

# This is how Europe camps!

Discovering the similarities and differences between campers of different nationalities



# Table of contents

Campers are bookworms .....	<b>4</b>
Motorhomes on the rise in Europe .....	<b>5</b>
The opinions of others matter! .....	<b>6</b>
Surfing the internet .....	<b>7</b>
This is what campers think about their compatriots on the campsite ...	<b>8</b>
On the road .....	<b>9</b>
Germans love campsites by the sea .....	<b>10</b>
Dutch and French campers are prudish .....	<b>11</b>
Love – or hate – thy neighbour .....	<b>12</b>
Dirty toilets biggest cause of irritation .....	<b>13</b>
Italians love a bit of culture .....	<b>14</b>
Culinary campsite delights .....	<b>15</b>
British people need their own tea .....	<b>16</b>
Toilet paper; to hide or not to hide? .....	<b>17</b>
Own toilet is best toilet .....	<b>18</b>



# Introduction

If you take a quick look at a motorway on a summer's day then you will realise: Europeans love camping! Motorhomes, caravans, trailer tents and cars with fully loaded roof boxes have taken over the European roads. Off to a sunny camping spot. It is no coincidence that ACSI sells campsite guides and other camping related products throughout the whole of Europe. We know European campers pretty well. But we thought it was high time to get to know them even better by asking them about their camping preferences. It's time to find out what your fellow campers have brought with them from home to the campsite and which nationalities make the best campsite neighbours!

We asked campers to participate in the International ACSI Camping Survey through our European websites (Eurocampings.eu, CampingCard.com and GreatLittleCampsites.co.uk). The survey was divided into two parts, with 18,683 campers filling in the first part and 9,130 the second part. Now it's finally time to share the results with you! So you can find out exactly what the similarities and differences are between European campers.

Do Dutch campers have the guts to walk over the campsite without hiding their toilet roll? And how curious are Spaniards about the local cuisine at their camping destination? We put these and other questions to Dutch, German, British, Spanish, French and Italian campers. Read this research report and get to know European campers better. You never know, you might be able to put the knowledge to good use!

Enjoy reading!

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## Colophon

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### Type of survey

Online survey in two parts among visitors on Eurocampings.eu, CampingCard.com and GreatLittleCampsites.co.uk

### Number of respondents

18,683 (part 1) and 9,130 (part 2)

### Language

Dutch, German, English, French, Spanish and Italian

### Respondents part 1

- Average age: 54
- 56% male, 44% female
- 62% camp as '2 adults without children'
- May, June and September are the most popular camping months

### Respondents part 2

- Average age: 57
- 59% male, 41% female
- 69% camp as '2 adults without children'
- May, June and September are the most popular camping months

# Campers are bookworms

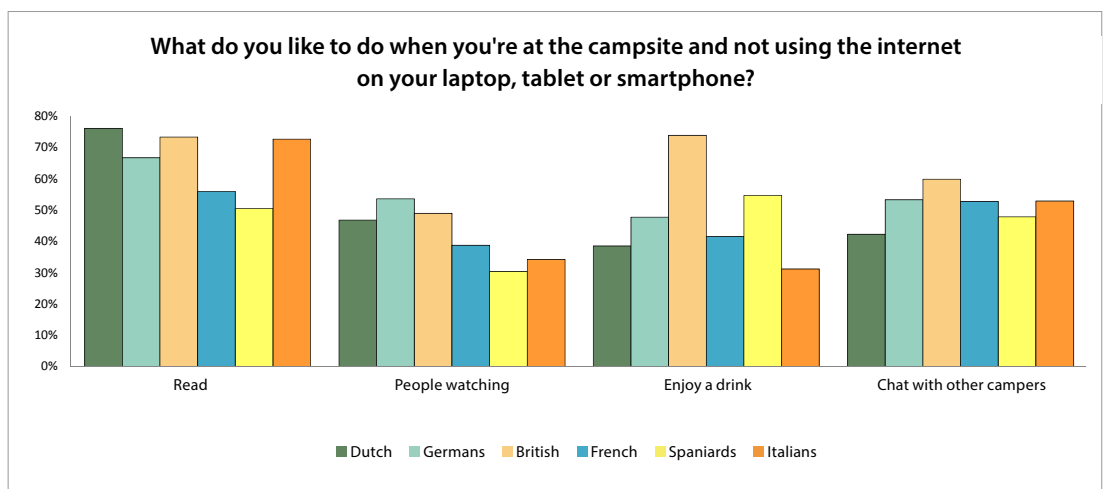
We asked European campers about their favourite offline activity.

## Here's what stood out!

Campers like to lose themselves in the imaginary world of a good book; this is often the number one activity during a camping holiday. An exception to this are British and Spanish campers, who prefer to open a good bottle of wine or a nice beer and have a drink together (74% and 55%).

### Thriller or novel

And what kind of books do we read? Dutch, German and British campers prefer a good thriller. French, Spanish and Italian respondents prefer to get lost in a novel.



# Motorhomes on the rise in Europe

We asked European campers about their preference for camping equipment.



## Here's what stood out!

Motorhomes are clearly on the rise. Among French people, the motorhome (53%) wins it from the caravan (27%) by far. This is also the case for the Italians. Of this group, 57% of respondents camp with a motorhome and far fewer camp with a caravan (16%) or tent (21%).

