

## Missing Christmas Flight Mystery For Malta

*Mystery surrounds a low cost airline flight scheduled to fly from London to Malta December 26.*

**Jan. 14, 2007** - [PRLog](#) -- A flight from London to Malta on December 26 has set alarm bells ringing on the holiday island of Malta.

The flight operator, well known and popular airline Ryanair, claims no flight was scheduled, while one newspaper said they had a photograph showing a departure board with 'cancelled' next to the flight number.

The Malta tourist industry pushed for low cost airlines to be allowed to operate to the island in the hope of arresting the recent decline in visitor numbers, and agreement was reached with Ryanair, with the inaugural flight from Luton in November.

With a projected 80,000 to 100,000 extra tourists a year, the arrival of new flights to Malta has been warmly welcomed and seen by many as the saviour of the holidays and hotel industry, with a knock on effect for the property for sale industry to overseas buyers.

The existing carriers, including the national airline Air Malta, have responded with offers of their own, and the price of flying to Malta has come down significantly in the last few months.

But what looks like a cancelled flight due to a lack of passengers has sounded alarm bells on the holiday island.

'The Malta hotels and holiday industry was looking forward to the year ahead with a sense of optimism', comment local travel guide <http://www.yourmalta.com>, 'The extra tourists being brought in by Ryanair is a major boost for the island's economy. But if a flight has been cancelled just weeks after their service started we just have to hope that it's not a sign for the future, and projected arrival numbers haven't been wildly over estimated. Hopefully there wasn't a flight scheduled at all rather than being cancelled.'

### Holiday Season

'There is a possibility', continue YourMalta, 'That the introduction of the low cost airlines flying to Malta will merely delay the long term decline of the island's tourist industry. Unless money is spent on the infrastructure and improving the environment for the tourists generally there is a danger that a lot of visitors will be one-off. If there's a lesson to be learned in Malta that the government and her agencies have failed to grasp it is that sustainable tourism is built on repeat visitors. At the moment a lot of visitors from the UK see Malta as a one-off trip'.

As well as Ryanair, it was hoped that easyJet would also start services to Malta, but the latest reports are that talks have failed to produce an agreement. But brighter news has come from the island's flag carrier Air Malta.

As well as at one stage selling two tickets a minute in a recent promotion the airline is starting a new service from Liverpool in April.

The property market will also be keeping a close eye on tourist numbers now that the new flights have been given the green light. If visitor numbers do drop in the medium term it could be good news for locals looking to buy their first property.

There has been some discontent on the island about the rising prices of property in Malta, and with less overseas buyers the possibility of prices falling and more islanders being able to get on the property ladder could be welcome news, as today's tourist is often tomorrow's property buyer.

But now that low cost airlines are offering flights to Malta, this could help the Malta hotels and holiday market as more people consider three and four day breaks instead of the traditional week or fortnight, boosting the overall number of visitors, especially if Air Malta and the low cost airlines bring the cost of Malta flights to levels seen for the Spanish islands.

Malta has traditionally seen the majority of her visitors from the UK, but this could be changing to a more diverse mix in future years.

Last year saw a record number of visitors from Italy, and increased enquiries have been received at estate agents across the island from Scandanvia, Holland, France and Belgium, helping to increase the demand for Malta properties.

For Malta flights visit <http://www.yourmalta.com/airport> , for hotels in Malta <http://www.yourmalta.com/hotels>

Website: [www.yourmalta.com](http://www.yourmalta.com)

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