

KUONI

MAGAZINE

ISSUE 24



*Living the WILD LIFE
in COSTA RICA*

*My life in travel
with Anita Rani*

*6 of the BEST
European getaways*

WIN a holiday to Cyprus

Contents



One of the things I love most about the new year is the anticipation of fresh adventures ahead. Whether you're dreaming of the lush Costa Rican rainforest unfurling before you, or an escape to the sugar-soft atolls of the Maldives, this magazine is your gateway to a world of new experiences.

From Rashmi Narayan's story about her revelatory journey back to her childhood home of India, p.40, to Helen Wright's road trip of a lifetime through California's show-stopping parks, p.16, our writers invite you on a journey of discovery. This year, I'm returning to Greece – a long-time favourite of mine on our doorstep. Europe offers enticing possibilities for every kind of traveller on p.12 we explore some ways to do it differently.

Alongside our travel experts, television personalities Anita Rani and Simon Reeve share personal stories about their adventures and we share our thoughts on new destinations, trending hotels and insider ideas.

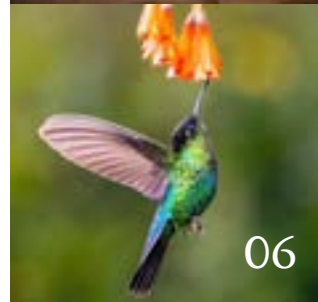
We understand how valuable a conversation with one of our experienced team can be, so in 2024 we're making it easier than ever to bring your plans to life. Our website is a great place to start, we've got a team of experts on the phone you can chat to, or you can visit us in one of our 27 stores throughout the UK.

We hope we spark your imagination for an unforgettable adventure in 2024.

Mark Duguid
Managing Director

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KUONI

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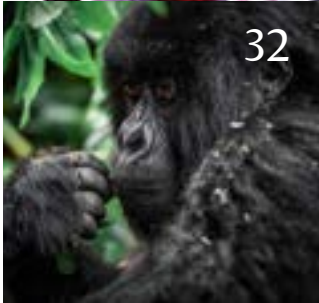
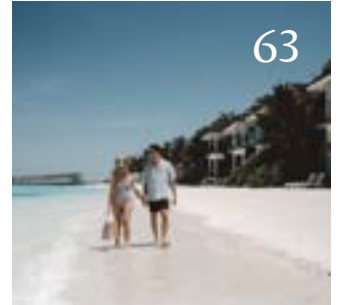
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Our travel experts are ready to plan your perfect holiday, here's how to get in touch

Award-winning holidays
Trust Kuoni to make your next holiday unforgettable.



TRAVEL NOTES

Trends, tips and the latest in travel... *a world of experience awaits.*



THE BIG TRIP

Epic adventures

2023 saw a more considered approach to travel, with customers travelling less often but adding one or more stop or stay, turning a simple holiday into the memory-rich journey of a lifetime. It's a trend that's put experience and exploration at the top of the wishlist and made multi-centre holidays more popular than ever. So why not mix up your Maldives holiday by exploring the temples, tea plantations and palm-fringed beaches of Sri Lanka first, before escaping to the private islands and untouched reefs of the Indian Ocean. Or indulge in the palatial luxury and Michelin-starred dining of Dubai before soaking up the rich customs, culture and cuisine of Thailand. Savour the contrast of a Stateside city break followed by sun-drenched downtime in the Caribbean. Take a rail journey across the Canadian Rockies to the wilds of Alaska on a once-in-a-lifetime cruise. The possibilities really are endless and our experts love nothing more than carefully crafting your dream itinerary, so get in touch to start planning your 2024 adventure.



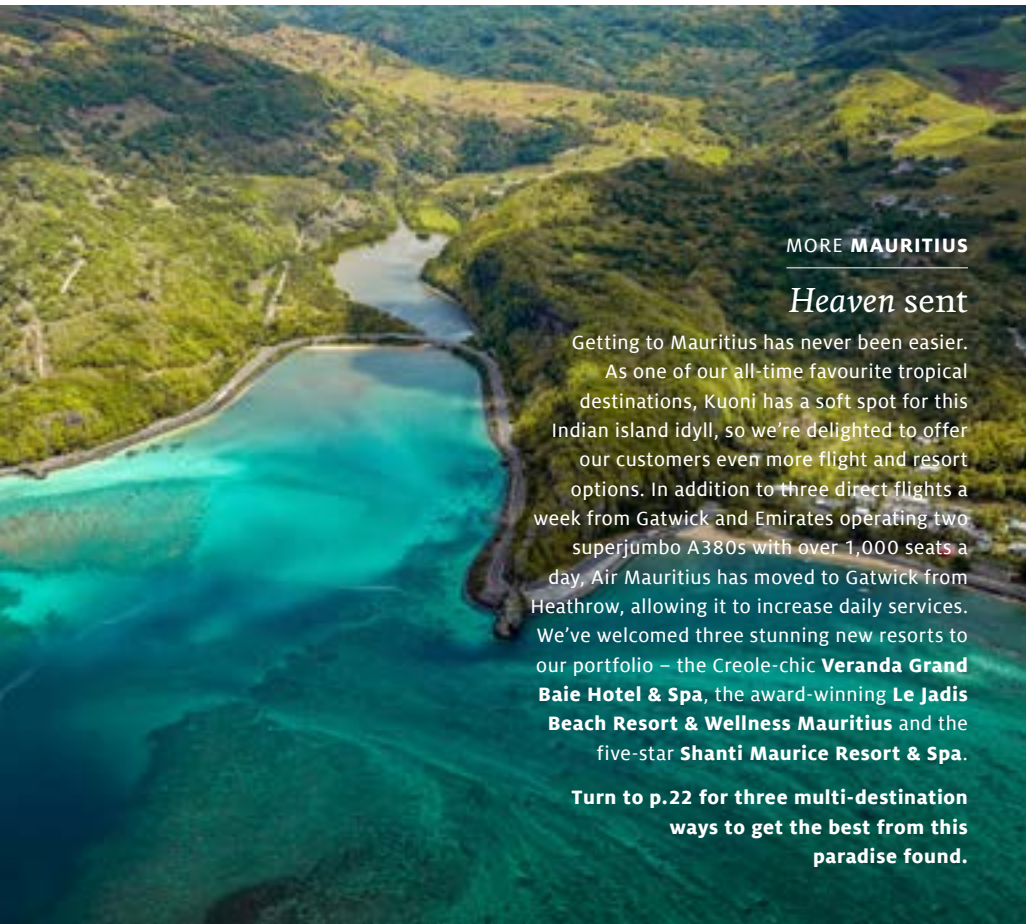
Clockwise from top left: tea plantation, Sri Lanka; the glassy blue waters of Mauritius; The Royal Sands Koh Rong, Cambodia; the Caribbean island of Aruba

NEW ROUTE

Aruba unveiled

Exciting news for travellers seeking tropical beauty and year-round sunshine. British Airways has launched a twice-weekly route from Gatwick to the Dutch Caribbean island of Aruba with a brief touchdown in Antigua. Its location off the coast of Venezuela and outside the hurricane belt means Aruba is blessed with 25-30°C temperatures, scant rainfall and balmy trade winds. Dive the dazzling coral reefs and bliss out on miles of sugar-white beach. Discover Spanish and Dutch architecture and art in the capital Oranjestad. Explore the rugged cliffs, desert terrain and volcanic hills of the wild north shore. And embrace the warmest welcome from the locals who give Aruba its motto – 'one happy island'. "The **Divi Aruba All-Inclusive Resort** is great for families as there's lots to keep children entertained," says Kuoni Caribbean Team Leader Lynn Lloyd, "while **Manchebo Beach Resort & Spa** is a retreat with a focus on wellness that's perfect for couples."

Visit kuoni.co.uk/destinations/caribbean/aruba



MORE MAURITIUS

Heaven sent

Getting to Mauritius has never been easier. As one of our all-time favourite tropical destinations, Kuoni has a soft spot for this Indian island idyll, so we're delighted to offer our customers even more flight and resort options. In addition to three direct flights a week from Gatwick and Emirates operating two superjumbo A380s with over 1,000 seats a day, Air Mauritius has moved to Gatwick from Heathrow, allowing it to increase daily services. We've welcomed three stunning new resorts to our portfolio – the Creole-chic **Veranda Grand Baie Hotel & Spa**, the award-winning **Le Jadis Beach Resort & Wellness Mauritius** and the five-star **Shanti Maurice Resort & Spa**.

Turn to p.22 for three multi-destination ways to get the best from this paradise found.



SOUTH EAST ASIA

Beat a retreat

We've made some exciting off-the-beaten-track additions to our South East Asia collection. Tucked away from the crowds, where mountain meets sea, the remote and secluded area of Quy Nhon in Vietnam boasts unspoilt coastline, old-time fishing villages, verdant paddy fields and the **Anantara Quy Nhon Villas** – a collection of castaway-style hideaways on a private beach. Journey to Quy Nhon from Hoi An on **The Vietage** train and watch the ocean or countryside from your luxury private booth. In Thailand, get away from it all on Koh Jum's relatively undeveloped coastline and connect with nature at the Travelife-certified **Koh Jum Beach Villas** eco-resort. Or steal some precious me-time at the **Varana Hotel Krabi**, a wellness hideaway overlooking Tubkaak Bay. New to Kuoni's luxe portfolio is **The Royal Sands Koh Rong** in Cambodia. Be one of the first of our customers to check in to this exclusive village, reached by private boat. **Discover more at kuoni.co.uk/destinations/asia/south-east-asia**

THE TRAVEL LIST

WHAT'S HOT IN EUROPE



WELLNESS WAVE

Reset, relax and refocus. Restorative retreats are all the rage as we look for holiday havens that help us to de-stress and decompress from our busy lives. Soothe your body and soul in one of Kuoni's holistic hideaways. **Hotel Caesius Thermae & Spa Resort** close to Italy's Lake Garda offers treatments and pampering that will take you to Ayurvedic nirvana.



ALL-ENCOMPASSING

The newly elevated all-inclusive is all about immersive indulgence. And the **Ikos Odisia** on Corfu's glittering Dassia peninsula is a new hotel in this prestigious portfolio that takes the concept to another level. Alongside menus designed by Michelin-starred chefs and straight-to-lounger service, fill your days with watersports, yoga, biking and driving adventures.



CITY BREAKS

European city breaks are ever-more popular and for this reason we've introduced Malaga to our programme. Beyond its seriously sunny beaches, this Andalusian city tells a fascinating cultural story – it's the birthplace of Picasso – and there's lively streetlife and tons of great tapas to tickle your taste buds. **For more excellent European escapes, visit kuoni.co.uk/europe**

A close-up photograph of a small, light green tree frog with dark spots perched on the top of a vibrant red flower. The flower has a prominent, textured, cone-shaped center. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green, suggesting a natural, lush environment.

Living the PURA VIDA

When *Sarah Bravo* handed over the holiday planning to her husband, she braced herself for a less-than-relaxing trip. But his chosen destination, Costa Rica, with its diverse landscape, astonishing wildlife and feelgood culture, was quick to work its magic.

Above: tree frog;
Opposite left: the beach between
Puerto Viejo and Manzanillo;
Opposite right: a colourful iguana

My best holidays have usually been spent on the beach – sunshine, a pile of books and a short stroll to the local taverna. My husband, on the other hand, prefers getting lost in the Highlands or leopard tracking in Africa. Over the years I've tried to find a compromise when it comes to organising our annual family break, but this year, with three teens in tow, I decided to hand over the baton.

Would I need sun cream? Yes. But I'd also need bug spray, binoculars, all-terrain shoes... and a raincoat. And so it was that I found myself on a flight attempting to land at San José airport, Costa Rica, in a storm. Perfectly normal during the rainy season, the pilot announces, deciding to divert to another airport while we wait for the storm to pass. The teens loved the drama. I added 'sense of humour' to the list of holiday essentials.

My knowledge of our destination was limited. I thought of Costa Rica as one vast rainforest and a few active volcanoes. In fact, the country is tiny (about the size of Switzerland), sandwiched between the Pacific and the Caribbean. Home to some 5% of the planet's entire biodiversity, at least 205 species of mammal, around 900 birds and 1,500 butterflies, it's recognised as one of the world's most ethical destinations.

Pura vida

Our first stop was a day in the capital, San José. With such a packed itinerary, we nearly swerved it, but I'm glad we didn't. We'd booked a walking tour, but it turns out our guide, Matteo, was more of a driver than a walker, so we spent an afternoon exploring Barrio Amón, where ancient buildings double up as art galleries, and the foodie capital of Barrio Escalante, from an air-conditioned minibus.

We learned that Costa Rica hasn't had an army since 1948 – instead, the country diverted funds into education, health services and social security. The locals (Ticos and Ticas) pride themselves on their peaceful country. Matteo boasted they were the happiest people in the world. 'Pura vida' is an expression we'd be hearing a lot during our visit. The locals use it for a multitude of things – a greeting, an emotion, a way to describe how they live. Pure life. I didn't quite get it then, but it wouldn't take long.

The next day we were bound for Tortuguero, one of Costa Rica's most unique national parks, on the north Caribbean coast. Only accessible by water, we waited for our transfer boats at La Pavona pontoon. Crowded, sweaty, chaotic, we didn't know where to stand or what to do. But everyone was smiling. Finally, a charismatic chap in a

Tortuga Lodge top appeared, introduced himself as Monkey and asked us to choose our lunch for our arrival. I realised I was smiling too.