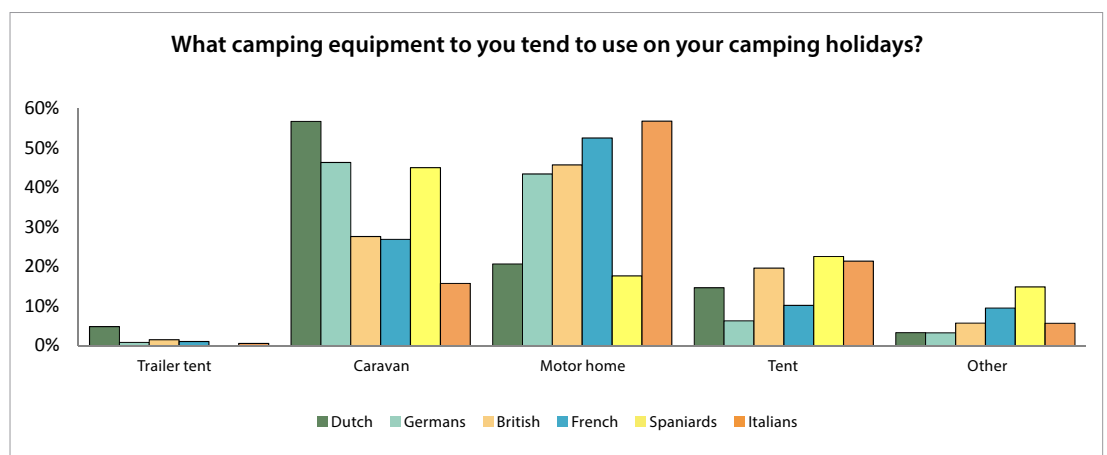
Besides French and Italian campers, British campers also make more use of the motorhome (46%) than of the caravan (28%). However the use of tents is still considerable: 20% of British respondents camp with a tent.

When it comes to German-speaking campers, the jury is out; the number of respondents with a motorhome (43%) and a caravan (46%) is almost the same.

### Loyal to the caravan

Dutch campers remain loyal to their caravan. 57% still camp with a caravan compared to 21% with a motorhome. The Dutch enthusiasm for trailer tents is remarkable: of all nationalities, only the Dutch seem to be a little interested (5%).

Spaniards also prefer a caravan. 45% of Spaniards take a caravan on their camping holiday. The motorhome (18%) and the tent (23%) are more or less in joint second position.



# The opinions of others matter!

We asked European campers how important reviews are when choosing a campsite. And which topics are particularly important.

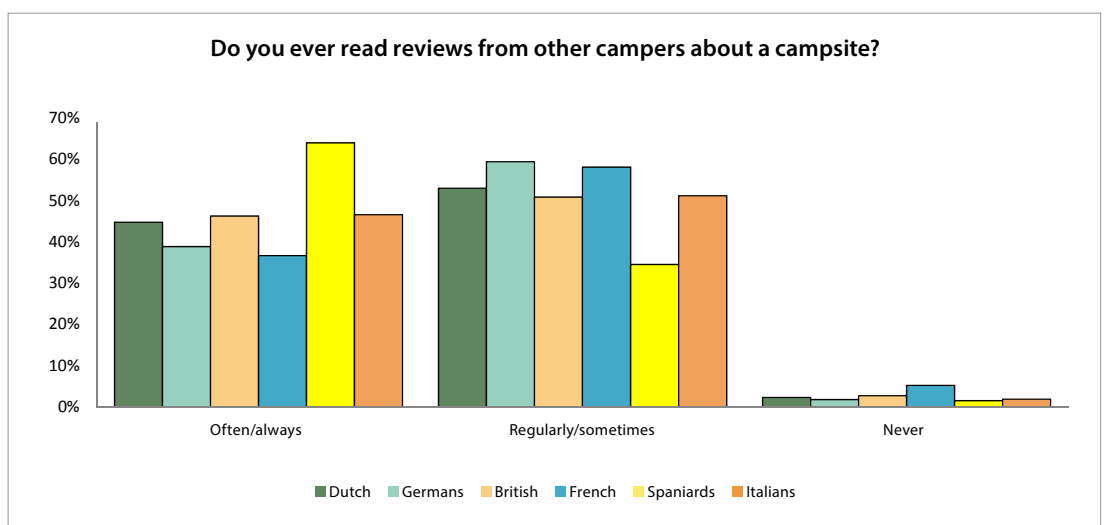


## Here's what stood out!

Campers value what other campers think of a campsite. Most campers read campsite reviews from others. Spaniards especially appear to be guided by this kind of information. 64% often or always read the reviews of other campers about a campsite. Of all nationalities, the French are the least concerned about the opinions of others.

### Toilet facilities and hygiene

For most nationalities, the most decisive topics in a campsite review are toilet facilities and hygiene. The surroundings and getting value for money are also important. Among Spaniards, information about the pool is also mentioned as an important topic in a review.



# Surfing the internet

We asked European campers about the reasons they use the internet on the campsite.

## *Here's what stood out !*

It is impossible to imagine a world without the internet, or indeed a campsite without internet. Most campers use it to check the weather forecast, to read e-mails and to see what they can do in the area.

### **The weather is important**

The British and the French use the internet most often for weather reports, e-mails and searching for the next campsite.

### **Working during the holiday?**

Of course, some people use the Internet for work-related matters. Spanish and Italian campers do this especially. More than a quarter of these nationalities use the internet for work during their holiday.



# This is what campers think about their compatriots on the campsite

We asked European campers how they would describe campers of their own nationality. Almost all nationalities see their compatriots as very social, but there are exceptions.

## Here's what stood out!

### The Germans are open and keen travellers

German campers see themselves primarily as open (35%), keen travellers (34%) and friendly (25%).

