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Tekst 11

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TRAVEL ADVICE FROM THE EXPERT

If you're planning to holiday across the Channel, driving rather than flying could prove a much cheaper option and that's not all...



If you haven't made your travel arrangements for a forthcoming holiday in Europe yet, don't automatically assume that a no-frills airline will offer you the best deal. For it's around now, as the peak summer travelling season approaches, that no-frills airfares start to look expensive, especially for families heading for the popular destinations in France and Spain. Once you've taken the extra taxes and charges into account, the final bill can be prohibitive.

So is self-drive the answer? Given some of the attractive cross-Channel deals available this year it certainly sounds as if it might be, though there are other considerations to take into account, such as the cost of wear and tear on your car, motorway tolls and fuel charges and where you live in the UK – good deals are rather less attractive if you live in the north of the country.

To discover which method is the most cost-effective, I took three different types of trip to France and Spain and compared prices for flying and driving.

First, I looked at fares for a family of four travelling to Bergerac in the Dordogne for the May half-term week. Eurotunnel's cheapest fare for a Saturday-to-Saturday return, travelling between 8am and 8pm, was £124 for a

car and four passengers. To this, I added £96 to cover the cost of motorway tolls and fuel. The cost of flying from Stansted to Bergerac, on the same day, with Ryanair was £735.52 plus £150 to hire a four-door group-B car for seven days. Verdict: flying was £660 more than driving.

Next, I compared costs for two people taking a long weekend break in Brittany in early June. Taking the ferry from Plymouth to Roscoff (daytime sailing) with Brittany Ferries came to £215. Flying from Exeter to Brest with Flybe came to £199, plus a group-A car hire cost of £70 for three days. Verdict: flying was only £50 more than going by ferry. As the journey time by sea is six hours compared with 55 minutes by air you might not think it is worth the £50 saving.

Looking at these figures, it's clear that for some key destinations, you can cut your holiday bills quite significantly by driving rather than flying, though the no-frills carriers usually offer a far quicker journey time, a great choice of destinations and, if you do manage to track down a good deal, the amount saved on the fares can often easily cover the extra cost of car hire.

On the other hand, parking charges at the airport can bump up overall prices – and you don't have to carry

heavy bags or tie yourself down to strict luggage allowances if you're taking your car. In peak season when airports are busy, driving can also be more relaxing than flying. Moreover, just like airlines, most cross-Channel

operators seem to be at last responding to their customers' needs in providing clearer website systems and adopting the simple at-a-glance pricing that makes it far easier to spot the bargains on their websites.

Lees bij de volgende opgave eerst de vraag voordat je de bijbehorende tekst raadpleegt.

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"If you're ... not all..." (tekst onder de kop)

Met de auto naar het buitenland op vakantie gaan kan goedkoper zijn dan met het vliegtuig.

- 2p **41** Welke drie andere mogelijke voordelen worden er in het artikel genoemd van het reizen per auto?
Schrijf de drie voordelen op.