

# Entering the European market for sun and beach travel products

Sun and beach tourism has a large market in Europe, particularly from Germany and the UK. However, it is a selective market and the sustainability of coastal resorts is very important. Besides European tour operators, Fully Independent Travelers (FITs) are the main market for sun and beach travel products in developing countries, and it is a competitive market. There is a wide range of accommodations and activities on the market, such as immersive experiences and community-based tourism (CBT). There are plenty of opportunities for sustainable, responsible businesses to introduce their product to the market.

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## 1. What requirements must sun and beach travel products comply with to be allowed on the European market?

European tour operators selling sun and beach products on the market are bound by strict regulations to ensure the safety of their travellers and to protect them financially. You should understand what these regulations are.

### What are the mandatory requirements that buyers have?

The requirements that European tour operators have for sun and beach tourism travel products in developing countries cover the following:

- The European Package Travel Directive
- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- Liability Insurance and Insolvency Protection

As a first step, you should read the CBI's [What requirements must tourism services comply with to be allowed on the European market](#) and familiarise yourself with the comprehensive details of legal, non-legal and common requirements. The sub-section entitled COVID-19 outlines measures taken by the European Commission (EC) to help support the relaunch of travel and tourism across Europe and how to keep abreast of travel advice being given to European residents across the continent.

### COVID-19: Establishing Safety Standards for Tour Operators

The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic continue to have a considerable impact on the tourism industry worldwide. Tourism has begun a slow recovery, but confidence among European travellers remains low, and many national governments continue to advise against all but essential travel.

In September 2020, the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) launched a new set of measures to rebuild consumer confidence, reduce risk and encourage the resumption of travel. The measures were developed in collaboration with other partners, including the Adventure Travel Trade Association (ATTA), which regularly undertakes research among its membership base and global community of operators in the field of adventure tourism. Some of the measures developed include:

- Reducing participant capacity to allow for social distancing
- Ensuring that activity difficulty levels do not exceed ability, to decrease the need for rescue services
- Providing clear, consistent and up-to-date communication on health and hygiene protocols
- Providing clear information on protocols such as wearing of face masks, hand hygiene guidance and social

- distancing requirements in advance and on arrival
- Encouraging online purchases wherever possible
- Encouraging guests to handle their own equipment for the duration of the trip
- Limiting queuing and physical contact wherever possible

You can download WTTC's [Tour Operators - Global Protocols for the New Normal](#) for more details about the measures and decide whether to apply for the '[Safe Travels](#)' Stamp Application.

For the remainder of this report, all discussion, insight and advice has been provided on the basis of travel in normal circumstances.

## **What are the additional requirements that buyers have?**

### **Establishing Standards**

It is of great importance for European tour operators that the local operators they do business with are well managed, professional and reliable. The products they sell must be of high quality and suitable for their customers. They will conduct regular assessments of the standards for accommodations, food and beverage outlets and any activities provided.

ISO is an independent, non-governmental, international organisation with a membership of 164 national standards bodies. ISO standards are voluntary, consensus-based, market-relevant International Standards to ensure that products and services are safe, reliable and of good quality. They help companies to access new markets and facilitate trade by improving standards and offering continuity between organisations.

There are a number of standards that you could consider for a coastal or lakeside tourism business including:

- [ISO13009:2015](#) establishes general requirements and recommendations for beach operators that offer tourist and visitor services.
- [ISO21401:2018](#) specifies environmental, social and economic requirements to implement a sustainability management system in accommodation establishments in the tourism sector.
- [ISO20410:2017](#) sets out the minimum service level and equipment requirements for bareboat charters offered for inland, coastal and/or offshore waters.
- [ISO17679:2016](#) establishes the service requirements of a wellness spa, the main supporting processes and the quality of service to be provided to the client.

#### **Tip:**

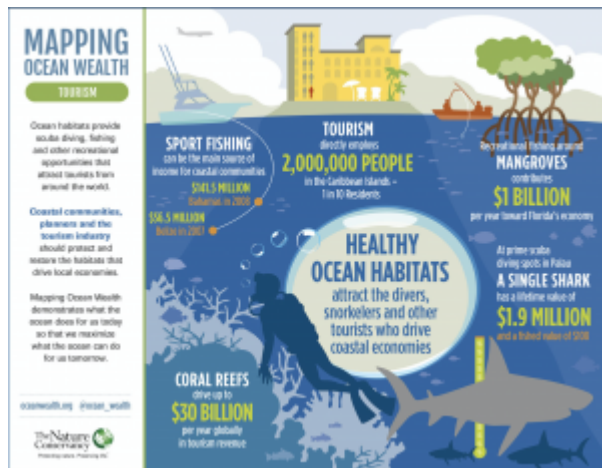
Purchase the standards that would be most suitable for your business, so that potential customers have the confidence to book with you.