### The Dutch are direct and open

Dutch people might be known for being frugal, but this characteristic is not in the top 3 of ways to describe Dutch campers. It does get the highest ranking of all the nationalities who were asked to characterise their compatriots, but it's not in the top 3. The Dutch see their compatriots mainly as direct (35%), open (29%) and social (31%).

### Brits find Brits friendly

The British see themselves as friendly, as motorhome users and as down to earth. Friendliness is a strong leader on the score board, more than half of all British people have given this answer. It is also striking that British campers attribute the characteristic 'noisy' to other British campers least often.

### The French are lovers of the good life

The French describe themselves as motorhome users, and also as social people who like the good life. Many French respondents attributed the typical 'loving the good life' characteristic to their compatriots. One third of them gave this answer.

### The funniest campers are Spanish

Apparently, if you put a group of Spaniards together they are sure to have an excellent time. Among all nationalities, the characteristic 'funny' is the one most often attributed by Spanish campers to other Spanish campers. The top 3 characteristics, however, are: noisy, open and social. Perhaps Spaniards laugh out loud a lot?

### Italians are social, but less interested in living the good life

Italians find themselves social, noisy and open. Typically, of all nationalities, Italians consider Italian campers to be the most social. Where the French see themselves as lovers of the good life, the Italians chose this characteristic the least of all: only 1% of Italian respondents thought their compatriots were people who like the good life.





# On the road

We asked European campers how many kilometres they travel on average to get to their camping destination. And we wanted to know if there tends to be a lot of arguing along the way and what the cause is.

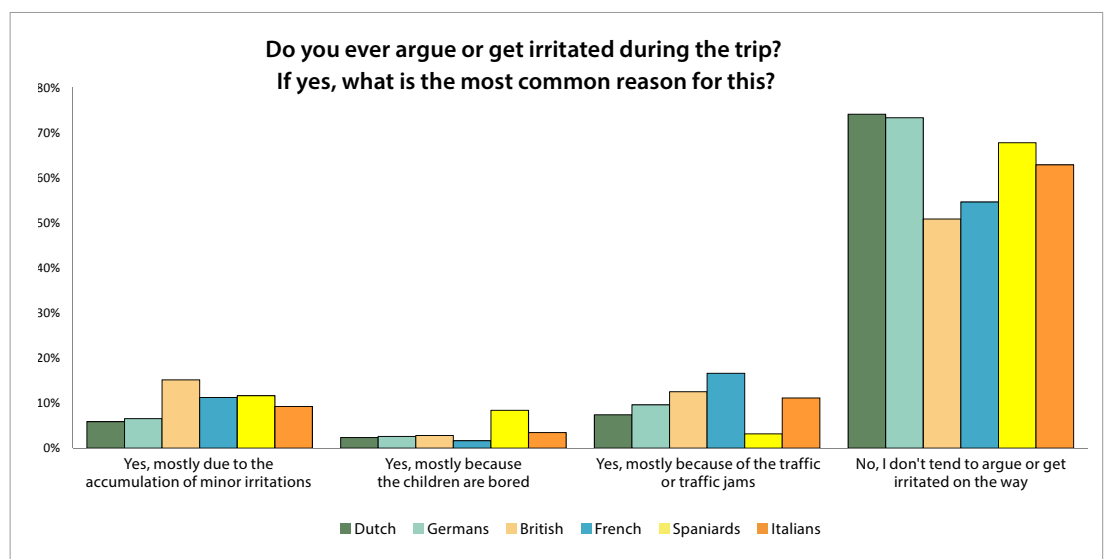
## Here's what stood out!

### The Dutch cover the longest distance

The Dutch travel the most kilometres of all nationalities to reach their camping destination. More than half of Dutch campers even travel more than 1,000 kilometres to get to their campsite. Spaniards stay closest to home: 55% of Spaniards do not travel more than 500 kilometres.

### Quarrelling while on the road

A quarrel in the car? A nasty remark from a backseat driver? Fortunately, the majority of respondents said they don't have quarrels or get irritated by their fellow travellers while on the road. But if there is irritation, for Dutch, Germans, French and Italian campers it is most often caused by traffic or traffic jams. Among Spaniards and Brits, the accumulation of minor irritations is the main cause of a bigger quarrel. Fortunately, for all nationalities, children do not often cause quarrels or irritation. Of all nationalities, however, it is the Spanish campers who most often indicate that the children cause quarrels or irritation.



