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Passengers face airport alcohol crackdown in an attempt to wipe out drink-fuelled violence on flights

- House of Lords committee recommends new rules on alcohol sales at airports
- Under UK law airport bars are not bound by trading hours restrictions
- Lords wants action after more than 440 alcohol related arrests in two years

By JOSEPH CURTIS FOR MAILONLINE
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A new crackdown has been launched on passengers drinking alcohol before flights to stop drunken and violent incidents on board planes.

Airports are currently exempt from restrictions placed on pubs and shops under the Licensing Act 2003, which means holidaymakers can buy alcohol 24-hours-a-day, including before early morning flights.

But a House of Lords committee is recommending introducing similar trading hour rules to airport bars and restaurants after a spike in 'air rage'.

As reported by MailOnline, more than 440 passengers have been arrested in the UK over the past two years on suspicion of being drunk on a plane or at an airport.



The House of Lords has called for a crackdown on the sale of alcohol at UK airports (file picture)

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A Lords report said the 'relaxed' rules on sale of alcohol at airports are leading to 'notorious' drunken incidents on flights. Pictured is a Frankie & Benny's restaurant at Gatwick Airport

The Lords committee report said: 'No one travelling on an international flight can fail to notice that, once they have gone through customs, control of the sale of alcohol seems to be relaxed, and the permitted hours even more so.'

'This is because the Licensing Act 2003 is expressly disapplied from such areas.'

'The incidents occurring on flights are notorious, sometimes requiring flights to be diverted, and more often than not such incidents are the consequence of alcohol consumed airside before the flight.'

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The committee also received evidence from airline Jet2.com which claimed their staff dealt with 536 alcohol-related 'disruptive incidents' in summer 2016.

The report added: 'Many also had the opportunity to drink heavily at the airport before they get on the flight.'

'The Civil Aviation Authority report a 36 per cent increase in disruptive passenger incidents in the UK between 2014 and 2015. This is a large number of incidents for a relatively small airline.'

'Alcohol Concern told us of a survey of holidaymakers which found that nearly 1 in 5 passengers said they began their holiday drinking at the airport.'

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There have been more than 440 alcohol-related arrests at UK airports in the past two years. Pictured is a bar at London City Airport

Pub firm Wetherspoon, which has locations at airports across the country, said it 'did not believe extra regulation was needed' and said staff 'understand their responsibility' not to serve drunk passengers.

Last year airports, police and pub operators launched a new set of guidelines that was described as a 'voluntary but strict' new code of conduct.

It included a ban on people being allowed to drink alcohol they have bought from duty free or from home and could lead to travel bans for people who behave badly when drunk.

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Punish the perpetrators not the rest of us.

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James Granite, Silver City, United Kingdom, 1 day ago

As long as these clowns get their free bars !

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Dumbdy, Valencia, Spain, 1 day ago

Overheard in the Lords to the Barman.....' Dimitri, there's a good fellow, keep the champers flowing and make sure there is plenty of brandy.....'

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ElizabethA, Bristol, United Kingdom, 1 day ago

It is a great shame that a minority has (yet again) spoiled it for the majority who drink sensibly and in a controlled manner. However, I agree in principle with this move.

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Bill, Wasp in the South, United Kingdom, 1 day ago

Unfortunately an airport drink ban would not affect those who are obsessive about having a drink before going off on a 'stag' or 'hen' do, they would just go to their nearest 24 hour off licence or supermarket and buy their booze there for consumption at the airport.

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