinations for a Spanish city break.
- **Madrid** has the most expensive airport-to-city taxi costing £27. It is £10 more expensive than the cheapest fare of £17.10, in **Malaga.**
- Costing only £9 per person, the sightseeing bus tours in **Malaga** and **Alicante** are more than 65% cheaper than in **Barcelona**, which has the most expensive bus tour costing £26.10 per person.
- Beer drinkers should head to **Jerez** where a pint costs £1.97 compared to a sobering £4.51 in Valencia.



Exploring City Costs

This report offers an in-depth study into the typical spending costs of a traveller on a city break such as accommodation costs, airport transfer, food and drink and local experiences. Findings are based on readily available data from reputable online sources as well as exclusive insights from Spain-Holiday.com booking and pricing data and aims to provide the traveller with an invaluable benchmark of typical spending costs city to city.

An attractive holiday destination

2017 has been a record-breaking year for Spain's hospitality and leisure sector.

Barcelona remains the most popular city break destination for international travellers. Recent figures indicate that 9 million tourists visited the city in 2016 with almost half (45.6%) of those visitors visiting Barcelona for the first time.

There has however been a strong pull of tourists to Spain's "second cities" such as **Valencia**, **Malaga** and **Granada**. Low cost airlines such as Easyjet and Ryanair have recently announced new direct flight routes from the UK to Seville which has also seen an increase in interest in tourist interest.

Areas of spending

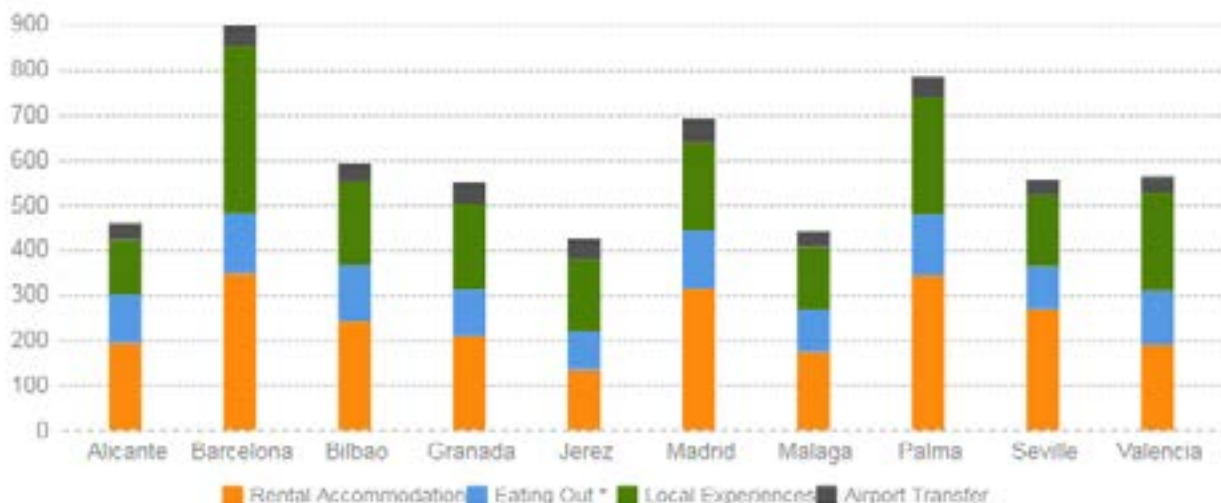
Accommodation, eating out and visiting local tourist attractions are areas that visitors are most likely to spend their budget on. The data shows that the average spending budget, including accommodation for two people on a 2-night break is £596. The biggest expenditure tends to be accommodation, with visitors spending an average of 40% (£241) of their total spending. Experiencing local tourist attractions is the second biggest expense accounting for one third (34%) or £200, followed by food and drink at 19% or £113.

While hotels remain one of the top accommodation options for visitors, the flexibility and choice offered by centrally-located city apartments are attracting growing numbers of travellers. In eight out of ten cities surveyed, rental apartments are cheaper than a double room in a hotel for the two nights' stay.

