

A third of Brits will start their Christmas shopping by the end of the month to keep costs at bay

This weekend marks 100 days to go until Christmas but as the nation continues to bask in the summer sun, it may be hard to believe that UK shoppers are already making yuletide purchases in order to keep their account balance in check.

- **A third of cash-poor Brits are forced to spend less on Christmas shopping compared to last year (36 per cent)**
- **A fifth of UK adults buy Christmas presents throughout the year to help spread the cost (21 per cent)**
- **A third of Brits start their Christmas shopping before October (36 per cent) and 15 per cent have already begun (before September)**
- **A fifth of the nation is already worrying about the cost of Christmas (20 per cent)**

This weekend marks 100 days to go until Christmas but as the nation continues to bask in the summer sun, it may be hard to believe that UK shoppers are already making yuletide purchases in order to keep their account balance in check.

New research* from VoucherCodes.co.uk reveals that the importance of keeping costs down forces many to plan their holiday shopping well in advance - with a staggering third of Brits beginning by the end of this month (36 per cent).

VoucherCodes.co.uk recently discovered that the majority of UK adults found the first half of the year more financially demanding than the first six months of 2012 (42 per cent) and they share a bleak outlook for the rest of 2013 with no increase in disposable income expected (62 per cent)**. This deteriorating financial climate has left Britons teetering with a fifth already concerned about the cost of Christmas.

Strained purse strings have forced a third of consumers to spend less on Christmas shopping this year compared to last year (36 per cent) and a further half cannot afford to spend any more than last Christmas (49 per cent).

To keep a handle on their budget, a fifth of Brits admitted buying items for the December festivities across the rest of the year to help spread the cost (21 per cent), with 15 per cent of shoppers having already started (before September).

Duncan Jennings, co-founder of VoucherCodes.co.uk comments: "After years of cutting back to make ends meet, consumers are clearly learning how to adapt their shopping habits to ensure they are not living beyond their means.

"Although Christmas is over three months away, it is interesting to see how many Brits have already cracked on with their purchases to avoid a huge hit to their wallets in winter. With a fifth worrying about the cost of Christmas already (21 per cent), it is important consumers know there is a range of money saving options at their fingertips to take advantage of.

"By checking voucher code sites before making any purchase, shoppers are bound to find a relevant deal to knock down the price of their desired items without having to compromise on the quality. While this is a good practice to get into the habit of all year round, using discounts can really bring down the expense of winter festivities - much to the relief of struggling households across the nation."

Notes to editors:

* Research undertaken in 11 countries (Australia, Canada, China, France, Germany, Great Britain, India, Italy, Netherlands, Sweden and USA) by Ipsos Public Affairs between 10 - 24 June 2013

** Research of 2000 Britons aged over 18yrs was carried out by One Poll on 28th - 30th June 2013.

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