# Germans love campsites by the sea

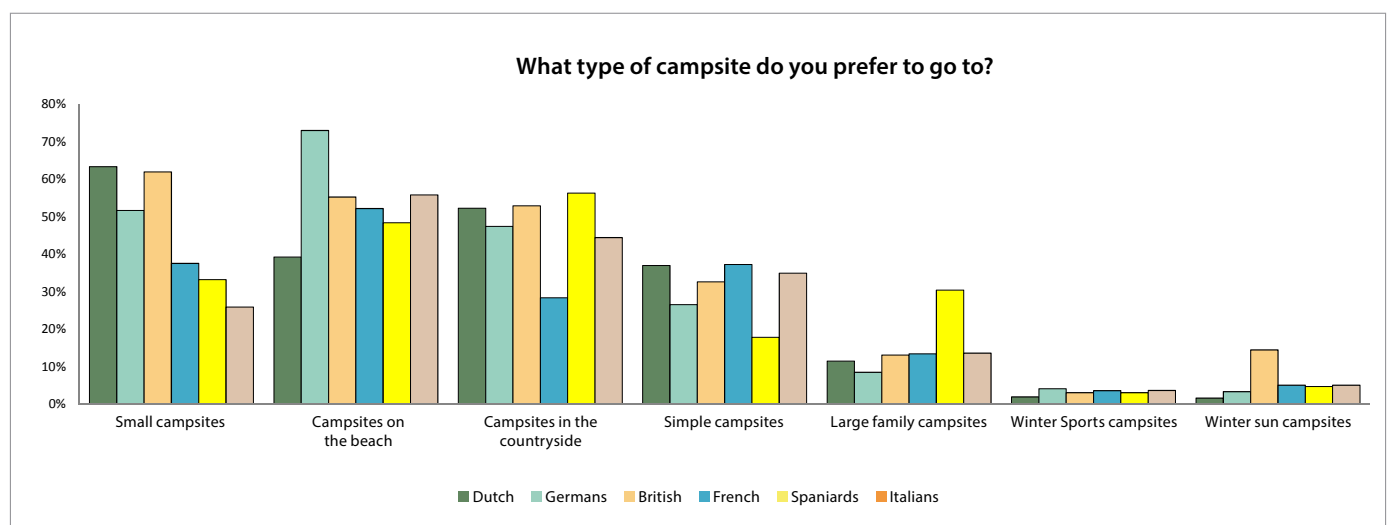
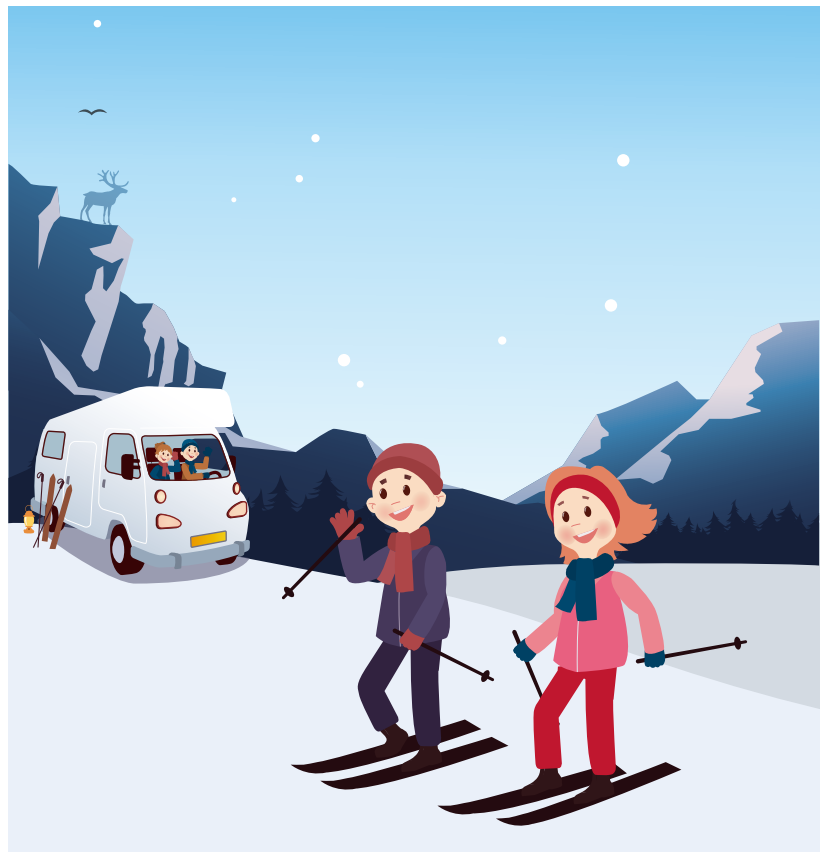
We asked European campers which type of campsite they prefer.

## Here's what stood out!

German campers prefer a campsite on the beach (73%). They opt for a coastal campsite much more often than other nationalities. Small campsites are the most popular among Dutch (63%) and British (62%) campers. Spaniards, on the other hand, prefer to go out into the countryside (56%). A campsite in the countryside appeals to them more than a campsite on the beach (48%).

### Winter camping

Winter sun campsites, where guests can escape the cold, mainly attract British guests. On winter sports campsites you will meet all nationalities. It is almost equally divided.



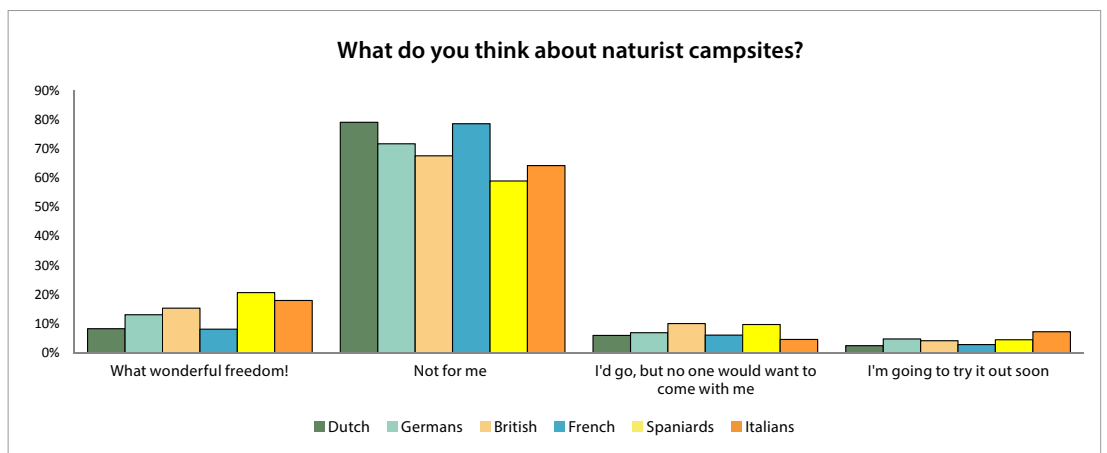
# Dutch and French campers are prudish

We were curious about the opinion of the European camper about naturist campsites.

