

# Lesbian and Gay Holidays

## LGBT – a “huge” travel market in Europe

**GETA - the Gay European Tourism Association** recently estimated the size of the Gay Travel market in Europe to be over € 50b. In truth, that may well be a conservative estimate, and in all likelihood the amount is growing - and growing fast.

As homophobia recedes in most of Western Europe, mainstream tourism offices and travel companies are waking up to the fact that gay travel is huge business in Europe - and a huge opportunity.

Are gay people travelling more? Probably not... but a larger proportion of their travel time is now “gay travel” time - in greater numbers and at a greater frequency. They’re increasingly tending to go on “gay holidays”, “gay cruises”, participating in “gay events”, and staying in “gay hotels”.

Catering for this, the Gay European Travel Association has developed a web-based information service<sup>1</sup>, including a number of Gay Hot Spot Guides, written by gay residents of each city or region, to help visitors get the most out of their trip. Why, for example, just travel to Barcelona, when one can travel to Barcelona to attend gay pride, stay in a gay hotel and meet up with lots of like-minded gay travellers in a gay bar?

### A FEW LGBT HOT SPOTS

**Amsterdam:** Petite, friendly and quirky - with a lively gay scene, vibrant cafés and impressive historical sights.

**Ibiza:** Spain’s clubbing mecca also offers golden beaches, excellent food and Europe’s best sunsets.

**Berlin:** I am gay, and that’s good the way it is! (‘Ich bin schwul, und das ist auch gut so!’) declared Berlin mayor Klaus Wowereit in 2001. Over a decade later, following Wowi’s term of office, Berlin’s reputation as one of the world’s most dynamic gay capitals thrives cheerfully.



**Mykonos:** The white-washed, laid-back alternative for gay travellers looking to get away from it all.

**Sitges:** Nowadays it is a popular destination for gay and lesbian travellers, as it has become one of the most gay-friendly places in the world.

**Prague:** The Czech Republic has become a much more liberal and gay-friendly destination in recent years and the Prague gay scene, mainly centred around the Vinohrady area (close to the city centre), is particularly vibrant and accessible.

**Stockholm:** Gay and lesbian life in Stockholm is like the city itself: easily accessible, hugely fun, highly varied and warm and welcoming.

**Vienna:** Not too many European cities have such a rich gay history as the Austrian capital.

Gay emperors, generals or composers of days gone by and all the gays and lesbians of today convert Vienna into a unique travel destination.

“ MAINSTREAM TOURISM OFFICES AND TRAVEL COMPANIES ARE WAKING UP TO THE FACT THAT GAY TRAVEL IS HUGE BUSINESS IN EUROPE - AND A HUGE OPPORTUNITY.

1. [www.gaywelcome.com/gay-travel-europe.php](http://www.gaywelcome.com/gay-travel-europe.php)