Capitalising on culture

Spain's unique landscape, history and world-renowned landmarks continue to appeal to overseas travellers, with 51% of international visitors saying the main reason they would visit Spain for a city break is for the culture. As many as 44% of visitors want to learn more about Spain's history and culture by visiting the numerous museums and cultural attractions, while 41% are particularly interested in the natural landscape.

Breakdown of Spending Costs on a 2-Day City Break



* Eating out for two people calculated on the average price of 1x three-course evening meal for two, 4x menu del dia, 2x cocktail, 4x beer and 4x coffee.

Exploring City Costs: Airport Transfer

TOP TIP:
Book a flight that arrives on a weekday daytime when taxi fares are standard rate and bus/trains should be running regularly.

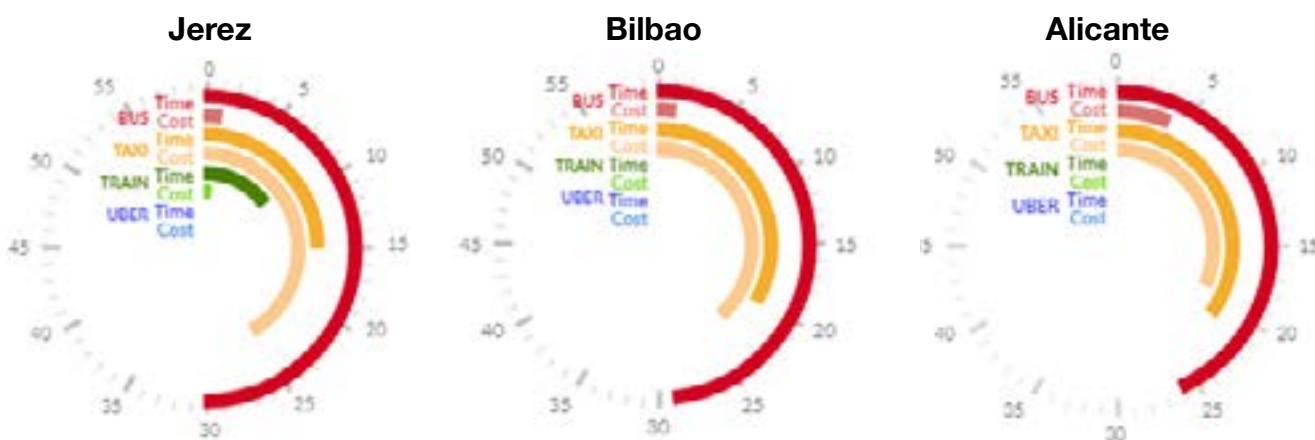
Price is not always a deciding factor when choosing where to go on a city break.

to get from the airport to the city including standard taxi fares and other means of transport such as *Uber*, bus and train.

For those who are eager to get their weekend break started, a taxi isn't always the fastest or cheapest way to get into the city. The diagrams below show the most affordable and fastest means

In **Jerez** and **Malaga**, choosing to take the train from the airport to the city centre is not only the fastest, but one of the most economical modes of transport.

Top Three Cities for Cheapest Airport Transfer



The cheapest taxi transfer can be found in **Malaga** where the journey costs £17.10 and takes 22 minutes for the 8km journey.