## Here's what stood out!

Are Dutch people prudish? They may not have that image, but this survey shows that naturist campsites are the least popular among Dutch campers. They say it is nothing for them (79%), followed closely by French campers (78%).

Of Spanish campers, 21% say that they enjoy the freedom of naturist camping. And there may be developments afoot: of all the nationalities, Italians most often say that they want to try out a naturist campsite soon.



# Love - or hate - thy neighbour

We asked European campers if they prefer one nationality over the other to have as their campsite neighbours.



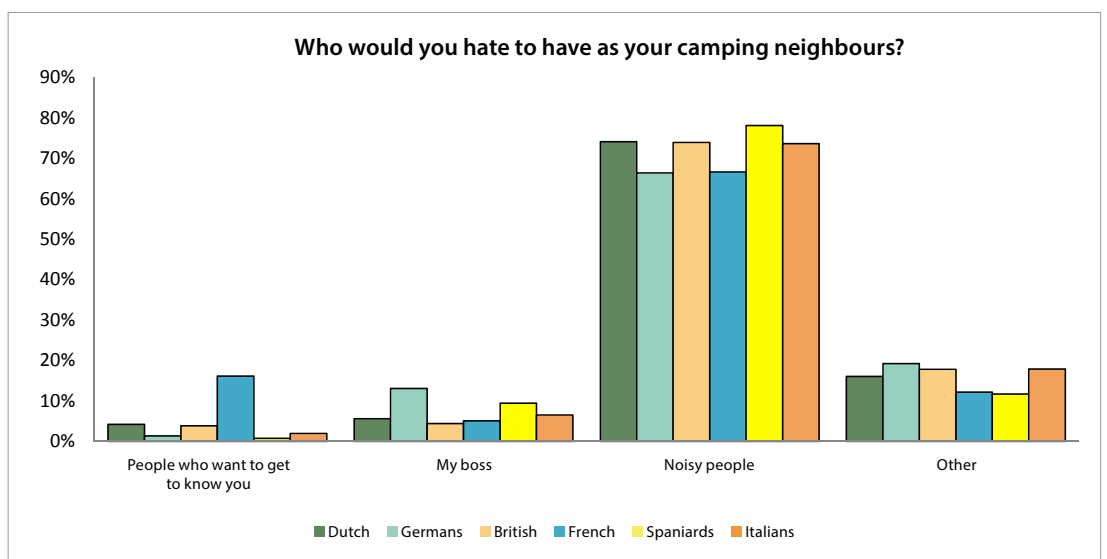
## Here's what stood out!

It's often a matter of chance: which spot will you get on a campsite and who will be next to you? The biggest worry among all the surveyed nationalities is a noisy neighbour. In fact, our survey tells us it's every camper's worst fear.

Of all the nationalities, the Germans most often indicated that they would not want to find themselves holidaying next to their boss (13%). The French, however, prefer to avoid people who would like to make contact with them (16%).

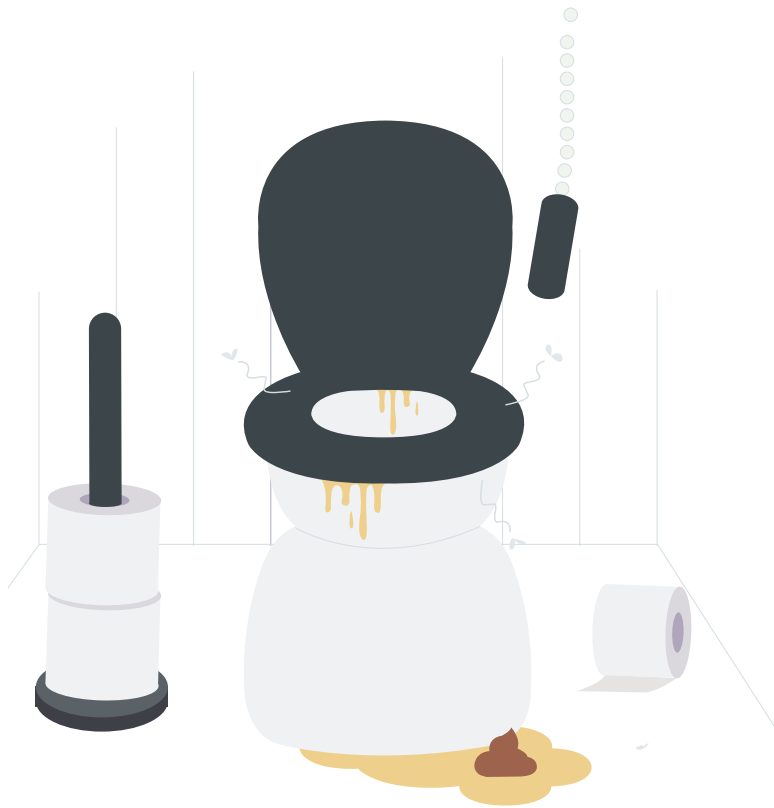
### Favourite nationality of campsite neighbours

Fortunately, campers usually don't care what nationality their neighbours have. If asked for a preference, they often prefer to have a pitch next to someone with the same nationality.