## **What are the requirements for niche markets?**

### **Sustainability in coastal destinations**

Coastal and marine tourism is a major economic sector for destinations with accessible and attractive coastlines. However, many coastal and marine tourism activities contribute harmful or negative environmental and social impacts on natural resources and local communities. As tourism is highly dependent upon the quality of natural resources, it has become even more important that all tourism activities are sustainable. Many destinations are working towards becoming a Blue tourism destination, whereby their coastal and marine tourism activities are low impact and focus on the promotion of local communities and the conservation of natural resources. This infographic shows how healthy oceans play a crucial and valuable part in attracting tourists from all over the world and in driving local economies, providing they are sustainably managed.

Chart 1: Mapping Ocean Wealth – Tourism



Source: The Nature Conservancy

This report, [Blue Tourism – The Transition Towards Sustainable Coastal and Maritime Tourism in World Marine Regions](#) provides a detailed examination of the sector and seeks to better understand the challenges and impacts of tourism on the fragile coastal environment. You should read this, so you fully understand the impact of tourism in your destination.

As a result, to attract the European market, sustainability should be at the heart of your tourism business. Waste mountains and millions of tonnes of single-use plastics polluting the world's oceans and causing serious damage to marine life are widely reported in Europe. Images of formerly pristine beaches in remote destinations that are overwhelmed by tides of rubbish have become commonplace, as are pictures of marine life tangled in fishing netting or mistaking a piece of plastic for food. Reef bleaching is another serious issue, a consequence of climate change and the increased use of sunscreens widely used by tourists.

As a result, European travellers are concerned about sustainability and are increasingly likely to choose destinations that actively promote their sustainable and responsible credentials.

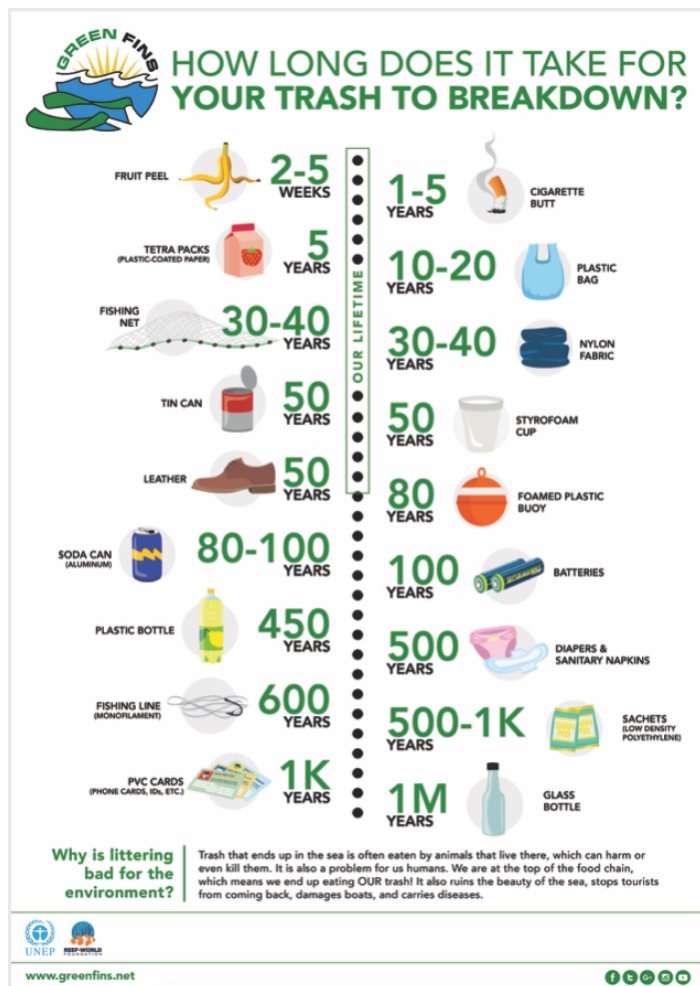
Sustainable initiatives that you should consider include:

- Adopt sustainable building practices and use local, rapidly renewable and/or recycled materials wherever possible.
- Adopt sustainable energy sources, such as solar and wind power. Rely on natural light and ventilation where you can.
- Use eco-friendly products throughout your operations, such as non-toxic cleaning and laundry products.
- Implement suitable waste separation disposal practices. You may be able to generate income from recycling and/or making handmade gifts from discarded plastics or other products.
- Source food and other consumables locally, wherever possible. This could include growing your own fruit and vegetables and buying produce from local sources.
- Employ local communities/people wherever possible. Encouraging your visitors to engage in community-based tourism, such as visiting markets and festivals, visiting local villages or taking part in cooking classes, is a sustainable form of tourism and benefits the economy of local communities.
- Provide low-carbon and low-impact activities such as tree climbing or ziplining.
- Make sure you tell your visitors how to dispose of their rubbish. Provide adequate waste bins that allow for separation. If your location doesn't have a suitable waste management system, provide visitors with a bag to collect their rubbish and take it away with them.
- Implement regular beach clean ups.
- Ensure that any partners you work with adhere to your responsible tourism code.