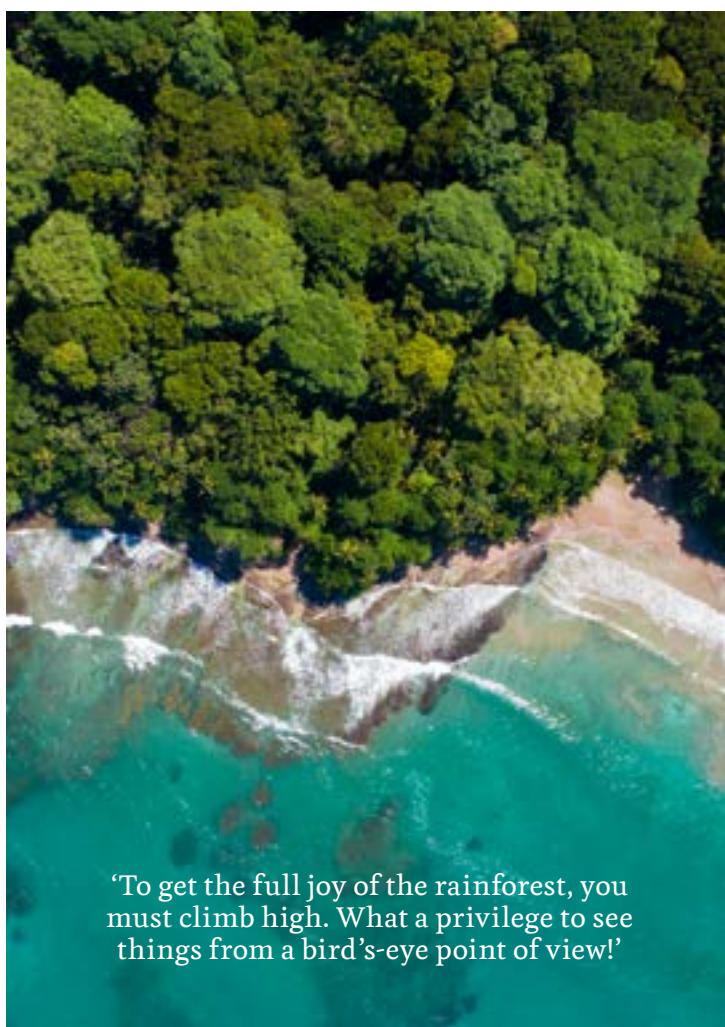
Nature's theme park

Known as the 'little Amazon of Costa Rica', Tortuguero is a nature lover's dream, with its network of canals bisecting the rainforest. On the boat to the Lodge, it turns out you don't have to get lucky to spot wildlife. Teen no.1 described it as a 'nature ride at a theme park'. In less than two hours we'd clocked up basilisk lizards, long-nosed bats, spider monkeys, blue-footed boobies (snigger) and my favourite spot, the toucan.

After settling into our thatched riverside lodge (lush lawns, orchids, tropical trees, colourful hammocks), I sneaked off to the pool with my book, feeling smug to have found a sunlounger and a glimmer of sunshine. Except I wasn't alone. I was being watched by the biggest (and most exquisite) iguana, so close it could probably read the reviews on the back of the book.

An immersive experience

That afternoon we witnessed our first rainy season shower as we sat drinking tea on the terrace. But it wasn't a shower. It was a deluge. A flood. A torrent. Staff calmly adapted the area to ensure we stayed dry, as though it were the most normal thing in the world. Except we ►



"To get the full joy of the rainforest, you must climb high. What a privilege to see things from a bird's-eye point of view!"



'Connecting to nature in Costa Rica and embracing "pura vida" felt like the greatest luxury of all'



'In less than two hours we'd clocked up basilisk lizards, long-nosed bats, spider monkeys, blue-footed boobies (snigger) and my favourite spot, the toucan'



Above: spider monkey, Corcovado National Park; Arenal Volcano Opposite left: Fiery Throated Hummingbird; Opposite right: Monteverde Lodge & Gardens

couldn't stop laughing, like kids splashing around in puddles in our wellies. We soon came to expect these afternoons of rain (along with glorious mornings of sunshine), but that first day took us all by surprise. Mother Nature was most definitely in control here, not us.

After the rains, you're more aware of your surroundings. The smell of the trees, the chit-chat of the wildlife, high up in the canopy. The sun goes down early, you lose the light quickly and it all feels very dark. One evening we joined a small group for a guided night hike, kitted out in wellies, long trousers, raincoats and torches. It was exhilarating and terrifying.

I had a bubble of excitement in my chest the entire time, willing myself to spot something and then shrieking (quietly) when I did. The teens took pride in leading the adults, up front with the guide, keen to be the first to spot red-eyed frogs, tarantula spiders and viper snakes with their torch beams.

As the days went by, it felt less like we were observing, and more like we had become part of nature ourselves. Howler monkeys were in the trees above us as we ate breakfast, a couple of toucans sat just outside our balcony. On the walk to the jetty to join a group of kayakers, we stopped to listen to the noises coming from above, binoculars at the ready.

Time for action

So far, my induction into the natural wonders of Costa Rica had been a relatively gentle one, but this was set to change. Our next stop was the Arenal region, home to the Arenal Volcano and the adventure heartland of the country. We learned from our guide Samuel, who collected us from our new base the **Tabacón Thermal Resort & Spa** in La Fortuna, that Costa Rica has 112 volcanoes, some of which are still active.

The most iconic of these is Arenal (which we were hiking up). Its last major eruption in 1968 destroyed three towns, killing 87 people. At times you can see smoke plumes rising from the top. The technology now in place to predict changes is very advanced, reassured Samuel, but I was secretly relieved when the rain came and we returned to the safety of our hotel. Not so the teens who were furious they didn't get to see the most active volcano in the world.

As for the adrenaline-pumping stuff? Over the next few days, we did it all. We pedal boarded on Lake Arenal (paddle boarding with pedals for speed), we rafted down grade three and four rapids (even teen no.2 was impressed I took part), we walked across the rainforest via 'hanging' suspension bridges, and we ziplined on cables 200m high and 750m long (don't ask me how it felt, I had my eyes closed).

Had I known all this was in store before we left, I'd have found a good excuse to sit out, but at the time, one of our guides talked about the 'risk and reward' of life. For example, to get the full joy of the rainforest, you must climb high. What a privilege to see things from a bird's-eye point of view!

Even if you don't fancy the more exhilarating experiences, there are still ways to take it at your own pace. Trams take you up gently, and the walks across the bridges enable you to catch sight of the wildlife that make the tree canopy their home.

To top it all, as we arrived back from our ziplining activity, the clouds had lifted and we got a crystal-clear view of the iconic volcano, with its seemingly perfect cone. Thankfully no sign of smoke.

Heads in the clouds

Monteverde was our next port of call, in the north west of Costa Rica, heading towards the Pacific. We checked into the peaceful **Monteverde Lodge & Gardens** for a short stay with one purpose in mind – to visit the Monteverde Cloud Forest, home to 2.5% of the world's entire biodiversity.

We were imagining hazy, mystical forests with trailing foliage and the call of rare birds, like something out of *The Hobbit*. We'd heard it was chilly, that we'd feel like we were walking

on clouds. We knew that the moisture from the clouds promotes a huge amount of biodiversity. Living within the protective reach of the forest (over 35,000 acres) are 100 species of mammals, 400 species of birds and all six species of the cat family.

Sloths in the sunshine

The irony wasn't wasted on me when we woke up to the clearest blue skies we'd had so far and warmer temperatures than expected. So, we didn't get the mists or the dramatic drop in temperature.

But we did get Luis, our most memorable guide. His knowledge was astonishing. He lured giant, hairy tarantulas from their sleeping places, showed us caves within majestic tree trunks where bats were huddled, and led us away from the crowds to chat to the howler monkeys.

He pointed out white hawks, jacamars, trogons and hummingbirds. And he found us the sloths we'd been so desperate to spot. They were high up and far away, a couple of small balls of fuzz, but by using his binoculars and our phone cameras, he was able to get the golden ticket shot we'd almost given up on. One for the memory bank.

And relax...

By this stage in the trip, even the husband was ready to lie down, sloth-like, on a sunlounger, and so we headed to the Pacific coast in the Guanacaste region for our last destination. The beach. What was that about 'risk and reward'?

We stayed at **Andaz Costa Rica Resort At Peninsula Papagayo**, and it was everything and more. We ate papayas, pineapples and bananas in abundance. The teens loved the surfer vibe, we all loved the beach bars, the plantain crisps, the guacamole, the beers. Of course, it rained. But not all day and the weather couldn't have mattered less.

On our last day we joined a catamaran boat party and experienced four seasons in one day, chased dolphins, drank rum punch, watched the sunset and danced with strangers from around the world. 'Pura vida' was alive and well on the Pacific coast!

Finally, the time had come to head home. We took off from San José in a storm (of course). Turns out I like an adventure after all. But more than anything, connecting to nature in Costa Rica and embracing 'pura vida' felt like the greatest luxury of all, and the ultimate holiday.

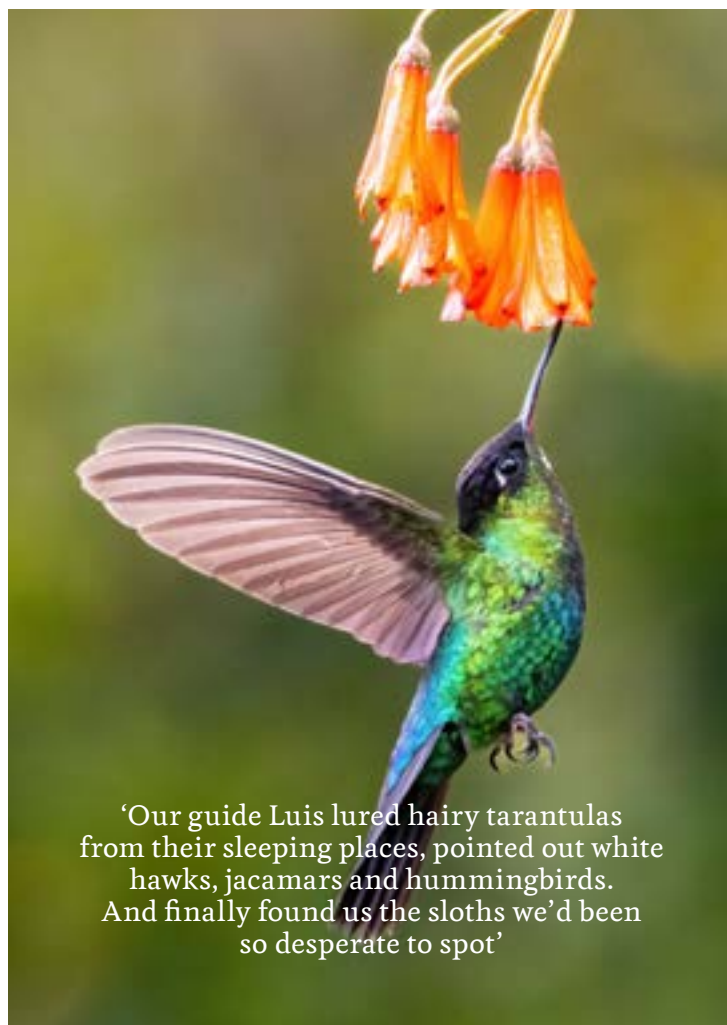
Useful things to pack

- Quick-dry, all-terrain sandals/shoes (walking boots a nightmare to dry)
- Handwash liquid to wash essentials (then use hotel laundry drying service)
- Good lightweight binoculars (who even am I?)
- SPF and mosquito spray (take lots)
- Ear plugs – jungles are noisy places (especially at night)
- Lightweight raincoat for impromptu downpours (get used to it)
- Smaller denomination US\$ notes for tipping (you'll want to)

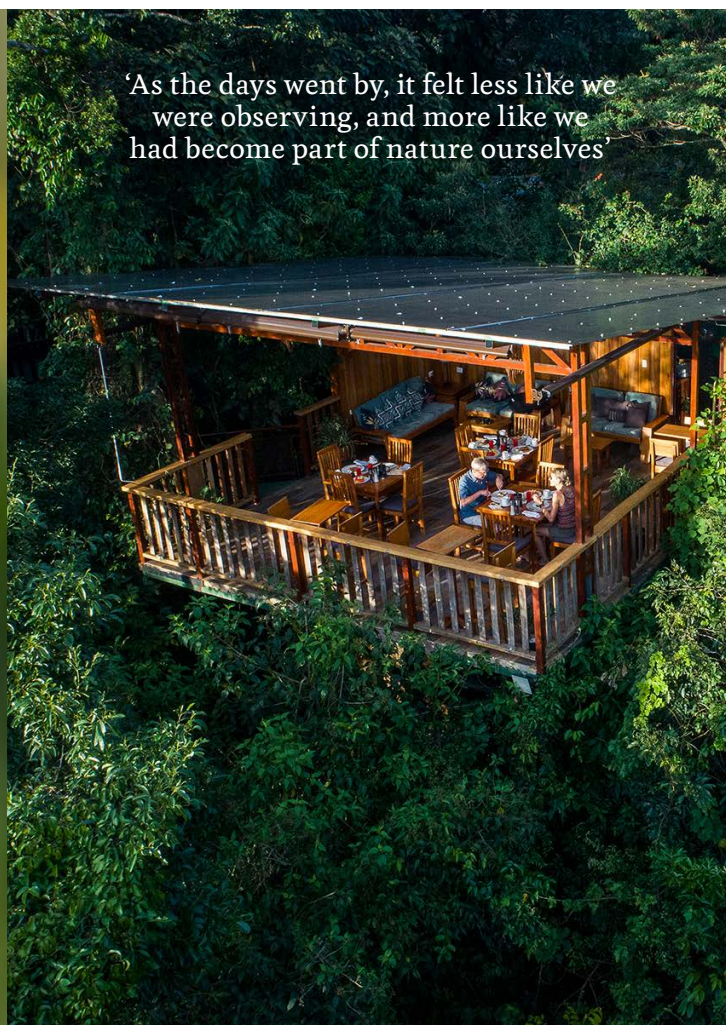


Sarah Bravo, editor
"Costa Rica is the happiest of adventures. The natural world at its most inclusive."

