NEWS LESSON

When Sunshine Stops Feeling Like a Holiday



BEFORE YOU READ

1 Warm up

Talk about these questions with a partner.

1. Would you choose a cool holiday over a hot one?
2. What weather can spoil a trip for you?
3. Do you prefer following the sun or avoiding the crowds?

2 Key words

These words are in the article. Write the letter of the meaning (A to H) in each box.

1	**drizzle**	☐	A	a sudden, very heavy fall of rain
2	**endurance**	☐	B	the ability to keep going through something hard
3	**breathable**	☐	C	the basic systems a place needs, such as roads and services
4	**downpour**	☐	D	a strange situation that is the opposite of what you expect
5	**archipelago**	☐	E	very light rain
6	**infrastructure**	☐	F	a group of many small islands
7	**irony**	☐	G	the amount of harm that something does to the environment
8	**footprint**	☐	H	cool and fresh enough to be comfortable

3 Read

Read the article and underline the key words from task 2. The paragraphs are numbered.

The coolcation may be an awkward label, but it captures a serious change in how travellers think about summer.

1 The promise of the traditional European summer holiday was simple: travel south, escape the drizzle and come home with a suntan. That promise begins to fail when sightseeing becomes an endurance test and sleep requires an air conditioner running all night. After a succession of punishing summers, some travellers are choosing almost the opposite holiday. They want breathable afternoons, cool bedrooms and the once-unfashionable possibility of rain.

2 The label "coolcation" sounds as though it came from a marketing meeting, but the attraction is more substantial than the slogan. Northern destinations offer the possibility of walking, kayaking or exploring throughout the day rather than arranging every activity around the temperature. What was once marketed apologetically, such as cloud, wind and the chance of rain, can now be presented as freedom from a holiday governed by heat.

3 In Scotland, businesses are already turning their traditionally unpredictable weather into an asset. BBC reporting from Glencoe in August described holidaymakers seeking relief from heat further south and cottage owners surprised to find that customers actually welcomed a downpour. Farther east, travellers have been exploring Sweden's coast and Norway's fjords for similar reasons.

4 Euronews, reporting with AFP, described growing interest in northern destinations. Norway's tourism organisation said about one in five international visitors named cooler summer weather as a reason for their trip. The appeal is also being able to explore without organising every hour around the temperature.

5 Nevertheless, the evidence calls for a measured interpretation. A spike in online searches may reflect curiosity rather than a lasting change in behaviour, and Europe's Mediterranean destinations continue to draw enormous crowds. Decisions depend on affordability, food, culture and flight connections, not the thermometer alone. Scandinavia can also be expensive, while a rainy week in the Highlands is not everyone's idea of relaxation. Rather than abandoning southern Europe, travellers may increasingly visit it in spring or autumn, leaving the hottest months for mountain regions or northern coasts.

6 There is an uncomfortable irony in the enthusiasm for cooler destinations. In parts of Norway's Lofoten archipelago, rising tourist numbers have already brought about congested roads, overflowing parking areas and arguments about who should pay for local infrastructure. Tourism pressure does not become sustainable merely because it moves north; the crowds simply turn up somewhere else. Cooler regions are not insulated from the climate crisis: Scotland experienced a substantial Cairngorms wildfire that summer. Long-distance flights, meanwhile, remain part of tourism's environmental footprint, whatever the weather at the destination.

7 The more consequential shift may therefore concern how holidays are organised, rather than the geographical direction of travel. If tourists spread their trips across different months and destinations, some overcrowded regions could gain breathing space while less-visited communities benefit economically. But that requires planning, infrastructure and an honest account of environmental costs, not simply a new label attached to another fashionable escape. The coolcation captures a changing mood: sunshine is still wanted, but it is no longer the whole of a good holiday.

Sources: BBC News. Picture: AI illustration.

4 True, false or not given

Circle **T** (true), **F** (false) or **NG** (the article does not say).

1. Both the holidaymakers reported from Glencoe and the visitors to Norway are described as being motivated partly by cooler weather. T F NG
2. The writer treats a rise in online searches as firm proof that holiday habits have changed. T F NG
3. Most visitors to Lofoten travel there by car. T F NG
4. The writer believes that spreading trips across the year would be enough on its own to solve overcrowding. T F NG
5. The text suggests that cost could put some travellers off Scandinavia. T F NG

5 Vocabulary

Complete the sentences with words from the box. Two words are not needed.

archipelago **asset** **congested** **insulated** **measured** **overflowing** **spike** **succession**

1. The minister offered a _____ response, avoiding both panic and complacency.
2. The ring road is so _____ at rush hour that a ten-minute journey takes an hour.
3. Wealthy neighbourhoods were largely _____ from the rise in prices.
4. The old harbour, once an eyesore, is now the town's greatest _____ .
5. A _____ of cancelled trains left commuters furious.
6. A sudden _____ in demand overwhelmed the ticket website.

6 Word forms

Use the word in brackets to make a word that fits the gap.

1. The scheme was widely criticised as _____ given the strain on local roads. (SUSTAIN)
2. Her _____ of the rules cost the company its licence. (REGARD)
3. The festival's rapid growth has been _____ to the village's fragile ecosystem. (DETRIMENT)
4. Supporters hailed the _____ of the old mill as a triumph for the town. (RESTORE)
5. The mayor's remarks were met with _____ from the packed hall. (SCEPTIC)

7 Language focus: linking words

Complete the sentences with words from the box. Two words are not needed. At this level, some linkers need a noun phrase, some a clause, and some a verb form. Look at what follows the gap before you choose.

albeit **conversely** **hence** **inasmuch** **notwithstanding** **thereby** **whereby**

1. The cabin was basic, _____ spotlessly clean.
2. _____ the forecast of heavy rain, the hikers set out at dawn.
3. The council trialled a scheme _____ visitors pay a small levy for footpath repairs.
4. Rents rose sharply; _____ many young families left the village.
5. Warm winters hurt ski resorts. _____ , they can help coastal towns extend their season.

SPEAK

8 Talk about it

Discuss in pairs or small groups. Give reasons for your answers.

1. Would you change a favourite destination because its summers felt too hot?
2. What makes a place a good holiday choice beyond its weather?
3. Could becoming a popular cool destination create new problems for local people?

9 Role-play: choosing a summer holiday

Work in pairs. Read your card, then have the conversation. Swap roles and do it again.

Student A · the friend who wants a cool holiday

You want to spend a week in Norway or Scotland this summer. You hate very hot weather and sleep badly when it is hot. Try to persuade your friend.

Student B · the friend who wants a beach holiday

You want a week in Spain. You love sunshine and swimming. Explain why, and listen to your friend's ideas. Try to agree on a plan.

Useful phrases

I'd rather go somewhere cooler.
I can't sleep when it's too hot.
That's a fair point, but I love the beach.
What if we went in May instead?
Let's compare the prices first.
I'm happy to compromise.

Afterwards, tell the class: where did you decide to go, and who gave way more?

ANSWER KEY

2 Key words

1 E · 2 B · 3 H · 4 A · 5 F · 6 C · 7 D · 8 G

4 True, false or not given

1 T · 2 F · 3 NG · 4 F · 5 T

5 Vocabulary

1 measured · 2 congested · 3 insulated · 4 asset · 5 succession · 6 spike

6 Word forms

1 unsustainable · 2 disregard · 3 detrimental · 4 restoration · 5 scepticism

7 Language focus

1 albeit · 2 Notwithstanding · 3 whereby · 4 hence · 5 Conversely

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