- Consider setting up a responsible visitor code and promote it on your website to encourage visitors to look after your environment and engage with local communities. See this example from Turtle Bay Resort in Kenya, which offers its visitors tips on [How to be a responsible tourist](#).
- If your business is located near a coral reef, encourage your visitors to use sunscreens that are free from chemicals that harm the reef. Make sure you sell them too and add a link on your website to a company that sells them, so your guest can buy suitable products before they travel, such as this one, [The Sunscreen Company](#).
- Consult [Green Fins](#), an initiative managed by the [Reef-World Foundation](#), which encourages diving and snorkelling centres, local communities and governments to work together to reduce their environmental impact. Green Fins has also published a range of conservation actions that could be adopted during the necessary downtime the COVID-19 pandemic has caused for operators. It has a range of useful resources on its website, like the posters below, that you could consult and/or download.

Chart 2: Green Fins' posters to help tourists change their habits





Source: The Reef-World Foundation/Green Fins

## Tips:

Consider becoming a certified sustainable tourism provider. Read [CBI's Entering the European market for nature and ecotourism](#) for comprehensive details about the accreditation schemes for sustainable tourism to assess which scheme would be most suitable for your business.

Read what [Sustainable Travel International](#) is doing to support communities and organisations in developing sustainable tourism practices in areas including oceans and reefs, and waste and water.

Establish an eco-policy. This example from the [Turtle Bay Resort in Kenya](#) will give you some ideas.

## Accommodation provision

There are a wide range of accommodation types for tourists in the sun and beach sector, and they vary in terms of service provision, ranging from basic (hostels), resorts (purpose built) to luxury (boutique). Beach bungalows are common and popular choices among the European traveller market, who seek unique experiences in developing countries. Sustainability is important and adopting sustainable initiatives for the construction of buildings is outlined in the section above, [Sustainability in coastal destinations](#).

The quality of accommodations is important to the European traveller:

- Tourists on a budget do not expect luxury fittings or amenities. Accommodation can be simple, but a good standard of cleanliness is vital.
- It is important to be clear about what you will provide, such as bed linen, and what you won't, such as towels. You may decide to provide towels for a fee.
- For those on high-end holidays, the standards for accommodations and facilities need to be higher, with a better standard of luxury bathrooms and fittings, and purpose-built accommodation.

**Tips:**

Add value to an accommodation by providing extras, such as hammocks under covered porches or hung between suitable trees, and equipment for the beach such as sea-grass mats, sun umbrellas and loungers.

Make sure you supply mosquito nets if mosquitoes are a problem in your destination, regardless of whether malaria is an issue.

**Providing activities in a coastal tourism business**

Destinations in a coastal setting, either sea/ocean, river or lakeside, offer local tour operators many opportunities. The setting of the destination, for instance a lagoon or wild surf, along with the type of beach, will have an impact on what type of business would work well. Environmental factors such as weather conditions are also important considerations. Additional intangible features such as a forest, cliff or tropical backdrop, or an offshore coral reef with dive sites have the potential to add value to a destination in the eyes of the potential visitor.

The FIT market is likely to seek out immersive experiences while staying at a beach resort, such as community-based tourism (CBT) activities. Examples of CBT activities include visiting villages, taking part in festivals, visiting local markets and other food/drink producers such as coffee/tea/wine plantations, and so on. Providing access to a range of local activities will enhance the experience for your FITs as well as provide sustainable economic benefits for the local communities involved.

The chart below gives some indication of the variables, including CBT, that are commonly associated with coastal tourism activities.

Chart 3: Common Coastal Tourism Activities

Activities	Main Features of Location	Tangible Requirements
Swimming, snorkelling	Clean beaches, clear seas	Lifeguards, sunbeds/umbrellas, beach sports (volleyball, beach tennis, yoga/tai chi), beach bar/restaurant, shop, rental of snorkels and fins
Stand up paddle boarding, canoeing, kayaking, surfing	Suitable sea conditions	Lifeguards, adequate rental equipment, guides as required

Jet ski, banana/donut boats, water skiing, parasailing, other motorised water activities	Suitable sea conditions	Rental equipment that is regularly maintained, trained staff, appropriate liability insurance, marking out safe areas in sea/lake
Diving	Suitable dive sites/wrecks, availability of marine life, coral reefs	Qualified diving instructors and guides, <a href="#">PADI affiliation</a> , equipment that is regularly maintained (oxygen cylinders, SCUBA jackets, weight belts, masks etc), boats, appropriate liability insurance
Windsurfing, Kitesurfing	Suitable wind conditions and suitable beaches for learning to kitesurf	Qualified instructors, suitable equipment, liability insurance
Boat trips	Places to sail, such as outer islands, less-visited beaches, cultural destinations	Qualified skippers, boats that are regularly maintained, robust safety regulations, glass- bottomed boats, appropriate liability insurance, guides as necessary
Hiking/trekking	Local marked trails in beautiful and culturally interesting locations	Trail maps
Cycle tours	Local marked trails in beautiful and interesting locations	Bicycles for hire (regularly maintained), trail maps
Community-based tourism	Daily life in local villages, markets, festivals, cooking classes, vineyards/distilleries	Suitable guides, vehicles
Wildlife/marine life watching	Resident wildlife/marine life of interest to target market	Trained guides, vehicles/boats



Conservation activities	Availability of suitable species, e.g. turtles or other, habitat protection activities, rubbish/plastic/beach clearing activities	Trained conservationists and staff
Wellness activities	Allocated area/building for wellness	Trained wellness practitioners, spas, range of wellness activities
Fishing	Suitable saltwater/freshwater species	Experienced fishing guides, suitable boats that are regularly maintained, robust safety regulations, fishing equipment
Horse riding	Local stables, suitable beach (sandy)	Experienced riders, liability insurance

Source: Acorn Tourism Consulting

### Tips:

Write a business plan. This will help you to identify aspects of your business that are the strongest, so you can focus on what to develop and/or improve. You can use this Treksoft guide, [How to create a business plan for a tour or activity company](#), to help you.

