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## **Ryanair a winner on charging passengers for food and drink**

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*IdeaWorks contributed information to this article - - see italics.*

Ryanair charges more for in-flight food and drink than any of the other principal British or Irish airlines, according to new research.

A survey by Nowfly, an online travel comparison website, shows that the Irish no-frills airline charges more than its rivals in every category apart from spirits – which it does not offer on board its flights. It charges 35 per cent more for tea and coffee, 50 per cent more for a small bottle of wine and up to 30 per cent more for sandwiches than its rivals, including easyJet, Flybe, Monarch and Bmi (see table).

*According to the American research group IdeaWorks, Ryanair took almost £550 million (A\$1.03 billion) in ancillary revenue last year – this includes spending on in-flight food, baggage charges and check-in fees, and the commission it receives from hotel bookings, car rental and insurance.*

*Its income from these will rise from next month, when it plans to increase its baggage fee by 50 per cent.*

*Ancillary revenue last year accounted for nearly 20 per cent of the airline's total revenue. Only American Airlines, United and Delta received more.*

A spokesman for the airline said: "Ryanair provides passengers with Europe's guaranteed lowest fares by providing a range of ancillary revenue services such as hotel, villa, camping and hostel accommodation, travel insurance, bus and rail tickets, car hire, gift vouchers, financial services and in-flight telephone services as well as in-flight beverages and food."

The spotlight has turned on the extra charges imposed by airlines following the decision by British Airways to stop providing complimentary in-flight meals earlier this month and to begin to charge for the carriage of sports equipment.

BA is to continue to serve breakfast on flights that take off before 10am, but has cut out meals on flights lasting less than two-and-a-half hours. It expects to save about £22 million a year. It will continue to offer a full meal service on long-haul flights.