MAKE IT HAPPEN: *Discover more about this incredible destination over the page with our expert guide to Costa Rica >*



'Our guide Luis lured hairy tarantulas from their sleeping places, pointed out white hawks, jacamars and hummingbirds. And finally found us the sloths we'd been so desperate to spot'



'As the days went by, it felt less like we were observing, and more like we had become part of nature ourselves'



‘Costa Ricans really live their life to the full, they’re so proud of their country and what it has to offer. Each part of the country offers a different landscape, from the verdant rainforests to the majestic volcanoes covered in cloud, the arid plains and beautiful beaches around the Nicoya Peninsula’

Costa Rica



Meet your
Personal Travel Expert

James Kerr, contact centre manager, has worked at Kuoni for 13 years, yet Costa Rica still blew him away.



To safeguard its natural wonders, 25% of the country's land is protected

“Costa Rica has long been top of my travel wishlist and it did not disappoint. One of the highlights was horseback riding down to a deserted Playa Islita and dipping my toes in the Pacific Ocean for the first time in my life!”

When to go

Peak season runs from November to April, when you can expect hotels and resorts to be very busy. Outside of this time there's more rainfall, but it's less crowded and great for wildlife-spotting. To catch the amazing sight of turtles nesting on Tortuguero beach, the best time is our summer months.

Getting around

A typical first-time visit might include San José before taking in La Fortuna and Monteverde. Driving times between each area are around three hours but there are also short internal flights – a great way to reduce travel times and a fabulous experience in themselves.

The roads away from San José can be rough, so I wouldn't recommend hiring a car. Save the hassle and take advantage of our private transfers with a driver to get you around. Then you can sit back, relax and enjoy the incredible vistas along the way.

Where to stay

In San José's heart of the action, the historic **Hotel Grano De Oro** is the standout choice. In Tortuguero, the **Tortuga Lodge** is a special place with lots of activities and wildlife on hand. **The Hotel Belmar** in Monteverde, famous for its Cloud Forest, has an almost alpine lodge-like feel with quirky touches throughout and even it's own craft beer microbrewery with a beer-tasting experience. For me, **Hotel Punta Islita** is top of the

beach options. It has a wonderful choice of included experiences, the food is amazing and the service exceptional. The hotel works closely with the local community and employs staff from the local village. Costa Ricans take sustainability incredibly seriously, and all the hotels offer refillable water bottles, use renewable energy and often grow their own produce for use in their restaurant kitchens.



Experience

Do a night-time nature walk if you can. After dark, the jungle comes alive – and you could be lucky enough to spot the elusive sloth.

Insider knowledge

The best beaches are on the Pacific coast. Choose from large properties such as **Andaz Costa Rica Resort** at Peninsula Papagayo or smaller eco-resorts such as **Punta Islita**. For a livelier surfer vibe, head to Santa Teresa.

RECOMMENDED ITINERARY

Discover Costa Rica

Weave your way towards Costa Rica's Pacific Coast from the capital San José via La Fortuna and Monteverde.

Day 1 San José Acclimatise in the splendid **Xandari Resort & Spa**, just 30 minutes out of the city. It's set on a hilltop amid forest trails, rivers and waterfalls, a glimpse of the adventures awaiting you.

Days 2-3 La Fortuna Search out La Fortuna Waterfall or hike the scenic trails of **Arenal Volcano National Park**.

Days 4-5 Monteverde Cloud Forest Head out before sunrise to experience the forest at its most atmospheric.

Days 6-9 Nicoya Peninsula Spend four nights at **Hotel Punta Islita**, where you can choose up to four included activities each day, including ziplining, monkey-spotting and horse riding.

Day 10 San José Your last night is back at the **Xandari Resort & Spa** – relax, enjoy the views and feast on farm-fresh food, taking a final swim or stroll.

MAKE IT HAPPEN:

Our ten-night Discover Costa Rica itinerary starts from £4099pp including flights.

Call our experts on 01306 230 506 or visit kuoni.co.uk/costa-rica

Local vibe

Costa Ricans live life to the full, and they're proud of their country and its different landscapes, from verdant rainforests and majestic volcanoes to gorgeous beaches.

Try

The national dish, *gallo pinto*, is a hearty meal of rice, beans and a generous portion of meat. Local *sodas*, or snack bars, are everywhere and ideal for grabbing a quick bite.

Top tip

Pick up some key Spanish phrases before you travel. While you'll find English is widely spoken in all the hotels, the locals really do appreciate you making the effort.

Something to love

Tortuguero National Park is a wildlife haven, its beach famous as a nesting place for the endangered green turtle.



6 of the BEST EUROPEAN GETAWAYS

Explore the wildly beautiful natural wonders of the Azores or unwind among the scented eucalyptus groves of Corfu - just some of the diverse landscapes Europe has to offer.



1 The Azores *Best for nature lovers*

With a world-apart, enchanting beauty, this verdant geological hot spot is an Atlantic archipelago of nine volcanic islands, whose basalt beaches, green peaks and azure lakes are nature's reward for a volatile past. This untamed paradise is home to over 400 species of birds and is a magnet for whales, dolphins and manta rays. On the larger island of São Miguel, hike around the cypress-fringed, emerald beauty of the Sete Cidades caldera or soak in the mineral-rich springs of the Furnas Valley. On the smaller island of Terceira, descend into the 90m-deep Algar do Carvão - a volcanic cavern and underground lake. Or witness the giants of the sea close up on a whale-watching trip. The Azores also has the notable distinction of being the first archipelago to be named a certified sustainable tourist destination.

DISCOVER: *The immersive 'Be a marine biologist for a day' experience is a unique way to learn more about the islands' incredible ecosystem using photo identification techniques and hydrophone analysis.*

MAKE IT HAPPEN: *The Azores are the natural home of eco-resorts. Stay at the Art Deco **Terra Nostra Garden Hotel, São Miguel Island**, a wellness retreat with Travelife Gold certification for sustainability that's located on the Furnas Valley's dormant volcanic crater. Seven nights in a Standard Art Deco Room from £1349pp including flights.*

Left to right: Spotting dolphins in the Azores; tapas in Seville; a spa break in the Italian Lakes



2 Andalusia

Best for gastronomes

Against the mysterious Moorish backdrop of Andalusia's centuries-old squares, labyrinthine lanes, whitewashed villas and the heady scent of orange blossom, gourmands can choose to dine like princes or paupers in everything from a Michelin-starred restaurant to a tiny, elbow-to-elbow bodega. Granted, this southern, sun-drenched region of Spain is renowned for its UNESCO-listed palaces like Seville's Alcázar and Granada's Alhambra, as well as the imposing Sierra Nevada mountain range and passionate flamenco. But its fertile earth has given rise to miles of olive groves, Muscat vineyards and rich tomato crops – a foodie nirvana. It's the home of tapas – don't leave without trying Andalusian gazpacho, Spanish tostada, melt-in-the-mouth Iberian ham from acorn-fed black pigs, and freshly grilled squid accompanied by a cold, crisp Fino wine.

DISCOVER: Why taste the delights of just one Andalusian city when you can see three on a 14-night self-drive from Seville to Córdoba and on to Granada, before indulging in some seafood and relaxation on the beach in Marbella?

MAKE IT HAPPEN: Set among olive groves in rural Andalusia, **La Bobadilla, a Royal Hideaway Hotel**, is a secluded retreat located in Sierra de Loja, between Malaga and Granada, where you can try cookery classes, olive tastings and an exceptional tasting menu at the Michelin-starred La Finca restaurant. Stay seven nights in a Deluxe Superior Room from £1479pp including flights.


3 The Italian Lakes

Best for spa seekers

North of the medieval streets of Verona and the Gothic palaces and domes of Venice lies the more sedate and Zen-like area of the Italian Lakes. This series of glacial lagoons has a laid-back, beguiling beauty and oozes ritzy, five-star glamour that has many of the world's A-listers in its thrall. If you're looking to rejuvenate, check in to one of the region's spa retreats with unobstructed views of crystal-clear waters backed by the snow-capped peaks of the Alps that glow pink and orange at sunset. Meander around the Italianate villas and villages bordering Lake Como and take a dip in a lakeside lido. Or breathe in the bougainvillea at the Botanical Gardens of Villa Taranto on Lake Maggiore.

DISCOVER: Explore the Grottoes of Catullus Roman villa and thermal baths at Sirmione with sweeping views over Lake Garda.

MAKE IT HAPPEN: Check in and completely tune out in the tranquil surroundings of the award-winning **Lefay Resort and SPA Lake Garda**. De-stress in its saunas, grottos and indoor and outdoor pools, with the added bonus of expert wellness advice. Stay seven nights in a Prestige Junior Suite from £1979pp including flights.



4 Cyprus

Best for mountain trekkers

It's easy to be bewitched by Cyprus as a sun, sea and sand destination – after all, Aphrodite's island has an enviable 77 Blue Flag beaches. But venture into the pine-scented Troodos Mountains and there's a completely different side of Cyprus to discover. Take one of the many nature trails among dense forests and waterfalls – the Artemis Trail around the top of Mount Olympus leads you to the highest point in Cyprus, with views for miles. Rest at a taverna and try *kleftiko*, *fried halloumi*, *keftedes* (meatballs) and *tiropita* (cheese pie). And visit the historic Fikardou village – deserted in the 19th century, two of its houses have been converted into agriculture and weaving museums.

DISCOVER: *Join one of the many walking and trekking routes in the area and experience a side of Cyprus that visitors don't tend to see – the stunning and character-filled villages tucked away in the Troodos Mountains.*

MAKE IT HAPPEN: *Seclusion is offered by Casale Panayiotis, a traditional mountain retreat in an ancient spa village converted into an award-winning hotel and spa, set against the dramatic backdrop of the Marathasa Valley. Stay seven nights in a Comfort Studio from £1149pp including flights.*

Aphrodite trail, Akamas peninsula, Cyprus



5 Corfu Best for privacy and panoramas

After exploring the Venetian architecture, cosmopolitan shops and cobblestone alleyways of Corfu's Old Town, there's nothing more delicious than returning to a holiday stay that enjoys precious privacy, yet still provides a picturesque outlook. The island of Corfu is renowned for just that. The second largest of the Ionian Islands, it boasts 135 miles of coastline and beautiful bays – each one a spectacular setting for seclusion and uninterrupted views of sapphire waters. Retreat to an adults-only Deluxe Junior Suite with private pool at the **Nido, Mar-Bella Collection**, overlooking a private section of the Ioannis Peristeron beach below. Or book into the brand-new **Ikos Odisia** in Dassia Bay with views across each side of a peninsula.

DISCOVER: If you can bear leaving your poolside haven, discover the pretty coves of Kalami, Nisaki, Barbati, Ipsos and Palaiokastritsa on Corfu's quieter north coast on a Hidden Corfu tour. After a dip and lunch, visit the island's oldest inhabited monastery and take in the panoramas from the Bella Vista viewpoint.

MAKE IT HAPPEN: Stay at the Cubist-style **Angsana Corfu**, perched on a hilltop above Benitses Bay. Stay seven nights in an Achilleion Woodland View Grand Room from £1179pp including flights.

6 Sardinia Best for active families

Enamoured by its beautiful beaches, the Aga Khan turned Costa Smeralda on Sardinia's north east coast into a billionaire's playground. Today, this island, 120 miles from Italy's west coast, still draws wealthy seekers of luxe beach clubs, high-end boutiques, elegant hotels and world-class dining. Those very same beaches, rugged landscapes and clear waters offer countless possibilities for active families who love bike riding, sailing, snorkelling, kitesurfing, kayaking and paddle boarding. Visit Costa Smeralda's Isola dei Gabbiani for perfect windsurfing conditions. Chia in the south has shallow, child-friendly waters and is a hot spot for scuba diving.

DISCOVER: The hotel options in Forte Village offer all kinds of exciting sporty add-ons for families, such as tennis, swimming and go-karting academies, and football training run by the Real Madrid Foundation.

MAKE IT HAPPEN: The family-friendly **Il Borgo Forte Village** has a dedicated Children's Wonderland as well as a water park and leisure park and featuring bowling, go-kart track, DJs and live music. Stay seven nights in a Deluxe Bungalow from £5699 per family of three (2 adults and 1 child under 12) including flights.

Above left to right: Afionas village on Corfu island; Costa Smeralda, Sardinia



The SHOW ON THE ROAD

Helen Wright gets behind the wheel to explore the other-worldly and elemental landscapes of California's national parks on an unforgettable road trip.



Helen Wright, travel and lifestyle journalist

"A US road trip is a journey through ageless landscapes surrounded by beauty."

The trees are so big along California's Redwood Coast, you can drive through them. I don't mean under the 30ft canopy that frames the winding road as these colossal pines entwine in the sky. But, along the Avenue of the Giants where you can, in fact, drive completely through the trunk of a 2,000-year-old redwood tree.