Work with local communities to identify and establish a CBT segment for the area.

Read [PADI's Timeline to Open a Dive Shop or Resort](#) for further tips and ideas on how to set up a dive shop or resort.

Create a website for your business. There are many important considerations to think about. Read [CBI's Tips for organising your tourism export services to Europe](#) to find out how to promote your business online.

## 2. Through what channels can you get sun and beach travel products on the European market?

### How is the end-market segmented?

Sun and beach tourism attracts a large market from Europe across many consumer segments. The market for sun and beach tourism has been shown to be strongest in Germany and the UK, according to the [CBI's Market Analysis Report on sun and beach tourism](#). Broadly, the market can be segmented into two core groups of tourists – traditional holidaymakers and FITs (fully independent travellers):



Chart 4: Market Segmentation of Sun and Beach Tourism

Segment	Characteristics	How long do they stay?	Who travels?
Traditional Holidaymakers	Sun and beach main focus of trip; book package holidays to one destination; stay in purpose-built resorts; all-inclusive a common feature	1-2 weeks most common	Families a substantial market
FIT (Fully Independent Traveller)	Sun and beach may be one part of a wider trip; take part in multiple activities outside resort, such as CBT/conservation/water sports/land-based activities; book trips themselves; create own itinerary; often act spontaneously	Length spent at sun and beach resort varies according to duration and activities of entire trip.	Couples, families, singles, <b>LGBT</b>