# Dirty toilets biggest cause of irritation

We asked European campers what they found the most irritating at a campsite and about the most irritating job that can't be avoided while camping.



## Here's what stood out!

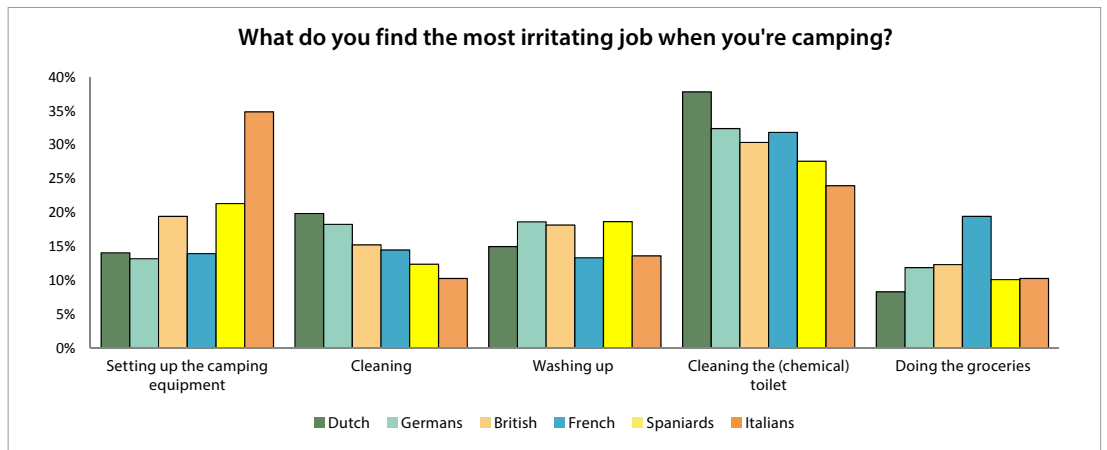
Campers of all nationalities are unanimous when it comes to their greatest irritation on the campsite: dirty toilet blocks are clearly the biggest complaint for everyone. The following percentages of campers indicate that dirty toilet facilities are the biggest annoyance on the campsite: 53% of Dutch campers, 61% of German campers, 41% of British campers, 45% of French campers, 49% of Spanish campers and 42% of Italian campers.

### Bad weather

It is striking that Southern European campers (Spanish, Italian and French) are twice as annoyed by bad weather during the holidays as other nationalities (Dutch, German and British). It would seem that southerners are especially keen on camping in good weather.

### Cleaning the toilet: preferably not

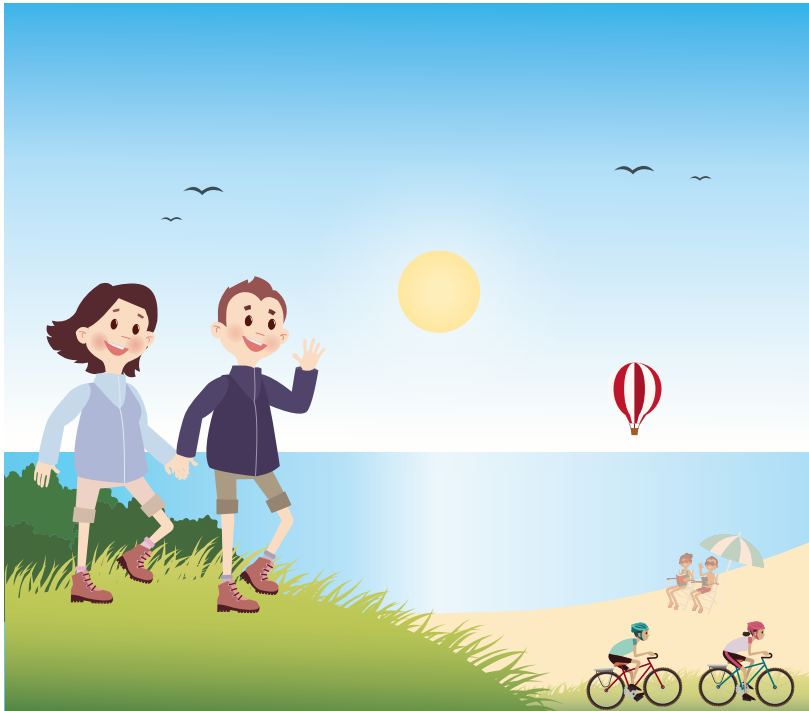
However, there are also jobs that you just need to do when you are camping that campers can experience as annoying. Number one for most nationalities is cleaning the (chemical) toilet. Italians have a different opinion however, they dislike setting up their camping equipment (35%). The French meanwhile hate having to do the groceries during their holiday.



# Italians love a bit of culture

We asked European campers about their preference for activities during a camping holiday. For example, they could choose between 'sun, sand and swimming' or 'mountains, climbing and hiking'. But they could also choose 'nature, cycling and walking', 'city, culture and restaurants' or 'eating, drinking and terraces'.