Opposite: 'firefall' at Yosemite National Park
Left: cable cars, San Francisco
Above: Glacier Point, Yosemite National Park

Of course, it's touristy – locals take the 101 freeway with its wide lanes and frequent gas stations – but here, the journey is the destination. Besides, it's not every day I get to glide through a tree like a ghost. I accelerate slowly so as not to leave our Mustang convertible with a permanent memory. On the other side, cheerful bystanders applaud.

It's incredible to think that when this tree began to grow, the automobile was inconceivable.

It puts into perspective the joy of a US road trip. Skyscrapers born of nature, not man. Ageless landscapes surrounded by beauty and so many places to stop, you'd need a month to do them all.

Luckily, for us, we had two weeks to explore America's natural wonders and arguably some

of the best road trip destinations in the world. Leaving Redwood National and State Parks, we head south for a quick pit stop in San Francisco, a city best enjoyed on foot or hanging from a classic cable car trundling up it's unforgiving hills.

There's just enough time to wolf down a bowl of creamy clam chowder at Nick's Lighthouse on Fisherman's Wharf and join a half-day tour of Alcatraz before, sliding back into our midnight-blue Mustang, we head four hours east to Yosemite National Park.

Show-stopper

The landscape here is nothing short of dramatic. After a series of almost comedic switch-backs that carve into the cliffs, we pass through the Wawona Tunnel to a view so stunning we didn't know which way to look first. Above, granite walls dominate

the landscape as the sun smashes against the glacier-carved stone. Below, a river cuts through a sea of sequoia trees. Is that a waterfall in the distance? Probably, but with a 100ft drop to the valley floor, this is definitely a place you want to keep your eyes on the road.

Our hotel, **Yosemite View Lodge**, was in a peaceful riverside spot on the outskirts of Yosemite Valley. Up early, we set off on the Mist Trail, a three-mile hike with extraordinary views of Yosemite's magnificent waterfalls. A ranger told us California had benefited from high rainfall in the winter, meaning the cascading water was at its most impressive. We clambered up to rocky lookout points and felt the mist of the water on our faces. Despite the sunshine, there were small patches of snow.

You collect iconic pictures here like Pokémon cards, hitting all the big lads in one day: ►

‘With the roof down, we imagined being Thelma and Louise or Bonnie and Clyde. Every classic movie set on these unforgiving roads has the same theme of unrivalled freedom’

Clockwise from left: Tunnel log, Sequoia National Park; redwood trees in Sequoia National Park; view of the badlands from Zabriskie Point, Death Valley National Park; Nevada Fall, Yosemite National Park; Joshua Tree National Park



‘A Zen-like aura with a rock-and-roll edge’

El Capitan, Bridalveil Fall and Half Dome. Experienced hikers take on the summit, but we were happy to watch the tiny dots meandering to the top as we tucked into a picnic by the stream, paddling in the crystal-clear water. I attempted, and failed, to take pictures as impressive as American landscape photographer Ansel Adams. There’s a gallery dedicated to his work in the village and it’s remarkable how little has changed in almost 100 years.

Further south in Sequoia National Park, **Wuksachi Lodge** was the perfect stop. An impressive hideaway in the Sierra Nevada mountains with elegant rooms and a cocktail bar, ideal for us city slickers. We got chatting to a couple who were heading in the opposite direction and compared notes. We all agreed the parks were equal in beauty but surprisingly diverse in character.

A new direction

It was time to see what the Mustang could do as we put our foot down and rolled into Death Valley. The landscape transforms before your eyes, leaving Yosemite’s green peaks in your dust as you pierce through the amber desert. This is the definition of open road, cutting across shimmering salt pans and not seeing another car for half an hour. With the roof down, we imagined being Thelma and Louise or Bonnie and Clyde. Every classic movie set on these unforgiving roads has the same theme of unrivalled freedom. The warm breeze blows in your face and you really do feel invincible.

Our last stop, Joshua Tree National Park, has an elusive charm. A Zen-like aura with a rock-and-roll edge. For a wide plain, scattered with boulders and angry desert plants, this place has the sort of shocking beauty that stops you in your tracks so you can truly absorb it. Then,

you’ll immediately want to make your own music video on Skull Rock Trail.

Unlike Yosemite and Redwood Parks, there isn’t much green here, but still things grow. It’s easy to see why rock stars and A-listers make the pilgrimage and find inspiration in the park’s beauty and resilience. Where Death Valley stuns in its emptiness, Joshua Tree surprises with its subtle colours, particularly at sunset when the terrain glows in shades of purple and pink. And then there’s the sky.

An International Dark Sky Park, Joshua Tree gets more stunning by night. You can take a guided tour or just sit, as we did, by the side of the road with the roof down and the radio up. We’d driven over 1,000 miles, so why did it feel like we were just getting started?

MAKE IT HAPPEN: For more California road trip tips see our expert guide >

California



Meet your
Personal Travel Expert

Ricky Kingwell, store manager at Kuoni Milton Keynes, loves building unique experiences for his customers.

“We live and breathe all things California. Our expert knowledge and experience ensure you will see the very best of the state and come home with a lifetime of happy memories.”

When to go

California is popular during the summer months but can be very busy. May, June and September are my favourite months to visit as the weather is generally good but it's less touristy than in July and August. November to March can be cold and some places such as parts of Yosemite are closed during this time.

Getting around

The best way to experience California is from the road. Car rental will allow you to see much more than public transport. You can easily combine national parks such as Yosemite with Hollywood, the movie capital of the world. From the hustle and bustle of the cities to the peace and beauty of the

national parks and coastline, it's easy to feel you have visited two different countries.

Where to stay

Yosemite View Lodge near El Portal is around 30 minutes' drive to Yosemite Valley but is less busy and more outdoorsy than the main centre. At Kuoni, we have dedicated USA specialists who live and breathe all things California and our expert knowledge is there for you to take advantage of.

Insider knowledge

Lake Tahoe, the largest freshwater lake in the Sierra Nevada Mountains, is perfect for paddle boarding. It's a great way to experience the lake in an active yet relaxing way, and a good way to cool off on a hot day.



RECOMMENDED ITINERARY

California Highlights Road Trip

Take in iconic sights all the way from San Francisco down to Los Angeles.

Days 1-4 San Francisco See the city's famous cable cars, the spectacular Golden Gate Bridge and the sea lions of Pier 39.

Days 4-5 Napa Valley Spend a night here and explore some of the many wineries with options for every palate and budget.

Days 5-6 Yosemite Head inland to experience dramatic waterfalls, granite cliffs, scenic lakes and nature trails.

Days 6-7 Carmel & Monterey Explore this ruggedly beautiful yet refined part of central California.

Days 7-9 Santa Barbara See the Chromatic Gate, a colourful set of arches in front of the Pacific Ocean, and revel in celebrity-endorsed Californian cool.

Days 9-12 Los Angeles Pick from starry attractions including Universal Studios, Venice Beach and the original Disneyland.

MAKE IT HAPPEN:

11-night California Highlights Road Trip from £2290pp including flights and car hire.

Call our experts on 01306 230 506 or visit kuoni.co.uk/usa



Experience

Stay in Monterey and take a boat trip in search of marine life, including whales, sea otters, orca, dolphins and maybe even a great white shark.

Local vibe

Californians love their landscape and are very keen on healthy lifestyles, so there are plenty of options for relaxation, outdoor activity and adventure. And there's always a salad box on offer as well as a burger!

Try

One of my favourite spots for lunch is just outside of San Simeon at the Hearst Ranch Winery – great food and it's worth staying overnight to allow for wine tasting! Being on the road also means experiencing typical American diners.

Top tip

Hiking in Yosemite is a must to get the best out of the park. Head out early in the morning or later in the afternoon – there are fewer visitors and getting that perfect photo is more likely. Yosemite Falls Trail and Mist Trail are two of the best walks.

Something to love

Big Sur on the coast of Pfeiffer Big Sur State Park is very close to my heart. Marvel at the rugged coastline and rolling hills – you may even spot a whale or sea otter out to sea. A misty morning just adds to the drama of the scenery.

My life in travel with ANITA RANI



The presenter, writer and Yorkshire lass speaks to Rachel O'Reilly, Kuoni's director of communications, about the things that make her reach for her passport.

The first job I wanted was to be an air hostess
I was two years old when I went on my first international flight to India and I've been hooked on travel since then. We flew with Thai Airways and I remember being in awe of air hostesses, they were so beautiful and kind. It seemed the most glamorous job in the world.

When I travel the creative juices flow
As research for my novel, *Baby Does a Runner*, I went to Delhi last Christmas. Even though I've been to India many times, I felt I was visiting with new purpose. I had a notebook and took it everywhere with me – otherwise I forget things. My life at home is very frenetic, so I love those quiet moments when you wake up early and enjoy the sunrise on the balcony before anyone else is up.



A weekend in Rome is my ideal city break
It's so compact, you can walk around it easily and every time you turn a corner you see something awesome like the Trevi Fountain or the Colosseum. In between the iconic landmarks, there are hidden delicious restaurants, and you don't have to spend a fortune. And then the gelato, of course. Yes, it's a tourist destination – but with a great local vibe, too.



Clockwise from top left: Anita Rani; Rome's famous Trevi Fountain; Gramen restaurant at Lefay Resort and SPA Lago di Garda, Italy

Diamonds Athuruga in the Maldives is the best hotel I've stayed in

I learned to relax there – something I didn't find easy for many years while my work life has been so hectic, but I've now come to appreciate the art of rest.



Clockwise from far left: Yakitori skewers; green papaya salad; a water villa at Diamonds Athuruga, the Maldives; the Namibian desert; Anita climbs Mount Kilimanjaro, Tanzania, for Comic Relief in 2019



Street food over fine dining any day

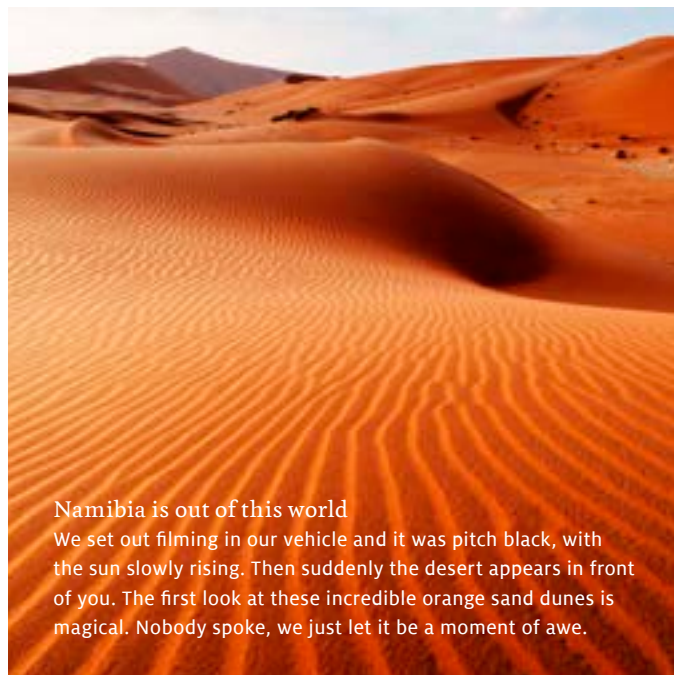
Street food for me! That's everything from yakitori (chicken skewers) in Japan to green papaya salad in Bangkok. I was in Sri Lanka a few years ago and I can still taste the fresh pineapple from a local street vendor. Just perfection.

“My book touches on the modern India, a fresh India that I think people will love reading about. I wrote my first book during the hardest year of my life. It was difficult, but a fulfilling and healing process”



Mountains over beaches

A few years ago, I climbed Kilimanjaro for Comic Relief, which was a massive challenge but an experience that will stay with me. I love the solitary feeling mountains offer – it's the balance I need in my life. I'm obsessed with visiting Bhutan, a Buddhist kingdom in the Himalayas, and have been desperate to go there for years. It's next on my wishlist.



Namibia is out of this world

We set out filming in our vehicle and it was pitch black, with the sun slowly rising. Then suddenly the desert appears in front of you. The first look at these incredible orange sand dunes is magical. Nobody spoke, we just let it be a moment of awe.



The product I always remember to pack

I love my skin to feel good when I'm away, so I always take a face mask and sit somewhere peaceful and let it work its magic. I also love beautiful perfume so will take my Diptyque or Chanel Mademoiselle, which feels special and indulgent.

Yorkshire has a special place in my heart

A great road trip would be to start in York, then go to Whitby for the fish and chips, winding streets, the castle and sea air, before going back via Skipton.



Anita's debut novel, Baby Does a Runner, is published by Zaffre at £11.99



PARADISE BOUND: Mauritius

It boasts some of the most pristine coastlines, reefs and lagoons in the world, but Mauritius goes above and beyond the blissful beach experience. From a family trip of a lifetime to an unforgettable honeymoon, we've curated three multi-destination ways to get the best from this bountiful island.



Opposite page: Le Mourne, Mauritius; Above: Grand Galet Falls, La Réunion; Below: Cirque de Mafate, La Réunion



Jungle jaunt to waterfront wonder

Embark on an unforgettable Indian Ocean experience by making your first stop the epic, Jurassic-like landscape of **La Réunion**. This tiny, French-speaking island lies between Mauritius and Madagascar and is a tropical wilderness where you'll discover green-cloaked peaks, cascading waterfalls, rare birds, coral reefs, black volcanic sands and Piton de la Fournaise – one of the world's most active volcanoes. This magical island is an action-adventure playground for families. Soar over the wild-water canyons on a helicopter flight, explore the hinterlands on horseback, hike the rocky ramparts of the three cirques, watch the sun rise over the crater of the volcano, and roam the sparkling underworld caves of the island's lava tunnels.

