

Whatever kind of holiday you're planning...



... here's how to book it safely



www.getsafeonline.org



**WEST YORKSHIRE
POLICE**

Every year, thousands of people in the UK become victims of holiday fraud – paying for accommodation, flights or entire holidays that simply don't exist.

They fall for fake online advertisements, sales calls, emails, social media posts and text messages. However:

- **The accommodation doesn't exist, OR**
- **The accommodation is real, but the person they booked it through has no connection with it, OR**
- **Flight tickets or holidays are non-existent, or haven't been paid for by the fake travel agent or tour operator, even if you've received confirmation**

Even some accommodation advertised on legitimate websites – whether a villa in the sun, a caravan by the sea or a cottage in the country – is non-existent, or is being fraudulently double-booked. For example, why is a villa still available at peak season? In many cases, unsuspecting victims actually turn up at their accommodation or the flight check-in desk, only to find that they've been defrauded.

For the fraudster, it's an easy way to make money. For you, it's heart-breaking as you've lost your holiday and your money. If you've transferred the payment, *banks are not obliged to cover your loss.*

Book and pay for your holiday safely.

Here's how:

- **Conduct thorough enquiries** into accommodation, flights or package holidays advertised on private advertisements, to check that they are authentic.
- **Check that accommodation really exists** by finding on Google Maps and looking for third-party reviews and recommendations. If you can, call the owner/agent directly. If the number is not provided, email and request it.
- **Check reviews** on TripAdvisor or similar sites.
- **Never pay for accommodation or travel by bank transfer** even if you're desperate to get away or how close to your holiday date you're booking.
- **Pay by credit card**, there's more chance of getting your money back if something goes wrong. It's worth the additional fee some businesses charge for doing so.
- **Wherever possible**, book through members of trade associations such as ABTA or ATOL, having confirmed their membership on the associations' websites. Note that although accommodation-only products are not covered by trade associations, most are still authentic
- **Paying online?** Make sure the payment page is secure by making sure the address starts with 'https' ('s' stands for secure) and has a padlock in the browser window frame.
- **Be wary** of unusually cheap holidays or unusually high deposits.
- **Always** get terms and conditions prior to making any payment.
- **Keep confirmations** and payment receipts, and check your bank and payment card statements for irregular entries.



And have a great holiday!

Get Safe Online

Get Safe Online is the UK's leading source of information and advice on online safety and security, for the public and small businesses. It is a not-for-profit, public/private sector partnership backed by a number of government departments, law enforcement agencies and leading organisations in internet security, banking and retail.

For more information and impartial advice on protecting yourself, your family, your business, your computer and mobile devices while online visit www.getsafeonline.org



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