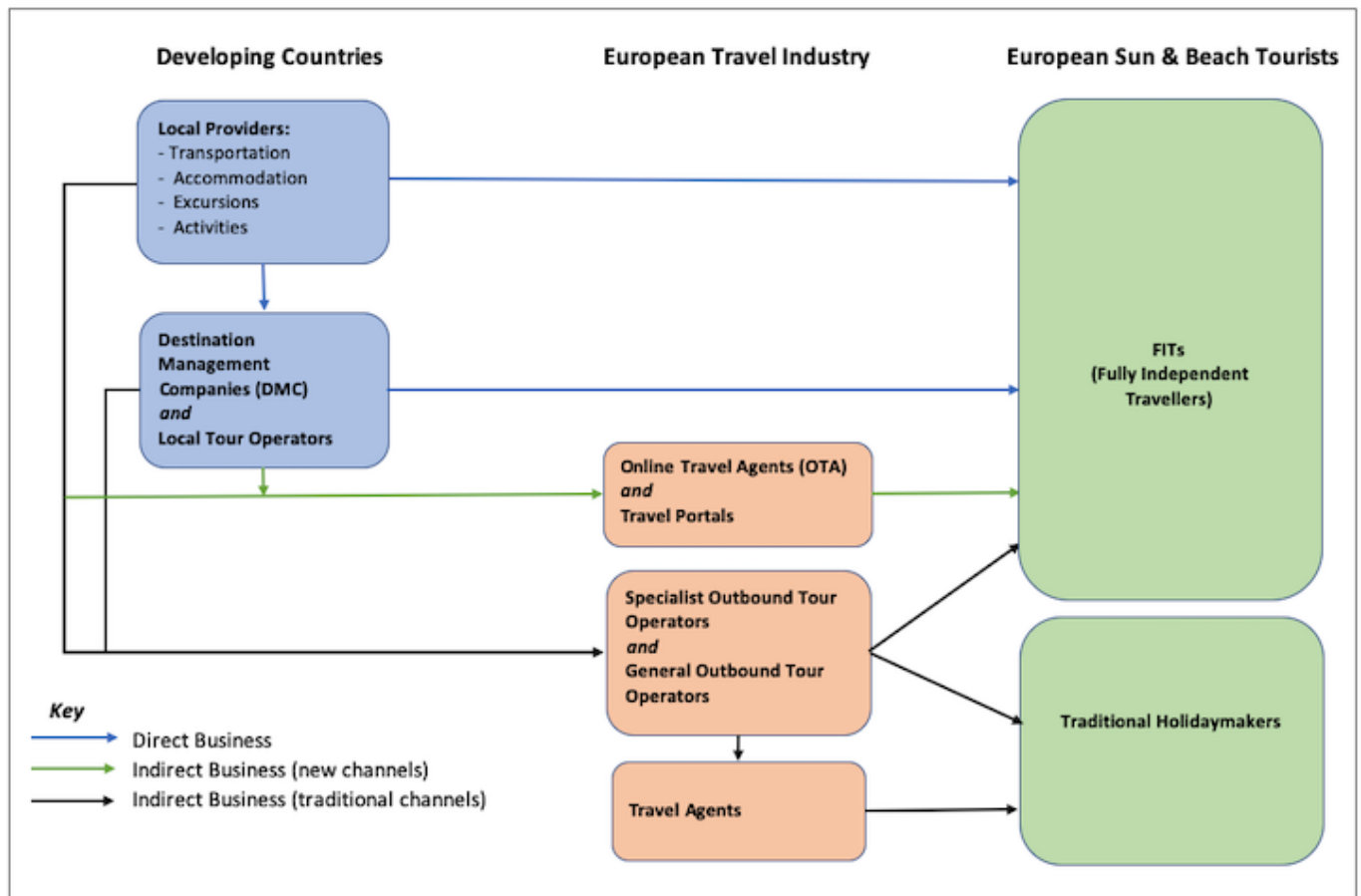
Source: Acorn Tourism Consulting

For local operators of sun and beach travel products in developing countries, the FIT market is your key market. To find out more about the FIT market, you should read the CBI study [What are the opportunities in the European FIT tourism market](#).

## Through what channels do sun and beach travel products end up on the end-market?

FITs often find sun and beach travel products from developing countries via their own independent websites, on OTAs (online travel agencies) and travel portals. Some sun and beach operators also sell their travel products through specialist tour operators. Traditional holidaymakers almost always book through a tour operator, travel agency or, less often, directly with the resort.

Chart 5: Sun and Beach Tourism Sales Channels



Source: Acorn Tourism Consulting

You should consider the following when preparing your travel product for the European market:

- Your own website – allows you to communicate fully with your potential buyer. Most FITs today are avid users of technology and spend time researching trips. Using images and videos, and interesting copy that informs your guest of all the sustainable actions you promote alongside your tourism products, will attract the European FIT. You should make sure to include testimonials and reviews, as FITs rely heavily on word of mouth.
- OTAs/Travel Portals – sell a range of accommodations, trips, experiences directly to FITs. Common for sun and travel products are the major OTAs, [Booking.com](#), [Expedia](#) and [Orbitz](#), which is part of Expedia. [On the Beach](#) is a specialist OTA with European branches in the UK, Sweden, Norway and Denmark.

### Tip:

For more information about the different sales channels for adventure tourism travel products that can include sun and beach in developing countries, read the [CBI's Entering the European market for adventure tourism](#) and see the section 'Through what channels do adventure tourism travel products end up on the end-market?'.

## What is the most interesting channel for you?

Establishing your own website should be a priority for you as a sun and beach local operator. You can find out more about setting up your own website in the CBI study [How to be a successful tourism company online](#) for detailed information on improving or creating your own website.

You should also work with the OTAs. To find out more about working with OTAs, consult this Arival Guide,

[Working with OTAs](#), and [CBI's Tips for organising your tourism services export to Europe](#).

To work with specialist tour operators, see the [CBI's Doing Business with European tourism buyers](#) for tips on working with European tour operators.

### **3. What competition will you face in the sun and beach market?**

#### **Which countries are you competing with?**

For now, European sun and beach tourists are travelling to domestic locations or to short-haul destinations within Europe, visiting countries they are able to travel to without any quarantine restrictions. At the time of writing (September/October 2020), many countries in Europe were experiencing an increase in COVID-19 cases, which is leading to increased restrictions on personal freedom. Many European governments continue to advise against all but essential travel, and travel to many countries is subject to entry restrictions. During the 2020 summer holidays, domestic holidays remained the most popular choices across Europe, although there was some movement across borders, such as Britons who travelled to France and Spain, and Germans who travelled to the Netherlands. As the region moves into the winter season, it is likely there will be limited travel to long-haul destinations until the spring/summer season in 2021, when the pandemic has hopefully diminished.

Sun and beach destinations are found all over the world, and developing countries are home to some of the best beaches that appeal to those FITs seeking a destination away from mass-market sun and beach destinations. However, it is a competitive sector, on account of the numerous destinations and wide range of less-developed beaches to choose from. For many FITs, destinations that are harder to reach are more appealing, and those that offer additional experiences such as CBT are also likely to be attractive.

Taking into account the three key regions of Africa, Asia and Latin America, you should consider the main competing destinations for sun and beach to be:

- Indonesia
- Kenya
- Mexico
- Nicaragua
- Tanzania
- Thailand

#### **Indonesia**

Indonesia is well known for its pristine beaches and numerous islands, and more than 9.3 million tourists visited the country for leisure purposes in 2017. Its sun and beach offer combines well with its exceptional cultural offer, alongside some of the world's best diving sites and other natural attractions. With so many islands in this tropical archipelago, the foreign tourist is spoilt for choice and the islands of Flores, Lombok and Bali have some of the best beaches. However, tourism suffered as a result of multiple natural disasters in 2018, which included a volcanic eruption in Bali, earthquakes in Lombok, an earthquake and tsunami in Central Sulawesi, and a further tsunami in Banten. If your business is located in an area where natural disasters are a risk factor, you must have a risk management plan in place (see tip below).