In between adventures, wake up to Creole-style elegance in the **LUX* Saint Gilles** and soothe mind, soul and tired toes with a dip in the calm, coral-sheltered lagoon bordering L'Hermitage beach – just steps from your suite and ideal for snorkelling.

Ready to take the adrenaline down a notch or ten? The palm-fringed beaches and crystalline lagoons of Mauritius are just 45 minutes away. This tranquil island nation is encircled by coral reefs and is part of the Mascarene Islands, a volcanic chain extending to the Seychelles. It's this volcanic legacy that has turned the island's fertile soil into an earthly Eden of majestic mountain ranges, swaying sugarcane fields and lush rainforests.

You can of course find adventure inland, but this sun-kissed sanctuary is perfect for laid-back loafing. Cool off under the thatched-roof luxury and shaded gardens of the Kelly Hoppen-designed **LUX* Belle Mare**, while the kids have fun in the splash pool, kids' club and Studio 17 DJ zone, or get tennis coaching lessons. Don't leave without exploring the vibrant market, food stalls and temples of waterfront capital Port Louis, where its multicultural heritage is reflected in colonial villas, botanical gardens, museums, fusion food and temples.

MAKE IT HAPPEN: *Stay three nights at LUX* Saint Gilles, La Réunion and four nights at LUX* Belle Mare, Mauritius from £2079pp including flights.*



Clockwise from left: Yoga at Shanti Maurice Resort & Spa, Mauritius; the Seven Coloured Earths dunes at Chamarel; Garden Pool Suite at Lakaz Chamarel Exclusive Lodge, Mauritius



Two steps to honeymoon heaven

Fall in love with two diverse but equally enchanting sides of romantic Mauritius by slowing down time in a hillside hideaway before blissing out in a deluxe coastal retreat.

The quintessential getaway for honeymooning couples, **Lakaz Chamarel Exclusive Lodge** lies inland, surrounded by panoramic mountain views and 12 hectares of tropical gardens. An exquisite mix of Chinese, Indian and African interiors featuring olive wood, bamboo and handcrafted furniture makes this boutique hotel a triumph of Zen-like calm. Check in to a Sea View Pool Suite with lavish open-air shower, private pool and flawless vistas over

emerald peaks and turquoise seas. And balance mind and body with an in-room massage, yoga in the Silent Space studio or quiet time in the Meditation Labyrinth.

Once refreshed, it's time for some low-key exploration. Wander the palm-fringed pathways of the 30-acre Chamarel estate. Be awed by the ochres and reds of the Seven Coloured Earths dunes. Or seal your union by planting a tree and a personal love note in the Ebony Forest at Sublime Point.

Head to the sleepy south of Mauritius to shores of velvety sand beaches and pretty fishing villages. For unparalleled pampering, check in

to the **Shanti Maurice Resort & Spa**. Set in a 36-acre sweep of seafront gardens, the 61 suites and villas are built from a harmonious mix of granite, lava stone and wood, and offer guests unobstructed ocean views and VIP-level privacy.

The hotel's spa is one of the largest in the Indian Ocean, so your every wellness whim is catered for. Salute the sunrise with yoga by the surf, de-stress with a mud wrap and dine to the soothing rhythm of the lagoon with a feet-in-the-sand feast.

MAKE IT HAPPEN: *Stay three nights at Lakaz Chamarel Exclusive Lodge and four nights at Shanti Maurice Resort @ Spa from £1849pp inc. flights.*

Top: male lion in the Eastern Cape;
Below: Main Lodge, Kariega
Game Reserve



From bush to beach

A safari in the African wilderness followed by a beach chill is next-level holidaying. Dawn game drives, bush sundowners, star-filled evenings, the thrill of the Big Five and then time to unwind from Africa's wild wonders with some decadent relaxation in Mauritius – just a five-hour flight from Johannesburg.

Easily attached to a Mauritius beach break, a safari offers adventure like no other. Our South Africa Safari and the City itinerary spans the urban sophistication of Cape Town and the spectacular savannahs of the Eastern Cape Game Reserves.

Start your adventure with four nights in the cosmopolitan South African capital, where the iconic Table Mountain presides over the coastal metropolis below. While you're here, you can choose to enjoy local Cape Malay specialities on a food discovery tour, cycle the Constantia Winelands, whizz along the Cape Peninsula in a 1950s sidecar, see the penguins at Boulders Beach, watch the sunset from a classic sail boat, and hear Nelson Mandela's story on a Robben Island Walk to Freedom visit.

A flight to Gqeberha (Port Elizabeth) whisks you to the **Kariega Game Reserve** – a boutique collection of luxury log chalets with spectacular views over the vast plains below.

Twice-daily game drives in open-top vehicles take you out over riverine forests and grasslands and to close encounters with graceful giraffes and herds of zebra. During your three-night stay, there's every possibility of a heart-pounding brush with some of the Big Five – a lion, elephant, buffalo, rhino or leopard – a majestic and unforgettable sight.

From the thrills of the veld, it's time to recharge at the holistic **Le Jadis Beach Resort & Wellness Mauritius** – a rustic-chic collection of stone and wood thatched pavilions in the island's peaceful north west. Float your stress away in your suite's infinity pool, master the art of doing nothing on the secluded white sands of Turtle Bay, unwind in a private hammam and savour Asian haute cuisine in Oryza restaurant.

MAKE IT HAPPEN: *Stay four nights at the Winchester Boutique Hotel, Cape Town, three nights at Kariega Game Reserve Main Lodge, Eastern Cape, one night at Peermont D'Oreale Grande Hotel, Johannesburg and five nights at Le Jadis Beach Resort @ Wellness, Mauritius from £3850pp including flights.*



ATTITUDE HOTELS, MAURITIUS: Preserving paradise

With miles of protected forests and white sands fringed by coral, *Mauritius* is a nature-rich nirvana. And our partner *Attitude Hotels* is honoured to play its part in protecting this precious pearl of the Indian Ocean.

A jewel off the eastern coast of Africa, Mauritius is an island nation sculpted by volcanoes, lush with verdant jungle and blessed with pristine beaches, natural lagoons and vibrant coral reefs. It's a rare and exquisite beauty whose culture, traditions and ecosystem are being nurtured and safeguarded for future generations by family-owned hotel group, Attitude.

Founded on chairman Jean Michel Pitot's belief that: "Tourism must benefit the whole island, even when the holiday ends," the eight eco-committed hotels are leading the way in embracing positive-impact tourism that finds a respectful balance between its locations, the natural world and the local community to ensure that all thrive in harmony.

New consumption habits that have helped to reduce environmental impact, and a commitment to zero single-use plastic and the fostering of partnerships with local and eco-responsible businesses has earned the hotels Travelife Gold and Top Sustainable Performer awards. And the three- and four-star family-friendly and adults-only hotels are Made in Moris endorsed – a label that authenticates the Mauritian roots of a product.

Everything that happens here links back to this concept of authentic, local and sustainable – whether you kick back and relax in the spa, where all products are plant-based, vegan and locally made, or shop at the Otentik Bazar where clothes and souvenirs have been crafted

by local artisans. Even the heavenly scented cardamom and vanilla tea at the self-service tea bar is made by a local family.

Guests are encouraged to live like a local through immersive *otentik* – meaning authentic – experiences. This could be a street food tour of Port Louis, discovering the secrets of Creole cuisine in a cookery class or enjoying a meal with a local family with an Otentik Dinner experience. As a visitor to any Attitude Hotel, you'll find a world of unforgettable activities that let you live life on this heavenly island like a local.

To plan your stay at an Attitude Hotel, speak to a Personal Travel Expert or visit kuoni.co.uk/mauritius





4★ The Ravenala Attitude

Family-friendly

Hidden among the palms of a huge exotic garden between Lemon River and Turtle Bay, this resort's relaxed suites feature natural materials and traditional architecture that blur the boundaries between inside and out. Reap the benefits of a free kids' club while you take a round-the-world tour of flavours in one of nine restaurants. Immerse yourself in new flavours, try local dishes and tuck into a different type of cuisine every night with Attitude's Dine-Around experience, which allows you to sample seven different dining spots.



3.5★ Friday Attitude

Family-friendly

A great-value jewel in the peaceful fishing village of Trou d'Eau Douche on the island's undeveloped east coast, the Friday Attitude has a deeply relaxing atmosphere where you can completely de-stress. Swim in the shallows of the turquoise lagoon. Let the little ones meet new friends in the Ayo le Dodo kids' corner on the beach. Take a day trip on the resort's own catamaran. And try the pepper cakes, rotis and dumplings at Mauritian street food trailer Taba-J.



4★ Zilwa Attitude

Family-friendly

Perched on the edge of a lagoon facing the north islands, the Zilwa Attitude truly lives up to its name, which means 'islander'. From the moment you step into this authentic, rustic-chic resort, you're immersed in relaxed Mauritian culture. The kids can join a treasure hunt on the private island of Gran Zil, where there is also a beach barbecue every day. Chill out with a meditative tai chi class, and later sip a sundowner at the Lor Disab – Pirogue Bar with breathtaking views over the lagoon.



4★ Lagoon Attitude

Adults-only

Hugging the shores of the huge Anse la Raie lagoon on the north coast of Mauritius, the Lagoon Attitude has three zones that you can explore according to your mood – lively, laid-back or local. Get your glow on with an indulgent 90-minute massage and facial at Spa POZ. Marvel at the marine life from a glass-bottomed boat. Taste the Mediterranean and Mauritian fusion cuisine at the Coral restaurant. And enjoy live concerts and DJs at the resort's beach and pool parties.



4★ Sunrise Attitude

Adults-only

Secluded from the wild and preserved east coast by leafy palm trees and on the most beautiful beach in Mauritius – Belle Mare – the Sunrise Attitude enjoys miles of white sand, a paradise lagoon, artisanal furnishings and a wealth of wellness activities. Take a refreshing plunge in the pool from your swim-up room. Enjoy a creative workshop with a local artist. Get fit with a guided energy walk on the beach or a weekly bootcamp. And quench your thirst at the resort's Teabaz tea bar, where you can sample local blends and infusions.

Clockwise from left: Sunrise Attitude; Taba-J food truck at Friday Attitude; poke bowl; holidaymakers at Taba-J, Sunrise Attitude; beach restaurant, Ravenala Attitude; family time at Ravenala Attitude; kids' club at Friday Attitude; family suite, Zilwa Attitude; Kot Nou restaurant, Ravenala Attitude; Papaya bar lounge, Sunrise Attitude; Seabreeze bar, Lagoon Attitude; beachfront at Zilwa Attitude





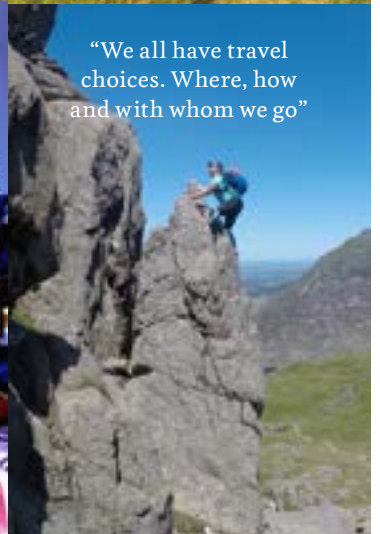
FRONTLINE conservation *tactics*

Famous for being the first woman to skydive over Everest and for taking part in the world's longest horse race across the Mongolian desert, each of adventurer and conservationist Holly Budge's challenges has been a launch pad to the next. And, as she explains to *Donna Hardie*, her most recent work with the fearless female rangers of Africa has put her at the forefront of the anti-poaching movement...



“I still get goosebumps when I see elephants in the wild,” says *Holly Budge*. One of Holly’s most memorable elephant encounters was in Hwange National Park in Zimbabwe. “I’ve never seen so many elephants in one place – there were probably about 130 standing around a watering hole. I also loved Chyulu Hills in Kenya. It’s a stunningly beautiful place where I got some good sightings of the big tuskers. And then there’s Kruger – I’ve had some fantastic times and elephant sightings there.”

‘Holly has worked for nine years to bring attention to groups of female rangers around the world who are at the forefront of the fight against ivory poaching’



Clockwise: Akashinga rangers on patrol in Zimbabwe; Holly crossing the Amphu Lapcha Pass, Nepal; training in New Zealand; rock climbing; hoisting a How Many Elephants flag at the summit of Mount Everest

As I speak to Holly, she’s about to set off on a 190km three-day cycle rally in east Devon to prepare for next year’s Silk Road Mountain Race on the unforgiving rough terrain and old Soviet roads of Kyrgyzstan’s high-altitude peaks. She’s only just returned from this year’s race, which she had to abandon due to sickness. Holly’s approach to life is to be self-sufficient and expertly proficient in the skills needed for every challenge she’s ever taken on – she’s signed up for a City & Guilds in bike mechanics to better prepare for next year’s race.

Holly does nothing by halves, unafraid to follow her passions to see where they will take her. She’s worked for nine years to bring attention to groups of female rangers around the world who are at the forefront of the fight against ivory poaching. Holly has experienced life on the

frontline herself – with a group called the Black Mambas in South Africa and other female ranger groups around the world. Her database now contains 4,500 female rangers in 18 African countries and around 5,500 female rangers worldwide. So great is her concern about the plight of the world’s elephants and their declining numbers that she founded How Many Elephants – a UK-registered charity that raises awareness through art installations that graphically draw attention to the 35,000 elephants killed for their ivory each year.

