

Traveller beware.....



EUROPEAN CONSUMER CENTRE IRELAND 

When on holidays people tend to be at their most relaxed and are therefore often vulnerable to scams. If you are approached on the street and offered a scratch card which reveals that you have won a “free” holiday, be careful, it may well be a scam. In order to collect your prize you are asked to go to a presentation to learn more about a new holiday scheme. You will later find out that the 'free' holiday is not free and you may be pressurised to sign on the spot.

Watch out for the techniques used:

- the presentation has lasted so long you are tempted to sign just because you are desperate to leave
- you are offered alcohol to get you into the mood to sign up
- they have made you a special discounted offer only valid for that day
- you are not left alone to discuss anything with your partner and you are given very limited time to view the contract

Not all holiday clubs are disreputable but if you answer no to any of these questions the likelihood is that you are dealing with a scam:

1. Can you take the contract away and come back in a few days' time with your decision?
2. Do you have any cancellation rights, and are they written down?
3. Is everything that was promised to you at the presentation included in writing in the contract?

Do not sign anything, no matter how much you are pressurised, unless you are sure it is exactly what you want.

ECC Ireland's advice to consumers is to avoid signing any documents or paying deposits on the spot. The smart holiday maker will take the time to think about their decision as they will know that a reputable trader can always be contacted again later.

For more information on timeshare and holiday clubs [click here](#)

“Free” tours

ECC Ireland has recently been contacted by a number of Irish consumers concerning promotions offered by the hotels where they were staying involving “free” dinners or tours of the local area. While it may seem like an attractive addition to their holiday, in fact, in most of these cases, consumers are actually subject to high pressure sales meetings during which they may be offered the opportunity to buy all sorts of products, ranging from kitchen equipment, to mattresses and timeshare or holiday clubs. The relaxed atmosphere which prevails during these events and, which in some cases may be also accompanied by free drinks, can often help to lure consumers to sign seemingly harmless contracts or to pay deposits without focusing too much on the details of what they are signing up to. Only after the consumer returns from their holidays do they realise that they have committed themselves to the payment of thousands of Euro for something they do not actually need.

ECC Ireland's advice to consumers is that if they choose to take up the offer of a "free" meal or trip they should be careful to avoid signing any documents or paying deposits on the spot. The smart holiday maker will take the time to think about their decision as they will know that a reputable trader can always be contacted again later to make an order.

For more advice on scams see www.eccireland.ie