#### **Kenya**

Kenya is best known for its iconic wildlife, but the country's unspoiled beaches on the coast of the Indian Ocean are often visited in conjunction with a safari. The product appeals to a wide range of sun and beach tourists, with mainstream products centred around Mombasa and Malindi where water sports, diving, marine and wildlife watching, and deep-sea fishing are popular among groups and families. Beach destinations in the north and south are more remote, and there are a range of luxury resorts that appeal to honeymooners. The island of Lamu has a distinct, easy-going culture that offers a distinct sun and beach experience.

## Mexico

Mexico's extensive coastline features numerous beaches, with plenty of variety – some are surrounded by jungles or ancient ruins, some are good for surfing, others for swimming and snorkelling. Besides the well-known tourist destinations, there are also numerous lesser-known beach destinations, which offers opportunities for local operators. Adventure activities in combination with sun and beach are more common in the lesser-known destinations such as Tulum in the Riviera Maya, which is surrounded by ruins.

## Nicaragua

Nicaragua is an emerging adventure destination in Central America, offering its sun and beach product on both the Caribbean Sea in the east and the Pacific Ocean in the west. It also has one of the largest inland lakes in the world, Lake Nicaragua, and crater lakes such as Laguna de Apoyo. Lake Nicaragua and its environs are popular for water-based activities such as fishing and kayaking. Surfing on ocean waves is the main activity on the Pacific coast at San Juan del Sur while the Corn Islands in the Caribbean Sea have coral reefs, fishing and long, white sandy beaches, which are listed as some of the best beaches in the world. Most leisure visitors to Nicaragua also take part in adventure activities in addition to sun and beach activities.

## Tanzania

Like Kenya, Tanzania is best known for its safari trips. However, the offshore islands of Zanzibar, Mafia and Pemba have become important sun and beach destinations. Zanzibar also offers a distinctive cultural experience for visitors through historical Omani and Portuguese influences. Mafia Island is a renowned diving destination and Pemba Island's secluded beaches are often combined with safari experiences on the mainland.

## Thailand

Thailand has been one of the region's leading destinations for sun and beach tourism for many decades, attracting both the backpacker and luxury tourist. Destinations for sun and beach are predominantly in the south, and islands such as Koh Samui, Koh Phang Nga and Phuket, where there are numerous facilities and activities, attract greater numbers of sunseekers. Further south, the Trang Archipelago has some of the best beaches, such as Koh Kradan and Koh Ngai, but they are more remote, time consuming to access and with fewer facilities.

However, there are many more destinations that you should consider to be your competition. Other ways to assess the competition is to identify those destinations that receive the most mentions in travel blogs and travel articles. Some of these are listed below – it is not an exhaustive list.

Chart 6: 'Best Beaches in the World' based on subjective travel listings

Africa	Asia	Latin America & Caribbean
Bazaruto - Mozambique	Bali - Indonesia	Bocas del Tora - Panama
Chitimba - Malawi	Goa - India	Corn Islands - Nicaragua
Nungwi, Zanzibar - Tanzania	Hidden Beach - Philippines	Grand Anse - Grenada

Trou-aux-Biches - Mauritius	Perhentian Islands - Malaysia	Playa del Amor - Mexico
Watamu - Kenya	Trang Archipelago - Thailand	Playa Flamenco - Puerto Rico

Source: Acorn Tourism Consulting

Notes: Online research was conducted over numerous travel publications and blogs during November 2019, pre-COVID.

Other competing nations can also be assessed by analysing a destination's position in [The Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index \(TTCI\)](#). The Index, produced by the World Economic Forum (WEF), measures factors and policies to assess the development and competitiveness of 140 countries. Environmental Sustainability and Natural Resources are two key measurement pillars. Mexico, Brazil and Costa Rica are the top three countries based on these criteria; to find out which other developing countries feature highest in the Index, consult [CBI's Entering the European market for Nature and Ecotourism study](#) and scroll to the section about competing destinations.

### Tip:

You can read more about managing risks in tourism in the [CBI's How to Manage Risks in Tourism](#).

## Which companies are you competing with?

Europe is one of the worst-hit areas by the COVID-19 pandemic, and although Europeans are keen to travel again, they will need strong and encouraging reassurance. To stay ahead of the competition, you must inform them of measures you are taking to keep them safe when they use your services. To do this, it is essential that you include a prominent link and/or message on the Homepage of your website, and you should list all the measures you are taking to keep them safe.

European tour operators already feature very detailed information about how they will keep their customers safe, and you should research how they are communicating with their customers. For instance, [Intrepid Travel](#) (UK) provides a link on its homepage and uses the message 'Your safety remains our priority'. [Globetrotter Abenteuer](#) (Germany) immediately draws your eye to the 'Current Situation'. [TUI](#) (Global) uses the website's top navigation to promote its 'Travel with Confidence Hub', which provides all the information customers need to make their holiday decisions. OTAs are also very strong on their messages to keep customers safe. [Viator](#) provides a direct link to detailed safety procedures under its Homepage message, As the world reopens.