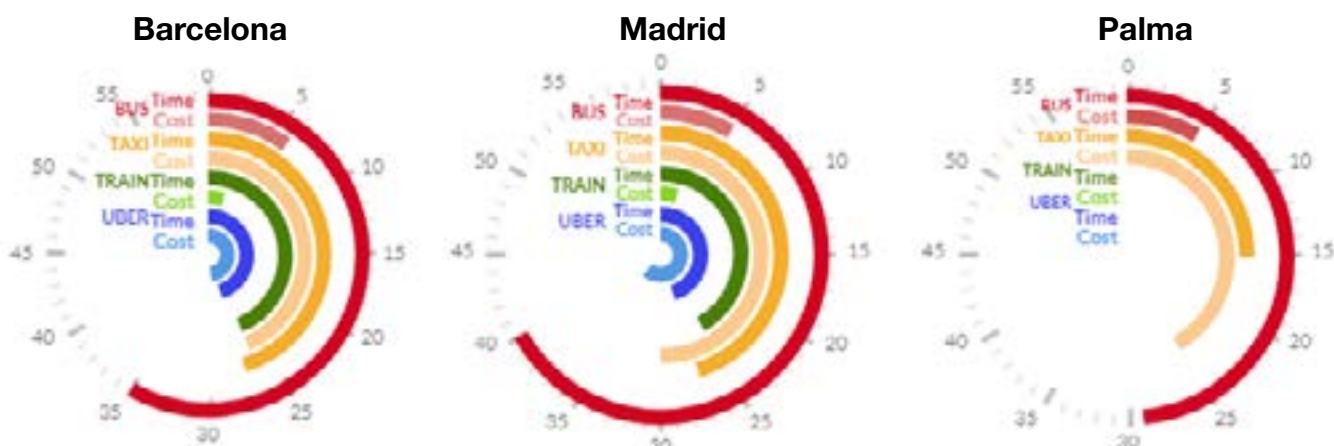
Uber/Cabify only operate in half of the ten cities studied. In three of those cities – **Madrid**, **Barcelona** and **Valencia** – the fare is actually more expensive than a taxi. In the two other cities, **Malaga** and **Seville**, the savings are approximately 10% and 25% respectively.

Taxi transfer from **Madrid** Barajas airport to the city centre is the most expensive at £27 for the 27-minute journey - nearly double the price of the **Malaga** taxi ride.

Barcelona, **Madrid**, **Malaga** and **Valencia** have the best transport options since they offer alternative bus and train transfer to the city centre.

Peer-to-peer taxi services are often perceived as a cheaper option to a taxi. But travellers in Spain may be in for a bit of a shock if they book an *Uber* (or the popular alternative in Spain, *Cabify*).

Top Three Cities for Expensive Airport Transfer



Exploring City Costs: Accommodation

TOP TIP:

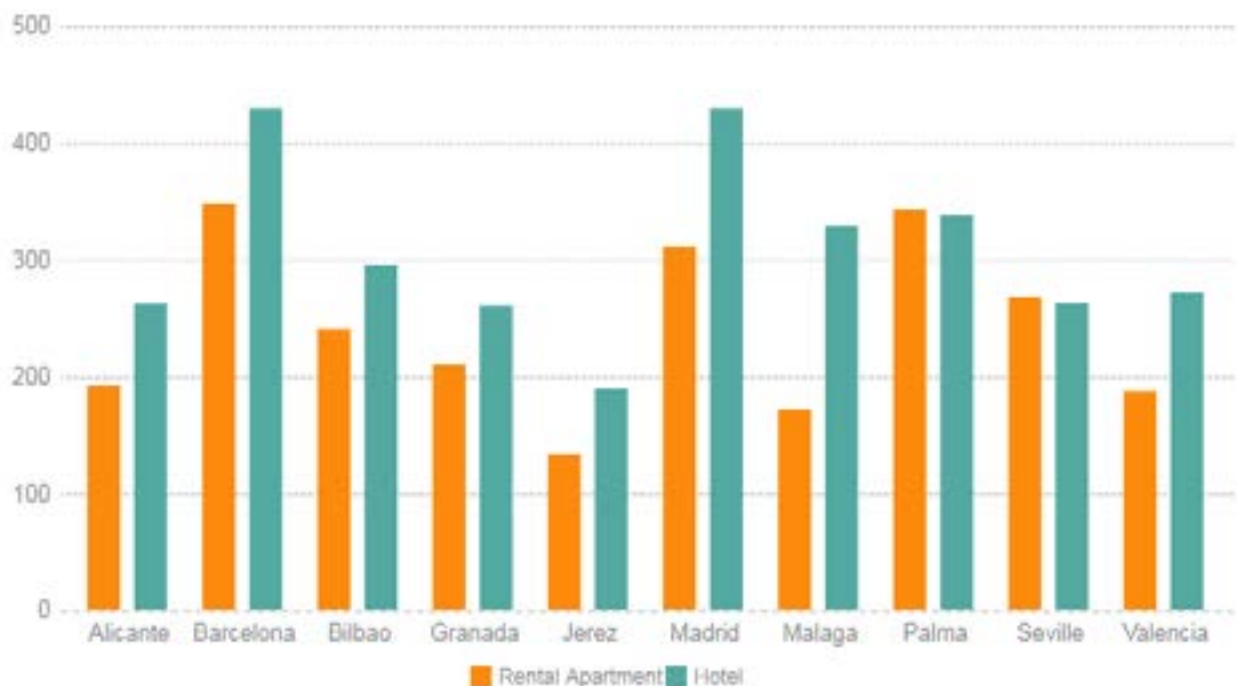
Hotels tend to cost more the closer to the booking date but you can bag a bargain last minute deal on a rental apartment.