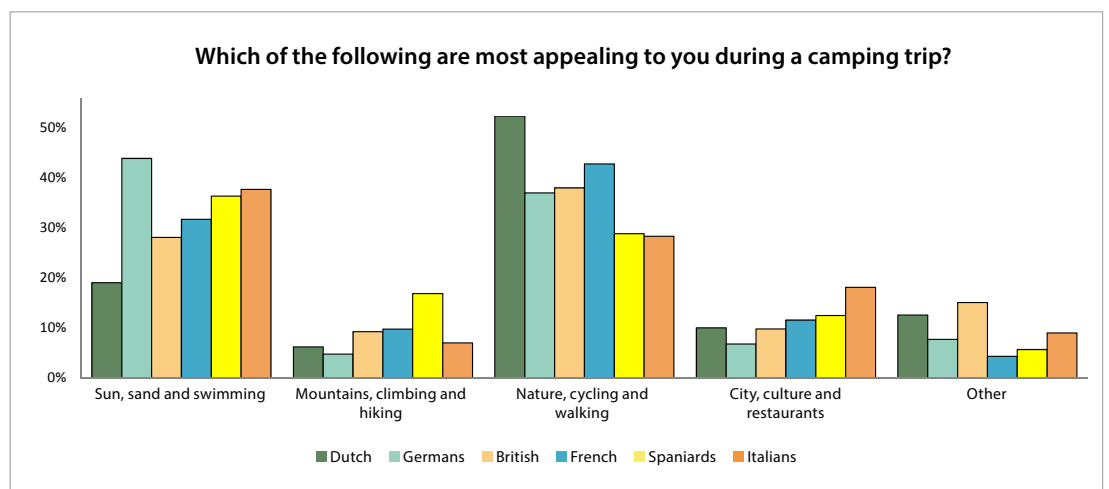
## Here's what stood out!



The category nature, cycling and walking is especially important for Dutch (52%), British (38%) and French (43%) campers. The Germans (44%), Spaniards (36%) and Italians (38%) find the combination of sun, sand and swimming to be important for their camping holiday.

A cultural outing to the city? You'll find fewer Germans than Italians going on one. Italians find city, culture and restaurants an important part of their holiday, while German campers are less interested.

Compared to other nationalities, Spanish campers have the biggest preference for the category of mountains, climbing and hiking.



# Culinary campsite delights

We asked European campers how and what they best like to eat when they prepare a meal at the campsite, and also when they go out to eat. Do they try a local dish or do they prefer to eat what they know?

## Here's what stood out!

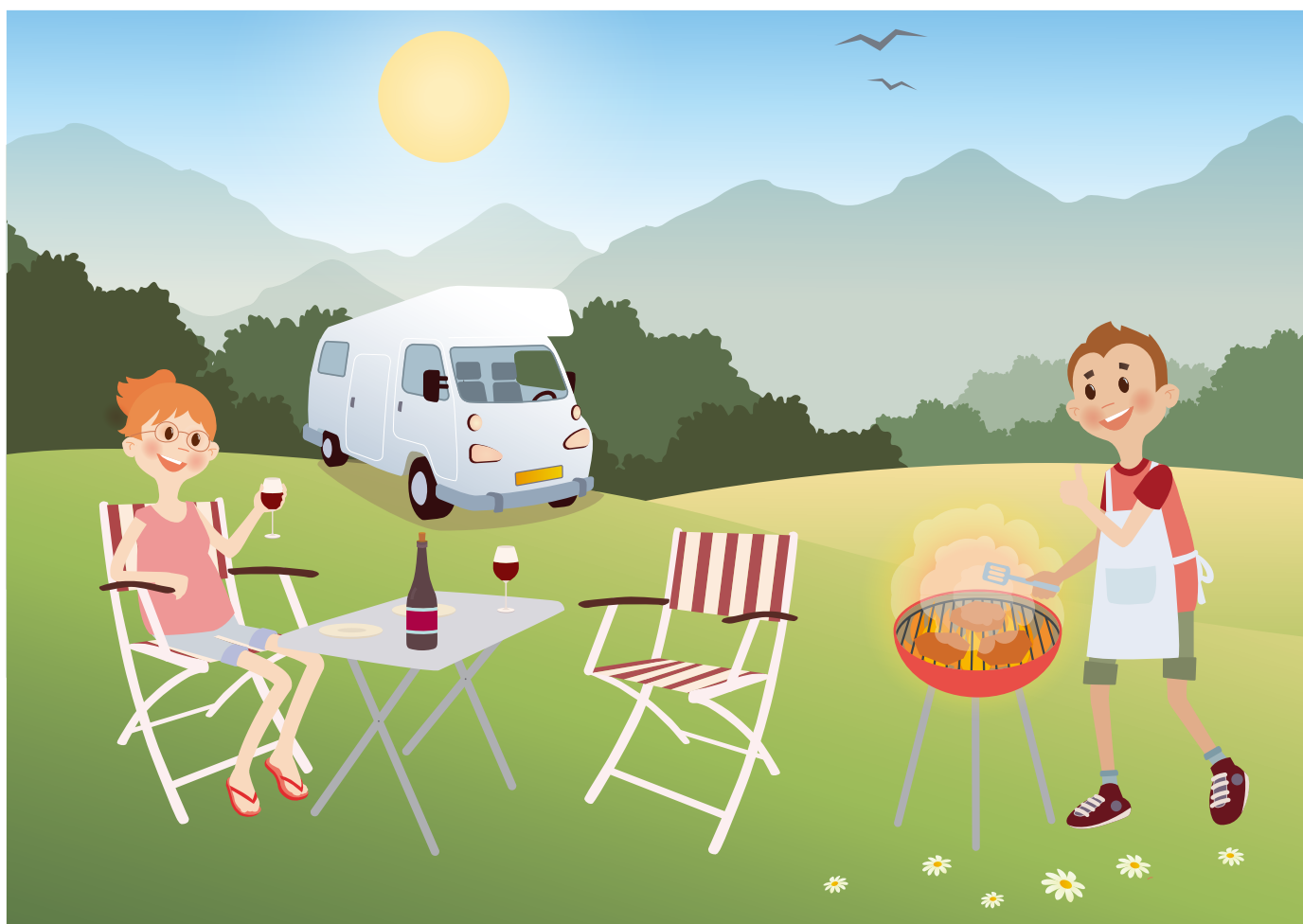
It will not surprise anyone that campers like to barbecue. It is almost everyone's favourite. Dutch campers are the exception. They prefer traditional Dutch food: meat, potatoes and vegetables (32%).