Operators in the less-developed sun and beach segment are a broad mix of resorts, accommodation establishments (hotels, guest houses, beach bungalows, homestays) and beach clubs that are located on or very near to the beach. Those that include CBT opportunities and additional activities for their guests to enjoy are more likely to appeal to FITs who are keen on immersive travel experiences.

## Companies in Indonesia

[Dream Beach Huts](#) in Nusa Lembongan, Bali is a collection of 28 thatched-roofed bungalows inspired by traditional rice barns, each with a private terrace overlooking sea or tropical foliage. Activities at the small

resort include diving with manta rays, surfing and snorkelling, exploring the mangroves and boat trips.

[LooLa Adventure Resort](#) is an award-winning eco-resort that combines adventure and community adventures with a beachside location on the island of Bintan. It has an inspirational website with lovely images and strong straplines like 'Have fun and help the planet', 'Gorgeous eco accommodation' and 'Recharge and reconnect with nature', which give the potential visitor clear reasons to choose to stay with them. Activities are numerous, including kayaking, raft building, rock climbing, ziplining, trekking and many other sporting activities. The operator's eco activities are outlined in great detail on their website. Guests are encouraged to take part in eco activities such as clearing up the beaches, planting mangroves and plant-based cooking activities. Families are a key market, and accommodation has been built in the local style above the sea or along the beach front. LooLa also serves the school market, specifically from Singapore, and there is also dormitory accommodation for up to 300 people.

## Companies in Kenya

[Turtle Bay Beach Club](#) is an award-winning responsible resort located south of Malindi, which is also an eco-hotel that offers a wide range of activities in addition to sun and beach, such as bird watching, deep sea fishing, dhow trips, snorkelling and diving. It also directly supports the community, with several local community initiatives. The resort is aimed at the family market.

[Kizingo](#) is a collection of eight beach-front bandas (meaning thatched house) built from local materials including mangrove, mkuti and mkeka, by local islanders. The resort is located on a remote stretch of coast on Lamu Island, a car-free island, and the beach has been left to nature rather than been developed, which adds to its attraction for guests. Activities include swimming with dolphins, dhow sailing and water skiing. Trips to Lamu Town are by boat. The operator is committed to conservation, supporting the local village and school, and uses solar panels to provide electricity.

[Ziwa Beach Resort](#) in Mombasa has 34 bedrooms arranged in eight beach cottages with private verandas. Water sports activities include diving, deep-sea fishing, jet skiing and kitesurfing. The resort features a vegetarian restaurant.

## Companies in Mexico

[Villa Pescadores](#) in Tulum on the Riviera Maya features rustic cabanas on the beach, close to Mayan ruins and local fishermen's boats. The cabins have been constructed using local stone and wood and sit directly on white sand with private gardens and hammocks. The hotel provides yoga classes. The hotel is part of the Ahau Collection of properties.

[Xinalani Retreat](#) in Puerto Vallarta offers beachfront bungalows that float on stilts, built by local Mexican craftsmen. The accommodation has been designed to take advantage of the natural elements, beautiful views and fresh sea breeze from the Pacific Ocean. There is a restaurant, bar and beach club on site, along with wellness and yoga retreats and activities. On the homepage, an inspirational video offers a showcase of the accommodation, views and activities, and they provide a direct link to a [COVID-19 Update](#) page, which outlines the measures they are taking to keep their customers safe.

## Companies in Nicaragua

[Jicaró Island Lodge](#) is located on an islet in the middle of Lake Nicaragua near the colonial city of Granada. Accommodation is in two-storey casitas built into the jungle landscape. Food is all locally sourced, there is a yoga deck at the edge of the water and kayaks and paddleboards are readily available for guests. The lodge offers a range of island tours including a sustainability tour to hear about the work the lodge does to earn its sustainable credentials. It is listed as one of National Geographic's Unique Lodges of the World and was constructed with certified wood and local materials. The operator lists links with partners prominently on the homepage, along with its award from the 2018 Tourism for Tomorrow People Award, issued by the WTTC.

[Morgan's Rock Hacienda and Ecolodge](#) is aimed at families and couples and set in a jungle reserve next to a long, sandy beach near San Juan del Sur. The accommodations are luxury rustic casitas, and there are numerous activities for guests including horse riding on the beach, breakfast at a local farm, and hands-on CBT experiences including organic farming. The website features an inspirational video on its homepage and a specific page dedicated to its [COVID-19 protocol](#).

[Monkey Hut Hostel](#) (listing on Tripadvisor) is located directly on the shore of Laguna de Apoyo and offers mostly dormitory accommodations, along with one private cabana. Tripadvisor reviews are generally positive, and it is one of the most popular places in this location, aimed predominantly at backpackers. There are kayaks and inner tubes for guests and they sell drinks and food. There is a kitchen if guests wish to self-cater.

## Companies in Tanzania

[Chole Mjini](#) is an eco-retreat featuring treehouse accommodations on a jungle island off the coast of Mafia Island, Tanzania. Activities are numerous, including swimming with sharks, stand up paddle boarding, sandbank day trips and visits to Chole village. Guests can all eat together around one large table, set somewhere different every day. There are seven treehouses, each privately located and linked by sandy paths. Awards won include winner of the Green Hotelier Award in 2017 and Gold for Best for Beach Tourism in the World Responsible Awards 2014. The lodge has created a new [Health and Safety page](#) on its website outlining the specific measures it has taken to ensure the safety of employees and guests, and states that there have been no cases of COVID-19 on Mafia Island.