Her devotion to elephants stems from her love of Africa and its wildlife. It was learning more about the uncertain future of African elephants that was the springboard for her passion. She had been studying for an MA in sustainable design when she began researching the issue. ➤

Clockwise: Holly becoming the first woman to skydive Everest; rangers in the all-female Akashinga rangers; part of the How Many Elephants art installation; Holly at a speaking engagement; the How Many Elephants art installation raises awareness of the losses caused by poaching



“I wanted to create a body of work that was non-gruesome, non-gory and non-political. It transcends language barriers and visualises the data. It’s impactful to see elephants repeated 35,000 times on a wall”



Aiming high

Holly considers the work of the rangers important enough that she’s founded and launched World Female Ranger Week (23-30 June 2024) to amplify the impact of female rangers on the global stage. “I recognised the power of adventure as a platform to speak about social and environmental issues. My love for adventure and raising money for conservation started to come together.”

Her adventurous spirit harks back to childhood when she competed in tetrathlons – swimming, running, target shooting and horse riding. Holly got the skydiving bug while travelling in New Zealand after school and decided she wanted to become a skydiving camerawoman. This ultimately led to a world-first Everest skydive. “I was the first woman in the world to skydive Everest,” she says. “It involved jumping from a small plane at 29,500ft and at -40°C. There was almost complete cloud cover beneath me, so the pilot held up the stop sign behind me, but I had too much momentum on my ‘ready, set, go’ and I fell out of the plane, which was terrifying.”

Her media profile, international speaking engagements, sustainable designs and adventures have collectively been the catalyst for How Many Elephants and the art installation she has produced to make a statement about the numbers killed each year. “I wanted to create a body of work that was non-gruesome, non-gory and non-political.

It transcends language barriers and visualises the data. It’s impactful to see elephants repeated 35,000 times on a wall.”

Holly has words for any of us who hope to journey to the region: “We all have travel choices. Where we go, how we go, with whom we go. I spend a lot of my time working closely with those in the travel industry such as Alfred& by Kuoni who promote collaboration between conservation and tourism. Going beyond the safari experience to visit local conservation and community projects is just one way of supporting this vital work, and then bringing those stories home and educating others.”

How Many Elephants is a UK-registered charity dedicated to supporting African elephant conservation and championing female rangers globally. Learn how you can lend your support at howmanyelephants.org and hollybudge.com

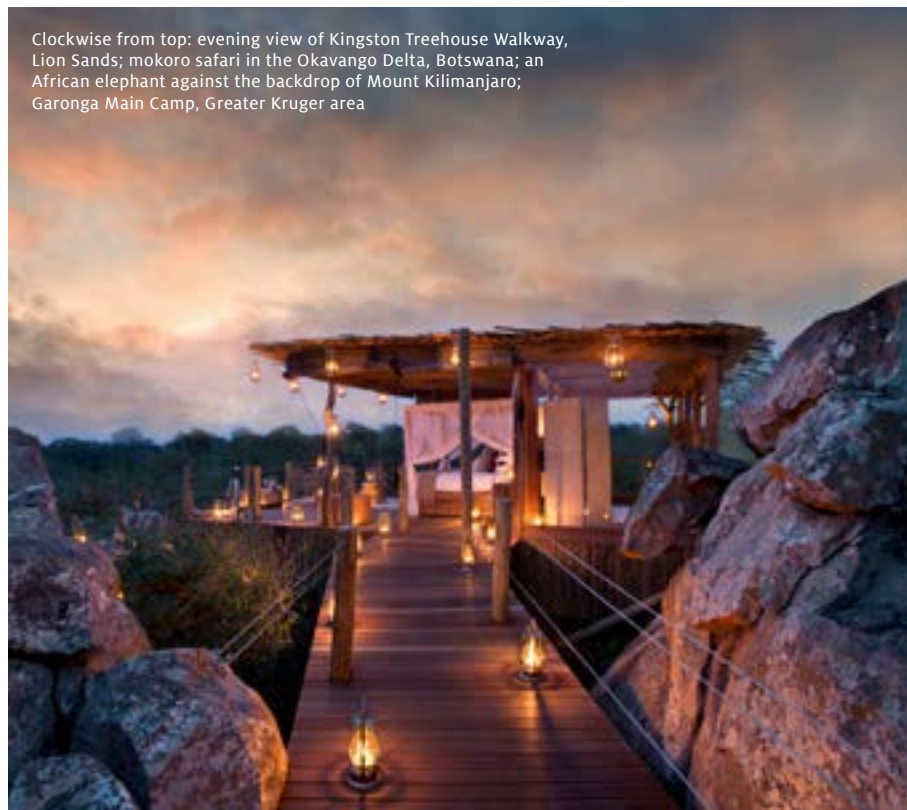


Donna Hardie, award-winning editor and journalist specialising in lifestyle and travel

“I’m fortunate to have visited some incredible places – travel gives us our greatest stories and memories.”

How to make the most of a safari holiday

From the spine-tingling sights of the mighty Kalahari in Botswana to the thrill of following the herds of South Africa's game reserves, your first encounter with the majestic elephant is guaranteed to be truly unforgettable. Our experts have curated a few of their top safari itineraries that give you the best chance of spotting Africa's Big Five.



Clockwise from top: evening view of Kingston Treehouse Walkway, Lion Sands; mokoro safari in the Okavango Delta, Botswana; an African elephant against the backdrop of Mount Kilimanjaro; Garonga Main Camp, Greater Kruger area

5 SAFARI HIGHLIGHTS NOT TO MISS

Sleep out under the stars: Romantic and thrilling in equal measure, there's nothing quite like spending a night in a cosy bed that just happens to be in the middle of the bush.

Fly high on a hot air balloon: From the remarkable feeling of stillness, broken only by the sounds from the ground, to the 360° vistas that seem to stretch on forever.

See nature's smaller details on a walking safari: If you have the opportunity, do it! Accompanied by a skilled guide, you can focus on the smaller details you miss from a vehicle like plants, insects, paw prints, markings and the droppings of much larger game.

Eat al fresco from dawn to dusk: Eating outside reaches a whole new level when the setting is a stunning African landscape.

Go behind the scenes and meet the locals: From village visits to anti-poaching units, see your lodge's sustainability practices in action and gain lots more backstage insights.

MAKE IT HAPPEN: For more safari inspiration visit kuoni.co.uk/safari-holidays or call our Africa experts on 0808 239 8368



Cape Town, Safari & Beach, South Africa

Offering a city break and safari in South Africa, plus a beach stay in Mozambique, this 13-day, tailor-made adventure lets you explore the foodie scene and cultural sophistication of Cape Town before spotting wildlife in Garonga Private Game Reserve. Then head to Mozambique's white-sand beaches for a Robinson Crusoe escape. Thrilling activities include game drives, nature walks, microlight flights and sleep-outs under the African stars.

BEST TIME TO GO: April to May, September to November

MAKE IT HAPPEN: 13-day tailor-made itinerary from £4995pp including flights.

Big Five Safari, Kenya

Although relatively short in duration, there's no shortage of wildlife action on this value-for-money small group safari. Discover the unique volcanic landscape of Tsavo West, where herds of magnificent elephants share the same vibrant hues as the rich red soil. In Amboseli, with its dramatic backdrop of Mount Kilimanjaro, enjoy game drives across a wide-open landscape where zebras, buffalo and wildebeest graze alongside elephants and big cats.

BEST TIME TO GO: January to March, June to October

MAKE IT HAPPEN: 6 day small group safari from £2395pp including flights.

Best of Botswana & Victoria Falls

Watch elephants wade through the Chobe River, navigate past hippos in the Okavango Delta and witness wild dogs hunting in the Moremi Game Reserve on this 11-day itinerary, which pairs the best of Botswana with the almighty Victoria Falls. Game drives, mokoro trips, sunset cruises and optional cultural excursions are all on the agenda too, with scenic flights whisking you between some of the region's most breathtaking sights.

BEST TIME TO GO: May to October

MAKE IT HAPPEN: 11-day tailor-made itinerary from £6995pp including flights.



POSTCARDS

from...

There's nothing our globetrotting experts love more than seeking out new places and sharing treasured travel memories. Wish you were there?



A birthday to remember in Rwanda

"Gorilla trekking in Rwanda has made for an incredibly memorable birthday experience. I spent an hour watching a family of 30, including a silverback who was cradling a five-day-old baby, and juveniles playing in the nest. This has been the trip of a lifetime to see the gorillas in the Volcanoes National Park, chimpanzees in Nyungwe National Park, the Big Five on safari in Akagera National Park, the capital Kigali and Lake Kivu, one of Africa's Great Lakes, where there are watersports galore and I watched fishermen bring in their catch on traditional tri-hulled boats. When I was in Ruhengeri at the gateway to the Volcanoes National Park, I stayed at the **One&Only Gorilla's Nest** treehouse retreat in the forest overlooking the volcano. In the south, our base was the gorgeous **One&Only Nyungwe House** right on the edge of the forest. The standout moments – apart from the gorillas – were seeing chimpanzees and monkeys while wobbling 70m above a ravine on the Nyungwe canopy walk and hiking through dense forest on the waterfall trail – tough but worth it. Rwanda is amazingly clean, the people are friendly and the hotels are outstanding."

MAKE IT HAPPEN: *Our eight-day tailor-made Majestic Rwanda adventure takes you to Nyungwe National Park to seek out chimpanzees, and on a trek in Volcanoes National Park, which is home to some of the world's last remaining mountain gorillas; from £5625pp including flights. Or upgrade your trip to include Dan's recommended One@Only properties. Ask our experts for details.*



Dan Heatly, Alfred& Senior Trading Executive

"I've had a 23-year love affair with African travel. My adventures have taken me to Kenya, Tanzania, Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Zambia, South Africa and Rwanda."

Sawasdee from Phuket, Thailand!

"It doesn't get much better than sitting in a beach bar, cocktail in hand, listening to the waves lapping Kamala Beach and watching a beautiful sunset. Paradise! Phuket has been a wonderful experience with something for everyone to enjoy. Shopping in the old town is like stepping back in time with quaint streets, pavement cafes, historic temples and little gift shops. After a Thai massage I felt like a new person – and it's just £15 an hour. And the food! I discovered I love *khao niao mamuang* – mango sticky rice doused in coconut milk. My favourite mode of transport in the city is the tuk tuk – I always get one with flashing lights and music playing as it's so much fun. One of the most breathtaking places on earth has to be Phang Nga Bay, otherwise known as 'James Bond island' as *The Man with the Golden Gun* was filmed there. It has these huge, towering rocks that jut out of the emerald-green Andaman Sea. Quite incredible."

MAKE IT HAPPEN: *Take in bustling Bangkok before heading to Phuket, an emerald island of karsts, golden sands and night-time revelry. Stay three nights at the Rembrandt Hotel @ Suites, Bangkok and seven nights at Cape Panwa Hotel, Phuket; from £1849pp including flights.*



Richard Harris, Store Manager, Kuoni Nottingham

"Having been in travel for 33 years, I love nothing more than to experience new places. Each corner of the world has something different to offer."



An incredible time in Sri Lanka

“From watching wild monkeys play around my villa in the serene **Uga Ulagalla** resort to the hotel’s Kamatha dining experience set in paddy fields, where we ate Sri Lankan specialities prepared in clay pots over open fires, there have been almost too many highlights to mention. We climbed the 200m-high Sigiriya rock fortress, where there are ancient palace ruins and jungle views for miles. Then there’s the **Uga Jungle Beach** resort that’s like staying in a treehouse in the forest, but on the beach. There was the magical sight of an elephant strolling into the reception at the boutique **Uga Chena Huts** in Yala. And a light aircraft flight from Batticaloa airport to Colombo over Kandy and the beautiful tea country. And it was food heaven – my go-to was mutton curry! Kottu roti was a favourite dish for dinner – roti, meat, curry, egg and vegetables chopped and sautéed together. As well as the food, wildlife and history, the warm hospitality is something I’ll never forget.”

MAKE IT HAPPEN: Explore Sri Lanka in a private car with a driver and stay at Uga Escapes’ boutique hotels. Our 13-night Ultimate Sri Lanka with Uga Resorts trip takes in Colombo, Sigiriya rock fortress and Yala National Park, and includes some time at the beach on idyllic Passikudah Bay; from £4699pp including flights.



Charlotte Lofty, Indian Ocean Destination Expert

“Travel for me is what life is all about – exploring other cultures, new experiences and seeing beautiful places. Food plays a big part in my travels and I love trying new things.”



Relaxing on Bali's fantastic beaches

"Located on a beautiful, sweeping, sandy beach, at our private pool villa at **The Royal Santrian** – an amazing hotel in Tanjung Bena – we enjoyed a relaxing natural Balinese body massage. We also did a fantastic cooking class that included going to a local market to buy fresh produce under the guidance of an expert local chef. Ubud has a large selection of local restaurants, and the local food is out of this world – my favourite dishes are nasi goreng and beef rendang. But there's plenty of wildlife and culture, too. At the Sacred Monkey Forest Sanctuary in Ubud, over 1,200 long-tailed macaques swing, leap and laze in trees – but watch your mobile phone and sunglasses, which they might take a shine to! We also stayed at **The Samaya Ubud** where rainforest views are breathtaking, and we had the most wonderful private dinner by the river at the bottom of the valley, surrounded by candles and listening to the hum of the forest and the trickling of the flowing water."