Spain-Holiday.com has analysed the price of 400 centrally-located hotels and rental apartments for a 2-night stay for two people.

Barcelona, Madrid and **Palma** are the three most expensive cities in Spain for tourist accommodation in both hotels and rental properties.

Jerez offers the cheapest hotel and rental accommodation. The average price of a 2-night stay in a hotel in **Barcelona** costs £430 compared to a trip to the capital of the Sherry region - **Jerez** - which offers savings of over £240.

Hotel Vs. Rental Apartment Cost Comparison



Staying in a rental apartment instead of a hotel in the heart of the city offers even greater savings.

Malaga is the city with the biggest price discrepancy between hotel and self-catering accommodation with the average price of a rental apartment costing **£156 less than a hotel**.

The study shows that average savings between £50-£156 can be made by staying in an apartment instead of a hotel in all of the

cities with the exception of **Palma** and **Seville** where hotel prices are slightly cheaper by £4.85 and £5.40 respectively.

For under £200 a couple can find quality rental accommodation for two nights in the city centre of **Jerez, Malaga, Alicante** and **Valencia**.

Full data for each city can be found in this [Google spreadsheet](#).

Exploring City Costs: *Eating Out*

TOP TIP:

Look for restaurants that offer "Menu del Dia" which is a set two- or three-course lunchtime menu including a glass of wine, beer or soft drink for approximately £10 per person.

Food is a great way to experience and explore the culture of a new destination.

43% of Brits state that gastronomy is a key deciding factor in choosing a particular place to visit.

With this in mind, the report looks at the average price of food and drink staples in the top ten Spanish cities. These include

a three course evening meal with a bottle of wine for two, a cocktail, a coffee and a pint of spanish beer.

The three cheapest cities for eating out are the Andalusian cities of **Jerez**, **Malaga** and **Seville**. By comparison, the three most expensive cities for food and drink are **Barcelona**, **Madrid** and **Palma**.

Eating Out Cost Comparison

Destination	Meal for two	Menu del Dia	Cocktail	Coffee	Beer
Alicante	£36.00	£8.10	£6.30	£1.94	£4.27
Barcelona	£46.80	£10.80	£9.00	£2.13	£4.28
Bilbao	£44.10	£11.70	£6.30	£1.55	£3.97
Granada	£34.29	£9.00	£4.85	£1.56	£3.39
Jerez	£31.50	£7.20	£5.07	£1.56	£1.97
Madrid	£45.00	£10.80	£9.00	£2.10	£4.28
Malaga	£31.50	£8.10	£5.31	£1.63	£3.62
Palma	£44.10	£12.60	£8.10	£2.51	£3.74
Seville	£33.30	£8.10	£5.40	£1.85	£2.48
Valencia	£39.60	£9.90	£7.20	£2.15	£4.51

Jerez and **Malaga** are the two cheapest cities where you can enjoy a 3-course evening meal for two, for only £31.50. This is approximately one third cheaper than dining out in **Barcelona**.