### The French do not like pasta

Italians? They eat pasta. Almost half of the Italians say this is their favourite dish to prepare on the campsite. French campers, however, are less keen on macaroni and its cousins. Only 4% say they eat pasta as their favourite camping dish.

### Dutch and Spanish campers like the taste of home

If campers don't feel like cooking and decide to head out to a restaurant, it's mainly the Dutch and Spanish campers who don't want to be too adventurous. Most of the respondents of these nationalities chose the middle ground: sometimes they'll order a local dish and sometimes a dish that they know from home. Most of the Germans, British, French and Italian campers always choose a local dish.



# British people need their own tea

We asked European campers what food or drinks they bring from home during a camping holiday, because they can't do without it.

## Here's what stood out!

### Dutch: chocolate sprinkles, peanut butter and cheese

What do campers bring on holiday? The Dutch holidaymaker brings coffee, cheese, *hagelslag* (chocolate sprinkles for on bread) and peanut butter.

### Germans: own alcohol, sausage and water

Germans mostly chose the answer option *other*, and often filled in that they prefer to bring their own alcoholic drinks and mineral water. Meat or sausages are brought along from home by a quarter of the Germans. Yet as many as a third of German campers say they don't bring anything from home.

### Brits: condiments and tea

Almost two thirds of British campers bring their own tea from the UK. In addition, almost half of Brits bring condiments.

### French: coffee, jam and cheese

French people rely on their own coffee (63%) and also bring jam and cheese from home.

### Italians and Spaniards: own olive oil

The vast majority of Spaniards apparently need their own olive oil. No fewer than 70% bring this from home. Italians also have this habit; 70% of Italian campers bring their own olive oil. They also need their own pasta and coffee.





# Toilet paper; to hide or not to hide?

We asked European campers how they walk across the campsite with their toilet paper if there isn't any paper provided by the campsite.

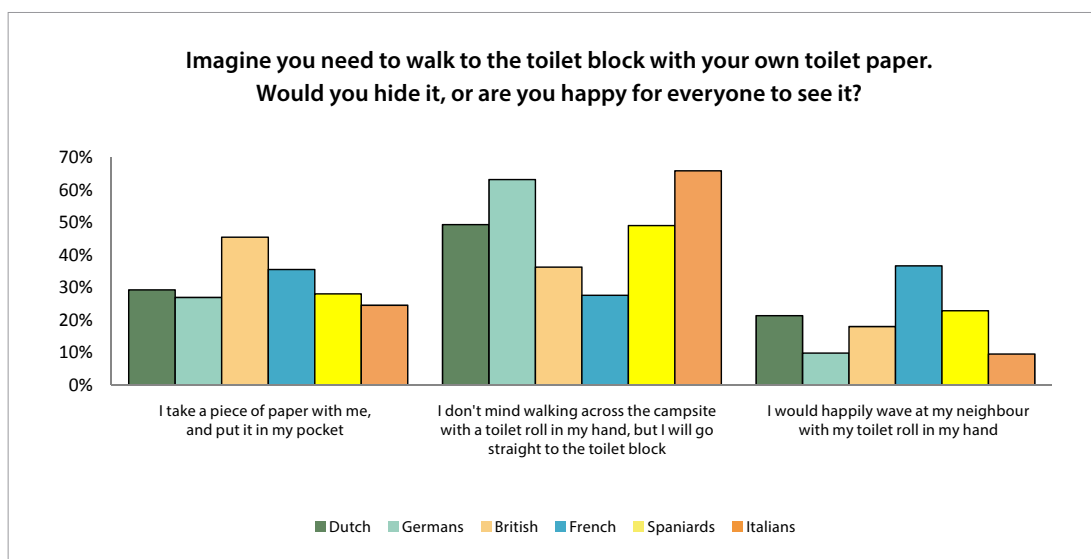


## Here's what stood out!

Everyone has seen them: campsite guests ambling along with a roll of toilet paper under their arm. Nowadays, most campsites provide toilet rolls in their toilet blocks; ACSI's yearly inspection by 330 inspection teams showed that 75% of the 10,000 ACSI campsites provide paper for their guests. We asked campers how they handle the walk to the toilet if that is not the case.

### The French are happy to show their toilet roll

It would seem that British campers prefer to hide their toilet paper; almost half of them take a piece and put it in their trouser pocket. The French are much more easy-going: they are happy to wave to their neighbours with the toilet roll in their hand (37%). Other nationalities do not mind walking around the campsite with a toilet roll in their hand, but choose to walk straight to the toilet block.



# Own toilet is best toilet

We asked European campers what they (besides food and drink) miss most from home during a camping holiday abroad.

## *Here's what stood out !*

What do campers miss when they are away from home? Not much, said most of our respondents. But of course there were some respondents who told us they missed certain things from home. British campers said they miss their family (14%). Spaniards and Italians most often

miss their own toilet (25% and 18%). Spaniards would also rather bring their own bed; of all nationalities the percentage that missed their night-time refuge was by far the highest among the Spanish.

