

## **TRAIN BOOKINGS UP AS BRITONS MAKE A SUMMER GETAWAY... IN THE UK**

Advance ticket sales are up by almost 50% on rail routes across the country this July as Britons prepare to escape from it all on holiday, according to new data released today from leading ticket retailer, thetrainline.com\*.

Instead of the usual mass exodus overseas, it appears that Brits are opting for some summer sun closer to home this year. Nearly 50% more people have already booked their train ticket for the start of the British summer through thetrainline.com website.

And with temperatures set to soar this summer, the British coast in particular, is enjoying a surge in popularity with traditional seaside destinations like Blackpool and Brighton seeing significant hikes in advance rail bookings compared to last year (+120% and +64% respectively).

The increase in rail ticket purchases appears to correlate with figures released by BAA last month revealing a 7% decline in air passenger numbers travelling from key British airports such as Heathrow and Gatwick\*\*. It appears that 2009 will be the summer of the 'staycation' for many Brits this year.

Commenting on the data, Ben Pearson, commercial director for thetrainline.com, says: "July heralds the start of the Great British Getaway we all look forward to, but it appears that this year, more people than ever are planning to stay in this country.

"Advance bookings are particularly on the increase as travellers are becoming increasingly wise to the savings that can be made by booking in advance online rather than buying a ticket on the day of travel from the station."

Customers can make an average saving of 43% on advance tickets if booked up to 6pm on the day before departure, compared to 'turn up and go' tickets bought at the station on the day of travel.

Pearson continues, "We're always looking to assist our customers in buying cheaper tickets and helping them to beat the rising cost of rail fares. Through our easy-to-use website and innovative tools like Best Fare Finder and Ticket Alert our customers are buying smarter; selecting single tickets over the often more expensive returns, travelling off peak rather than peak, choosing a time and day to return rather than leaving it open and looking at alternative days and times to travel."

It's not too late to take advantage of the savings. If booked now a return journey from London to Bournemouth over July could cost as little as £9 each way - a saving of around 61% when compared with a 'turn up and go' return ticket bought at the station on the day of travel (£46.50\*\*\*).

**ENDS**

**For further information, please contact:**

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**Notes to the editor**

\* thetrainline.com analysed advanced bookings data for outbound journeys on the four weekends in July in both 2008 and 2009.

\*\*BAA Traffic Summary, May 2009, released 10 June 2009

\*\*\*All fares correct at time of issue. Tickets and availability cannot be guaranteed.

**About thetrainline.com**

thetrainline.com is the leading UK rail ticket retailer and rail ticket information provider, offering fast and easy access to timetables, fares, reservations and tickets through its Internet site and contact centre operations in the UK train travel sector. In addition to its own website, [www.thetrainline.com](http://www.thetrainline.com), it operates retail websites for 15 Train Operating Companies who sell rail tickets online, as well as providing a rail business travel service direct to a number of blue chip corporations and travel agents.