MAKE IT HAPPEN: See two different sides to Bali on a twin-centre villa escape. Spend four nights at *The Samaya Ubud*, a riverside oasis in artsy Ubud, and three nights at *The Royal Santrian, Luxury Beach Villas*, which is set on the golden shores of Tanjung Bena; from £2499pp including flights.



Nancy Verboom, Senior Product Executive

"I first fell in love with the Balinese culture and people in 2017. It reignited my passion for Indonesian food, which was a huge part of my life growing up in the Netherlands."

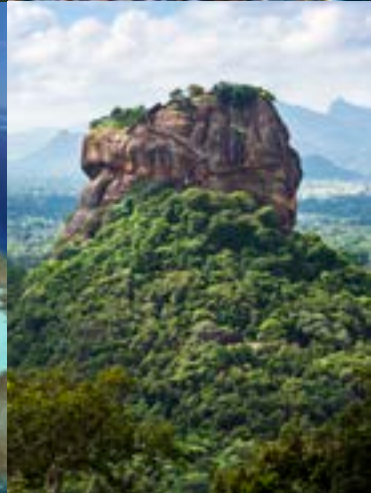


OUR KUONI HOLIDAY *with Alice & Chloe*

After booking three wonderful trips with Kuoni over the years, *Alice Sprake* and wife *Chloe* entrusted Kuoni with planning an unforgettable honeymoon in Sri Lanka and the Maldives.



Meet Alice and Chloe... “I am a nurse and Chloe is a midwife. We both work very demanding jobs, so we like to ensure we have regular holidays to de-stress and have something to look forward to. Although, the type of holiday can vary as we both like a mixture of relaxation and adventure, as well as good food!”



Clockwise from below: Alice and Chloe at a Sri Lankan tea plantation; a monkey on the couple's balcony in Krabi; a sea turtle; Sigiriya rock fortress, Sri Lanka; the island resort of Kandolhu, the Maldives

We want to see as much of the world as we can...

We have always loved travelling and it's one of the things we had in common when we met each other. Travel also gives us time together as a couple, away from the stressors of working life, allowing us to reconnect and discover and unearth further cultures and experiences. Our first trip with Kuoni was to **Kuramathi** in the Maldives. This was a surprise trip for Chloe as I was planning to propose to her! The next trip was Thailand for Chloe's 30th birthday. This included a stay in Bangkok, Phuket, Elephant Hills Khlong Sok and Krabi. This was an unforgettable birthday, especially with 20 or more monkeys making their way across our balcony in Krabi!

We like a mix of adventure and relaxation

We love having a private pool for relaxing holidays or different activities on offer at more adventurous destinations. Chloe also loves snorkelling so anywhere with good marine life is a must. We also look for ratings and reviews beforehand – although since finding Kuoni we trust that their recommendations meet our expectations.

We went to Sri Lanka and the Maldives for our honeymoon – we customised the itinerary so it was unique to us

Our personal driver, Ahmed, in Sri Lanka, was amazing as we were able to be flexible with our own schedule. The country is beautiful – we loved

Uga Chena Huts for safaris, tea-picking in Nuwara Eliya and climbing the ancient Sigiriya rock fortress at sunrise. We flew to the Maldives for some relaxation. We went to **Kandolhu** first, a small, intimate island specialising in relaxation and romance. Here, we saw dolphins for the first time, snorkelled with the reef sharks and dined under the stars. We then took a boat transfer to our final island, Kuramathi, which will always hold a special place in our hearts.

We'd never travel without...

My trainers as I love running on beautiful trails and watching the sunrise. For Chloe, it's her snorkel as she loves spending hours in the sea watching marine life!

Kuoni ensures that each holiday is suited to your needs

Every hotel, restaurant and external company has been carefully selected to ensure luxury and peace of mind. Hayley in the Cardiff branch is always a phone call away to help with any travel queries or advice. Every holiday has exceeded our expectations and we put our full faith in knowing that any destination we pick will be amazing!

MAKE IT HAPPEN: *Speak to a Personal Travel Expert in-store to design your own personalised itinerary.*



Revisiting India's GOLDEN TRIANGLE

When *Rashmi Narayan* took her husband to visit the places that captured her heart as a teenager, she discovered India's Golden Triangle of Delhi, Agra and Jaipur from a fresh perspective.

The first time I visited the Golden Triangle as a teenager my father did all the planning and chauffeuring. The north of India, where the route is located, is very different to the south – where I am from. Many move from the north’s unrelenting heat to my hometown of Bangalore, or Bengaluru as it is now called, which is 3,000ft above sea level.

But the uninterrupted sunshine and cloudless blue sky of the Golden Triangle brought a smile to my British husband Max’s face on this visit. Ever since his first trip to India, he’s immersed himself in a culture that was alien to him. He’s from sleepy Devon, yet he was fascinated with the tropical life and hospitality India offered. Returning to India with him helps me see my home through a new lens.

Without my dad, I was in the driver’s seat. While I’ve inherited some of his regimented planning – from accommodation and sightseeing to choosing restaurants, along with timings for each – I left some room for spontaneity, especially around food, as I wanted to wander and explore street food stalls at our own pace. Beyond Delhi, Agra and Jaipur, I was keen on introducing Max to some lesser-known towns like Fatehpur Sikri and Mandawa.

Local delicacies

First up, Delhi. We stayed at a family-run guesthouse in the neighbourhood of Janakpuri, recommended by a friend from the capital. The area reminded me of where I grew up in Bangalore. It bore the charm of a sleepy town amid leafy avenues and friendly locals who advocate a strong sense of community. We were in for a treat at breakfast as our host had prepared some legendary home-cooked parathas. This unleavened, layered flatbread is a no-frills daily staple that is ordinarily served with a dollop of butter, fiery Indian pickle and yoghurt.

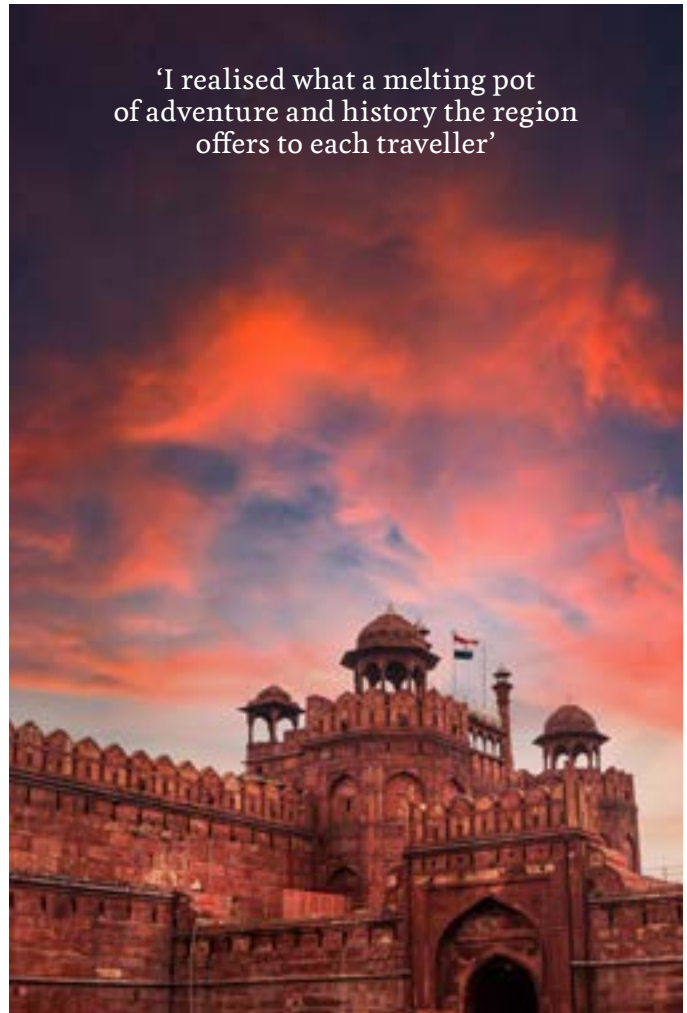
Our quest for parathas didn’t end here. That evening we went on a walking tour taking in Parathe Wali Gali (meaning, literally, ‘the street for parathas’) in the narrow alleys of the buzzing Chandni Chowk district.



This glittering bazaar is where Delhi comes to life and there’s a gamut of parathas prepared by iconic eateries. We lingered here longer than we intended, a piping hot cup of chai in hand, people-watching and dipping in and out of the wide array of shops selling everything from pots and pans to saris and sparkly bangles.

After exploring ancient marvels such as the towering UNESCO World Heritage Site Qutub Minar in Mehrauli, we headed south to Agra. Although it’s possible to see the former capital on a day trip from Delhi, a fleeting visit to the Taj Mahal and Agra Fort would miss the subtleties of the city’s many moods. Having witnessed sunset at the Taj before, I wanted to experience the site at sunrise and Max was up to the task. We bought our tickets and carried only a small bag with our phones. I remember the Taj being jam-packed with barely any time to enjoy

‘I realised what a melting pot of adventure and history the region offers to each traveller’



Opposite: Taj Mahal, Agra;
Left to right: Delhi’s Qutub Minar minaret at Mehrauli;
a street vendor in Jaipur; Red Fort, Delhi

the monument at my own speed, but on a weekday early morning it was far less crowded. The initial fog cleared quickly and the first rays of the sun peeked between the minarets. Everything else almost felt out of focus at that moment – the Taj was towering before us, oscillating from shades of pink to amber to off-white.

Marvellous marble

Avoiding all the souvenir shops and salesmen near the Taj, we headed to Fatehabad Road to admire some marble inlay work – something you will see all over the Taj. The designs and patterns are magnificent, with gemstones inserted within the marble surfaces.

In the afternoon, we set off on a bike tour of the city. To say that Max was terrified of riding his bicycle through the unruly streets of Agra would be an understatement, but he was met with smiles at every traffic signal – from the chatty rickshaw driver asking if he was lost, to an ascetic trying to bless him in exchange for a few rupees. We parked our bikes and walked to a vantage point at Taj Nature Walk and had a moment of calm, witnessing Agra’s verdant growth and palm trees beyond the chaos and traffic. We were looking at trees and endless hues of green, and the mighty Taj Mahal towering behind them – with no crowds. It was a rewarding and moving sight, and a memory that will remain special to us.

While the Taj Mahal is enchanting, I fell in love with Agra Fort for its patchwork of stories. These are tales that give a true insight into the life of the Mughals. The carefully planned gardens, the libraries, the apartments and tranquil spaces designed for queens all lie within the stunning red sandstone fort. Such is my love of stories that we made time for one last tour – the untold stories of Agra’s Mughal women. ➤



‘It was enlightening, interactive and fun talking to a local about the area’s rich culinary history’

Clockwise from top left: the Hawa Mahal palace, Jaipur; a woman painting water pots in a Rajasthani village; local dish *ker sangri*; Amber Fort, Rajasthan; a colourful Rajasthani puppet

It opened my eyes to the remarkable women of the Mughal era. Though they had orthodox restrictions, these women were key political figures, artists who were also well-versed in Persian literature and wrote poetry. Some even went hunting and played polo matches. Emperor Akbar boasted an impressive library and often hosted international singers and artists in his court and this contributed to the women’s knowledge of worldly affairs, even though they were confined to the palace. Their stories influence the women of Agra even today, with many thriving in the realms of arts and crafts.

To feel like true locals, I stopped at a shop to buy some *dalmoth*, a teatime snack strongly affiliated with Agra and sold in bazaars and supermarkets. It’s a heady concoction of beluga lentils, nuts and chillies, and was a useful snack to have while we were on the road.

A lost empire

On our way to Jaipur, the capital of Rajasthan, we stopped at Fatehpur Sikri, a ghost town where the Mughal empire once flourished. The colossal gateway of Buland Darwaza is here, a favourite spot for Instagrammers for its ornate Islamic patterns carved in sandstone, but we loved smaller details such as intricate marble *jali* – stone latticework windows at the Tomb of Salim Chishti. A courtyard is designed to look like a chessboard and there’s a stage surrounded by water that was built specially for Hindustani classical musician Tansen. The royal kitchens even had a dedicated vegetarian section for Hindu queen Jodha Bai.

To many, the glorious photographs of Rajasthan that grace the front of magazines and guidebooks define India as a whole. You’re likely to have seen Jaipur’s Hawa Mahal – a dazzling pink palace with delicate patterns on its many windows, designed for the royal ladies to watch the streets of the city. But as a teenager the Rajasthan that bewitched me was from its stories. Each palace, or *haveli* as locals know them, bore a fable from Rajasthani folklore. The majority of these were haunted stories – often of someone who was cursed. “You can still hear the anklets rushing down the stairs at night and if you are patient, you may be rewarded with a hum of an ancient tune, too,” says our tour guide casually, on our heritage walking tour of Mandawa.

In Jaipur, the most endearing of all the sights was a street puppet show. *Kathputli* are shows featuring puppets created by local artists, which tell short, entertaining tales narrated in Hindi or Marwari. There was also a local musician playing a *ravanahaththa* – an ancient stringed instrument.

Though I love fables, I am also an ardent fan of Rajasthani food and this time I decided to take a cooking class with Max. It was enlightening, interactive and fun talking to a local about the area’s rich culinary history. We cooked over a fire and made local delicacies such as *ker sangri* (stringy desert beans and berries cooked with tangy spices), along with local breads.

