

Weather

- Heavy snow disrupts air, road and rail travel on 18 December

Transport news

- The High Court grants British Airways an injunction that lifts the threat of a 12 day strike by cabin crew over the Christmas period
- Flyglobespan collapses with all flights grounded
- IATA forecast that the global airline industry will make a loss of \$5.6bn in 2010 after a loss of \$11bn in 2009
- The seven airports operated by BAA in November (the final month in which Gatwick will be included in BAA figures) handled 0.8% more passengers than a year before, the first annual increase since March 2008. Figures by route sector were; domestic -1.7%, European scheduled 4.7%, North Atlantic -6.8% and other long-haul 4.1%
- BA reports that after less than three months its double daily business class only flights from New York JFK to London City are profitable
- For summer 2010 flybe will operate new services to Birmingham from Avignon, Bordeaux, Limoges and Rennes, to Manchester from Avignon, Bergerac and Limoges, to Gatwick from Limoges and to Southampton from Verona
- From April easyJet will fly to Doncaster Sheffield from Amsterdam, Barcelona, Faro and Prague
- From May easyJet will fly three times a week from Lisbon to Edinburgh
- The Boeing 787 Dreamliner finally makes its maiden test flight
- Eurostar says that industrial action by some of its drivers will not disrupt services

Domestic Economic News

- In his Pre Budget report the Chancellor forecasts that the UK economy will shrink by 4.75% in 2009
- Bank of England again keeps UK base rates at 0.5%
- UK inflation picked up more than anticipated in November, with further increases likely early in 2010 following the reinstatement of the 17.5% VAT rate
- In the three months to October UK unemployment increased by 21,000, continuing the trend for the joblessness rate to increase more slowly than earlier in 2009
- UK retail sales fell in November whereas many analysts had anticipated a rise

European Economic News

- Greece follows Ireland in announcing sweeping spending cuts in order to rein in national debt
- Inflation across the Eurozone turned positive in November for the first time in seven months
- The Irish economy has emerged from recession, recording economic growth of 0.3% between the second and third quarters of 2009

US Economic News

- US base rates again held at between 0% and 0.25%

Global Economic News

- Industrial production in China in November was its strongest for 30 months indicating that the economy continues to recover robustly

Tourism News

- According to STR Global Europe's hotel room pipeline currently stands at 97,266, with London being the city with the largest number at 5,154
- According to Global Refund the number of transactions by inbound visitors who reclaimed tax increased at an annual rate of 44% in November, but a 6% decline in average spend meant that the increase in sales was 36%

Factors contributing to tourism trends in Britain, December 2009