Those looking for nightlife that doesn't break the bank might want to consider visiting **Granada** which has the cheapest cocktails at £4.85 - nearly half the price of **Barcelona** and **Madrid** where a cocktail will set you back £9.

Beer drinkers might be in for a shock in Valencia where a pint of Spanish beer costs £4.51.

For a budget-busting boozy break **Jerez** is the top choice, with a pint costing only £1.97 and then of course there are all those wine and sherry bodegas to try out as well.

Exploring the City: Local Experiences

TOP TIP:

Many museums and art galleries offer free entrance on Mondays. Flexible travel dates can make significant savings.

Not everyone on a city break is a “culture vulture” with plans to hit the museums, art galleries and cultural attractions. Some prefer to simply soak up the city ambiance, or shop ‘til they drop or indulge in the gastronomy. However, one universally popular thing to do on a city break is take a sightseeing bus tour.

Malaga and **Alicante** are the cities with the cheapest sightseeing bus tour costing £9 for a 1-day adult pass, compared to **Barcelona**’s “Hop On Hop Off” tourist bus which costs nearly three times the price at £26.10.

Another popular activity on a Spanish city break that combines sightseeing and gastronomy is to go on a tapas tour. Results show that the price of a tapas tour varies greatly from just £15.30 per head in **Jerez**, to £67.50 in **Palma**, which is 77% more expensive.

The report also compared the entrance fees for the top ten attractions in each city which included cultural attractions, museums, art galleries as well as natural attractions such as city parks.

Local Experiences Cost Comparison

Destination	Attraction Price	Sightseeing tour bus	Tapas Tour
Alicante	£11.43	£9.00	£40.50
Barcelona	£117.90	£26.10	£40.50
Bilbao	£27.00	£12.60	£53.10
Granada	£43.02	£16.10	£36.00
Jerez	£52.47	£12.15	£15.30
Madrid	£51.30	£18.90	£27.00
Malaga	£27.54	£9.00	£33.00
Palma	£46.71	£15.30	£67.50
Seville	£27.90	£16.20	£34.94
Valencia	£63.09	£15.30	£31.50

Alicante, **Malaga** and **Seville** are the three cheapest cities to visit attractions. It costs less than £30 per person to visit the top ten attractions in each city.

Alicante is the cheapest city to explore its most popular tourist attractions with seven of the top ten attractions free of charge to enter. The total cost of the top ten tourist attractions is just £11.43 per person.

Malaga and **Seville**’s top ten attractions cost £27.54 and £27.90 respectively.

By comparison, visiting the top attractions in **Barcelona** including *Sagrada Familia*, *Casa Battlo* and the *Camp Nou Experience* can quickly see the costs of a short break increase. Entrance to the top ten tourist attractions in **Barcelona** costs £117.90 per person - more than ten times the price of **Alicante**’s most popular attractions.

