NEWS LESSON

The Holidaymakers Heading North



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	**shutters**	☐	A	a large fire that spreads quickly across wild land
2	**sightseeing**	☐	B	a long chair for lying in the sun
3	**guaranteed**	☐	C	long narrow parts of the sea between high cliffs, as in Norway
4	**fjords**	☐	D	visiting interesting places as a tourist
5	**thermometer**	☐	E	wooden or metal covers that close over a window
6	**wildfire**	☐	F	certain, with a promise that it will happen
7	**sunlounger**	☐	G	an arrangement to have a hotel room or a ticket
8	**booking**	☐	H	a tool that shows how hot or cold it is

3 Read

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

Shutters closed, streets empty and sightseeing postponed until sunset. After a run of punishing summers, some travellers are booking north instead.

1 Imagine arriving for a long-awaited city break and discovering that the afternoon is too hot for sightseeing. The streets empty, the shutters close and the holiday moves indoors until sunset. After another summer of intense European heat, some travellers have decided that guaranteed sunshine is no longer a guarantee of enjoyment. They are looking north instead, for fresh air, cooler nights and the freedom to stay outside.

2 The trend has taken off under the awkward but memorable name "coolcation". Scotland, Norway and southern Sweden offer fjords, lochs, long evenings and temperatures that make walking or kayaking possible throughout the day. The attraction is not simply a colder thermometer. It is the freedom to explore without organising meals, journeys and sightseeing around the most punishing hours.

3 The weather has helped push this idea into the mainstream. Europe's Copernicus climate service reported that summer 2026 was the continent's third warmest on record, with western Europe recording its hottest summer. In August, the BBC visited a holiday business near Glencoe whose owners said customers were increasingly choosing Scotland because of its cooler climate. Some guests welcomed the rain rather than complaining about it. The kind of weather tourism advertisements once tried to play down had become a selling point.

4 There are signs that this goes beyond a few unusual travellers. Euronews reported growing interest in Scandinavian and northern European destinations. Separately, Norway's tourism organisation said roughly one in five overseas visitors regarded cooler summer temperatures as a reason for going there. However, tourism researchers are cautious about declaring the end of the beach holiday. Southern Europe is still enormously popular, and climate is only one factor alongside cost, transport links, food and personal preference. An internet search does not always turn into a booking.

5 Nor is heading north a perfect solution. In Norway's Lofoten Islands, growing visitor numbers have put pressure on roads, parking and local facilities. Moving crowds from one part of Europe to another could simply create new problems. Northern destinations are also experiencing climate change themselves. Scotland suffered a major wildfire in the Cairngorms during the summer, a reminder that cooler does not mean risk-free. And taking a longer flight to escape the heat can add to the emissions that contribute to global warming.

6 A more lasting change may be a shift in the holiday calendar. People who love Spain or Italy might still visit, but choose spring or autumn instead of the height of summer. Others may discover that their happiest holiday involves a mountain path rather than a sunlounger. The appetite for sunshine has hardly disappeared. But when a holiday starts to feel more like hard work than a break, it's understandable that a grey sky can suddenly look rather inviting.

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. Norwegian hotels have raised their summer prices in response. T F NG
2. Scotland suffered a major wildfire in the Cairngorms that summer. T F NG
3. Researchers say the beach holiday has come to an end. T F NG
4. Copernicus reported that summer 2026 was Europe's third warmest on record. T F NG
5. Copernicus said summer 2026 was the warmest on record for the whole of Europe. T F NG

5 Vocabulary

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

awkward	emissions	facilities	forecast	fragile	mainstream	punishing	reminder

1. Vegan food was once unusual, but it has moved into the _____ in many cafes.
2. I felt _____ when I met my new boss and could not remember his name.
3. The marathon was _____ : forty degrees and no shade.
4. The cold, wet week was a _____ that British weather can change quickly.
5. Long flights produce _____ that warm the planet.
6. The campsite has good local _____ , including showers and a small shop.

6 Verb forms

Write the correct form of the verb in brackets.

1. By the time the guests arrived, the owners _____ every room. (CLEAN)
2. Most of the cottages _____ last week, so we stayed in a hotel. (BOOK)
3. You _____ a waterproof jacket in the Highlands, even in July. (SHOULD / TAKE)
4. Since June, the number of bookings _____ steadily. (RISE)
5. While we _____ along the fjord, it started to rain. (WALK)

7 Language focus: linking words

Complete the sentences with words from the box. Two words are not needed. Check whether the gap joins two clauses, comes before a noun phrase, or starts a new sentence. Then check that the logic works.

despite	nevertheless	owing	provided	therefore	unless	whereas

1. _____ the rising interest, researchers say it is too early to call it a lasting change.
2. Some guests loved the rain, _____ others wished for sunshine.
3. Hotels in the north fill up quickly; _____ , it is wise to book early.
4. Flights to the north are often long. _____ , many travellers accept the extra journey time.
5. The cottage owners will keep their prices low _____ demand rises sharply.

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

4 True, false or not given

1 NG · 2 T · 3 F · 4 T · 5 F

5 Vocabulary

1 mainstream · 2 awkward · 3 punishing · 4 reminder · 5 emissions · 6 facilities

6 Verb forms

1 had cleaned · 2 were booked · 3 should take · 4 has risen · 5 were walking

7 Language focus

1 Despite · 2 whereas · 3 therefore · 4 Nevertheless · 5 unless

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