[Zanzibar Star Resort](#) is located in the north of the island on the Nungwi Beach. The furniture is all made using the local Zanzibar wood, and the hotel organises a wide range of activities and excursions including a Zanzibar Spice Tour, tour of Stone Town, a forest tour and Safari Blue, a day trip on the ocean.

## Companies in Thailand

[FaaSai Resort & Spa](#), 'Where the forest meets the sea' is an eco-resort, committed to preserving the environment and supporting the local community. CBT activities are encouraged, and the resort has won numerous awards. There are only 14 rooms and the emphasis is on enjoying a peaceful atmosphere by a small beach and fishing village and surrounded by tropical gardens.

[Bayview Sunset & The Hill Resort](#) has accommodations on Sunset Beach and up the hill with spectacular views over the Andaman Sea. The resort offers fishing and yoga and has received multiple Certificates of Excellence from Tripadvisor.

[The Tayan Resort and Spa](#) is a riverside resort in Sai Yok, near Kanchanaburi. Rooms are basic but comfortable, and each is only a few steps from the river. The decks have hammocks, and other facilities include fishing, boating and excursions.

### Tips:

For an example of a sun and beach operator situated on the shores of a lake, check out the [Usisya Beach Eco-Lodge](#) in Lake Malawi and take note of all the CBT activities it offers its guests.

Review the websites of each of these operators carefully to see what you can learn from them.

## Which products are you competing with?

Trips and experiences on the broader adventure tourism market are your biggest competitors, particularly those



that combine sun and beach on the same trip. You should also carefully consider CBT experiences as a competing product, as they are often included in sun and beach tourism travel products in areas that are not commonly regarded as mass-market sun and beach tourism.

There is so much choice for the European traveller, and sustainability is rapidly becoming an essential feature of many adventure trips. This means that you will have to work hard to create a Unique Selling Point (USP) to differentiate your travel product from others on the market. To find out more about creating a USP, you can read [CBI's Tips for Doing Business with European Tourism Buyers](#).

### Tips:

Conduct a SWOT analysis to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of your business. Be honest about what you are doing well and what you could improve, so that you can make measurable improvements to your business.

Monitor the sustainability of your sun and beach business on a regular basis. Make sure your customers can see clearly what positive contributions your business is making to sustain the local beach environment. Make sure you tell your customers how they can make a positive contribution to your sustainability efforts, such as leave no trace and separating waste.

Research what other operators and providers are doing in your area, to gain an understanding of what your competitors are doing. This research will ensure that you have a thorough understanding of the market in your area, so you are in a position to identify what works well and what you could do to compete more effectively.

To find out more about the adventure market, consult the [CBI's What are the opportunities in the European Adventure Tourism Market](#).

## 4. What are the prices for sun and beach products on the European market?

Prices for sun and beach vary hugely across the world and there is no set formula. Prices will depend on the popularity of the resort, seasonality, what is included in the price and what is not, activities offered and so on. Generally, resorts that have sustainable credentials charge more, as they are often chosen by visitors who are prepared to pay more to make a positive contribution to a local community, or to offset any guilt they might feel travelling to a destination. The table below shows a wide range of prices within the three budget groups and across the main competing destinations.

Chart 7: Example Prices of Beach Resorts in Competing Destinations

Resort/Property Name	Country	Price guide for 2 people, 3 nights in November 2020 (€)
<i>Budget</i>		
Lighthouse Guesthouse	Tanzania	52
Peponi Watamu	Kenya	67

Lanta Palm Beach Resort	Thailand	72
Surf Ranch Hotel & Resort	Nicaragua	82
Quinta Margarita	Mexico	137
Santai Hotel	Indonesia	157
<i>Mid-Range</i>		
The Light Exclusive Villas and Spa	Indonesia	177
Travellers Beach Hotel	Kenya	196
The Reef Cocobeach	Mexico	224
Aluna Nungwi	Tanzania	251
Big Buddha Beach Villa	Thailand	508
TreeCasa Resort	Nicaragua	635
<i>Luxury</i>		
Z Hotel	Tanzania	668
Rock and Sea Resort	Kenya	811
Ayana Resort & Spa	Indonesia	885
Chiringuito Tulum	Mexico	911
Vana Belle	Thailand	972
Hacienda & Ecolodge Morgan's Rock	Nicaragua	1,010

Source: Booking.com

Notes: Prices quoted are based on research conducted in November 2020.

### Tips:

Conduct your own competitor research to find out what local resorts, hotels, guesthouses and homestays are charging per night in your destinations.


Make sure you assess what they include in their price per night, such as breakfast or free transfer to the airport or railway station.

Take account of seasonality in your destination, so you can set competitive prices to encourage visitors out of season.


This study has been carried out on behalf of CBI by [Acorn Tourism Consulting Limited](#).

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