Conclusion

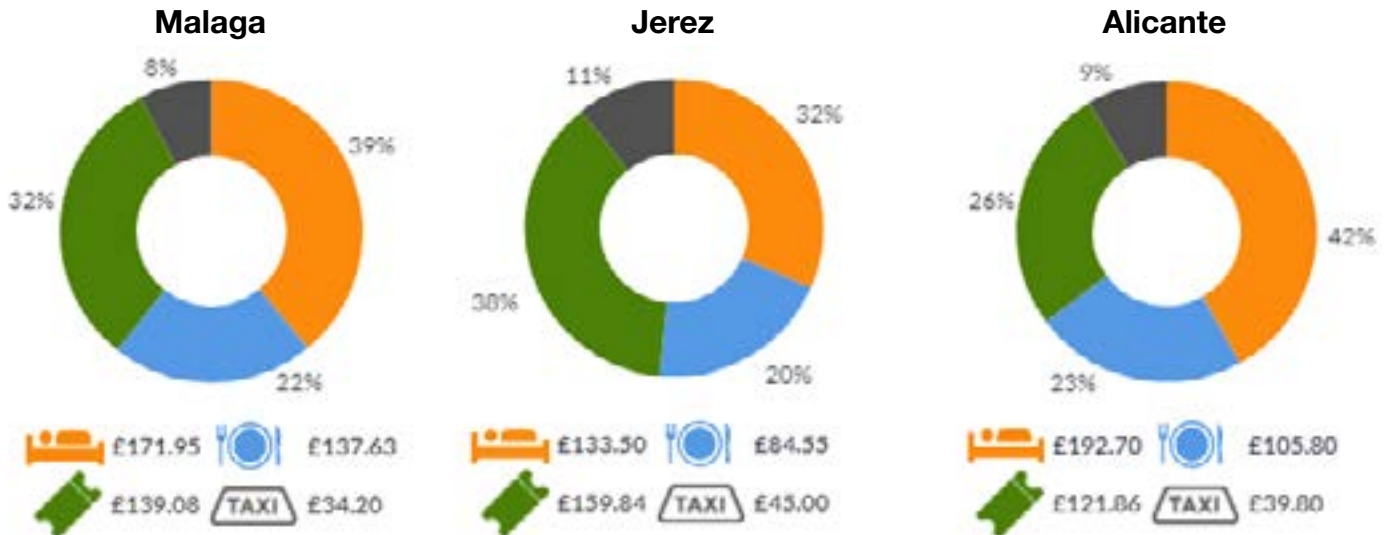
City trips are the fastest growing holiday market segment and now represent 26% of all holidays.

It is no coincidence that the trend for city breaks is increasing year on year.

A shorter city break provides the ideal opportunity to visit somewhere new without breaking the bank or using up too

much annual work leave. Exploring a new city with a few days full of sightseeing, cultural, gastronomic and relaxing experiences can recharge the batteries in the same way as a week or two on the beach.

Top Three Best Value Cities



Overall, the **Spain-Holiday.com City Break Cost Index - Autumn/Winter 2017** has revealed a variety of results. It is no surprise that **Barcelona** and **Palma** are in the top three most expensive for airport transfer, eating out, local experiences and accommodation. Alternative "second cities" such as the Andalusian cities of **Jerez**, **Malaga**, **Seville** and **Granada** have a great appeal for a short break and offer great value on accommodation, eating out and local experiences.

Travellers shouldn't be put off planning a trip to one of the three most expensive city destinations of **Barcelona**, **Madrid** and **Palma**. It is still possible to keep the cost in check by looking at mid-week trips, taking a bus or train from the airport and

planning and booking your entrance tickets in advance online to get a discount. Tourists can stay in quality rental apartments in the city centre for up to 50% less than the price of a hotel.

Top Three Most Expensive Cities



Methodology

Exchange rate as per 12th October 2017 of €1 to £0.90.

Cities were selected based on the most searched for destinations on Spain-Holiday.com from September 2016 for a 12-month period. Fieldwork was conducted in September 2017.

Airport transfer costs extracted from official transport pricing for bus, train, and metro in September and October 2017. Taxi fares are based on standard tariffs in September 2017.

Eating Out costs are based on the average price for a 3-course evening meal, four lunchtime “menu del dias”, two cocktails, four beers and four coffees.

Eating out data extracted in September and October 2017 from sources that utilize crowdsourcing techniques to collect and aggregate price data on global prices and quality of living etc. While this method provides regular data updates from a large sample, there may be issues with data quality and consistency over time. Therefore, prices should be considered representative with considerable room for measurement and sampling error.

Accommodation data was collected from 3-star or higher hotels and equivalent quality rental accommodation on booking websites in September and October 2017, taking the average price of a 2-night stay for two people. The data ignored peak prices and price fluctuations based on the date and availability so actual prices may vary.

The price of local experiences is taken from the entrance fee of the top ten tourist attractions and activities in each city according to TripAdvisor and Google search results. Entrance fee prices are based on a single 1-day adult entrance fee.

The price of tapas tours is based on the average price of top ranking tapas tours in each city with positive reviews in September and October 2017.

The price of the sightseeing bus tour is based on the price of a 1-day adult pass for each city in September 2017.



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Eating Out

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