I have often tried to convince visitors to go beyond the Golden Triangle of my beloved India but, on this trip, I realised what a melting pot of adventure and history the region offers to each traveller. These are towns and cities that make me proud of India’s unique heritage and I seem to learn something new from every visit.

And Max said it was life-changing for him as he saw the country in a new light – as a sensory exploration for the taste buds and the soul.

MAKE IT HAPPEN: Find more ways to explore India and the Golden Triangle with our expert guide >



Rashmi Narayan, journalist and feature writer

“I love to explore the world through food and drink, and have strong passions for sustainability, stargazing, train journeys and history.”

India



Meet your
Personal Travel Expert

Tailor made travel expert Mayur Khanna grew up in India and has travelled extensively throughout the country.

“The variety this colourful country offers in terms of its regions – all the different landscapes, experiences, people and culinary pleasures – makes it hard to resist!”

When to go

I recommend going October through to March for the best weather. The heat and humidity of the summer months can be a challenge. Indian springtime, between February and mid-May, is the best time for spotting tigers.

Getting around

Travelling with a private driver and guide is one of the most convenient ways to experience India, but we often also include train travel as it captures the country's amazing landscapes and offers a snapshot of the real India.

Where to stay

Spoil yourself along the way by upgrading to a palace or haveli, such as Jaipur's luxurious

former royal residence **Samode Haveli**. You feel like a Maharaja the moment you receive the traditional Rajasthani welcome.

Make it a multi-stop

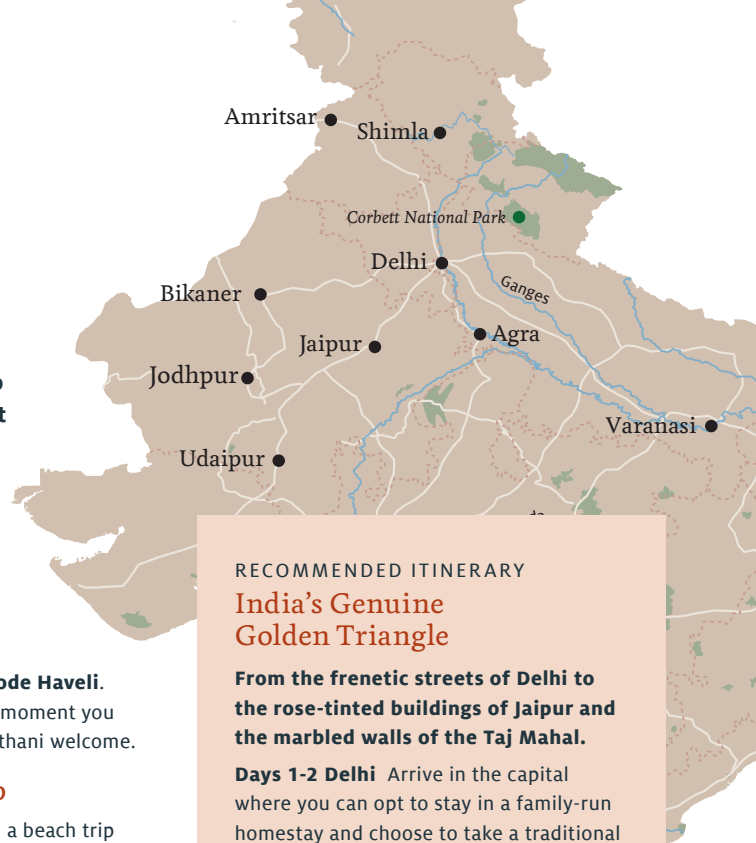
Whether you want to add on a beach trip to Goa or downtime in the forested hills of Shimla, we can tailor-make your trip.

Insider knowledge

It's the Taj Mahal that attracts most of us to the Golden Triangle, but my favourite place is Jaipur for its heritage, architecture and forts.

Something to love

Some of my favourite moments have been in Kerala, sailing in a rice barge sipping a warm cup of chai while the sun is setting.



RECOMMENDED ITINERARY

India's Genuine Golden Triangle

From the frenetic streets of Delhi to the rose-tinted buildings of Jaipur and the marbled walls of the Taj Mahal.

Days 1-2 Delhi Arrive in the capital where you can opt to stay in a family-run homestay and choose to take a traditional dinner with your hosts for a glimpse into local life. On your first morning you might want to explore Delhi by Dawn on foot or rickshaw ride to see the sights.

Days 3-4 Jaipur After breakfast in Delhi, travel to the historic walled city of Jaipur where you can choose to take an optional cookery class, join a walking tour or go up in a hot air balloon. Next up is the Amber Fort – a UNESCO-listed 16th-century sandstone hilltop palace.

Days 5-6 Agra Travelling from Jaipur you can stop at the walled city of Fatehpur Sikri. The next morning, visit India's marble masterpiece the Taj Mahal at dawn to watch the sky turn peach above its domes.

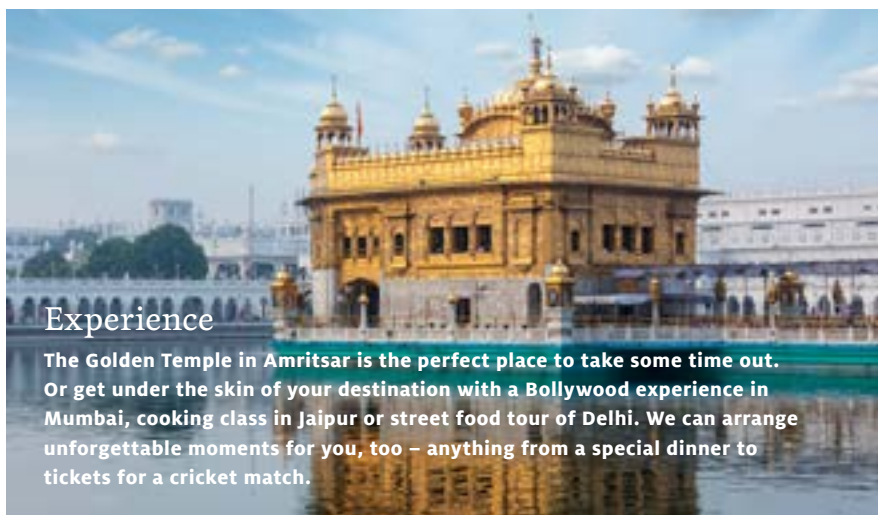
Days 7-8 Delhi Travel back to Delhi and explore the city independently or choose from the many experiences on offer.

Ask us about all our optional experiences.

MAKE IT HAPPEN:

Our eight-day Genuine Golden Triangle itinerary starts from £1425pp including flights.

Call our India experts on 0808 239 8368 or visit kuoni.co.uk/india



Experience

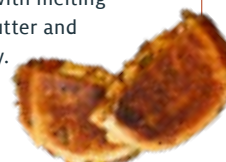
The Golden Temple in Amritsar is the perfect place to take some time out. Or get under the skin of your destination with a Bollywood experience in Mumbai, cooking class in Jaipur or street food tour of Delhi. We can arrange unforgettable moments for you, too – anything from a special dinner to tickets for a cricket match.

Local vibe

Don't miss the festivals that bring so much joy to Jaipur and other cities – Kite Festival in mid-January to celebrate the start of the new year; Holi, the Hindu festival of colours in March celebrating spring; and October's Diwali, a festival of lights. Festival times add real authenticity to travelling around India as they magnify the experience of getting close to local communities and their traditions. For photography fans, festival times offer amazing picture opportunities.

Try

Amritsari *kulcha* is a traditional leavened bread stuffed with mashed potatoes and spices. It's best eaten hot on the side of the street with melting fresh white butter and chickpea curry. Delicious!



Top tip

The best way to travel is slowly – then you can get the most out of every place you visit. Take time to meet local artisans and try local cuisine on the many food tours we can arrange for you.

Ask the EXPERTS

There's no 'one size fits all' when it comes to holidays. After all, a honeymooner's romantic paradise might leave an active family itching for more adventure. Our experts give you their top tips on customised itineraries.



Scott Catchpole

Tailor-made Travel Expert

Previously a chef, Scott has worked for Kuoni for five years and visited 50 countries. But it's New Zealand in particular that took his breath away.



Mel Cox

Personal Travel Expert, Kuoni Bluewater

Having worked in travel for over 30 years, Mel has travelled widely across Europe, Asia, the Indian Ocean, South Africa and the Caribbean.



Claire Gately

Tailor-made Travel Expert

Claire has worked for Kuoni for 12 years and has expert knowledge of North America, Australia, New Zealand and Cruise & Stay.



Melissa Fritchley

Personal Travel Expert, Kuoni Cheltenham

Melissa has worked for Kuoni for 13 years. From city breaks to paradise beaches and safaris, she loves being able to visit so many different places.



Michelle Bavidge

Caribbean Expert

Michelle loves travel and has taken her children everywhere from Borneo and Singapore to the Maldives, but their all-time favourite destination is Dubai.



"In North Island you can hike volcanoes, sail around islands or explore caves, rainforests and world-famous movie sets"

I'd like advice on where to go for the ultimate outdoor adventure...


Scott says: "New Zealand is all about the great outdoors. It's slightly larger than the UK but with 62 million fewer people, so there's a vast, untouched landscape of natural wonders. Whether you like fast-paced sports or prefer taking things a little slower to discover nature, culture and history, there's a huge array of things to do.

In North Island you can hike volcanoes, sail around islands, or explore caves, rainforests and world-famous movie sets. In South Island you can whale watch, swim with dolphins, climb glaciers or brave an action-filled, nerve-tingling range of activities in the adrenaline capital of Queenstown.

For something more leisurely, hire a bike and cycle around one of the many world-famous wineries, take a stroll along one of the ten Great Walks of New Zealand or explore indigenous Māori culture and history.

I'd recommend Kaikōura on South Island, famed for its Hikurangi oceanic trench and home to humpback whales, dolphins, albatross and seals. I worked there at the luxury **Hapuku Lodge & Treehouses**. Set within an olive grove and deer farm, it boasts architecturally beautiful accommodation. Even in this tiny town, there's so much to do right on your doorstep."

MAKE IT HAPPEN: To discover more about visiting New Zealand, see kuoni.co.uk/new-zealand



We're looking for something extra special for our honeymoon. Any ideas?

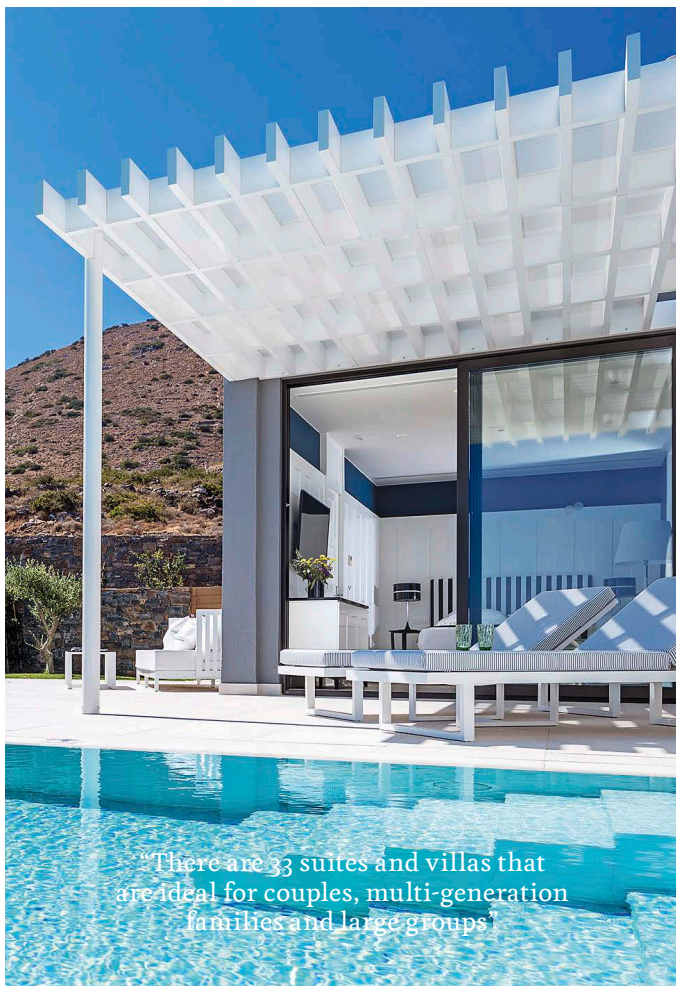
Melissa says: "With its powder-white beaches, jungles and spectacular coral reefs, the Seychelles has to be one of the most romantic parts of the world I've travelled to."

Each island has its own charm, but I would build a few stops into your itinerary as it's easy to hop between them. Some of the islands even offer a helicopter transfer – perfect for a VIP arrival. Start with Mahé, where you'll find both stunning beaches and national parks. I would then go to Praslin. Anse Lazio beach in the north west of the island is often voted one of the best in the world. While in Praslin, go trekking in the ancient palm forest of the Vallée de Mai Nature Reserve where you might get a glimpse of the rare and elusive black parrot. I would recommend a stay at the phenomenal **Constance Lemuria** and indulge in its romantic, ocean-side On the Rocks dining experience.

Finally, visit the laid-back and sleepy La Digue island to experience local life at a much slower pace. There are very few cars and ox carts are the main mode of transport!

The Seychelles enjoys glorious sunny days throughout the year, but I would highly recommend June to September when the days are longer and the sun is a little cooler, with very little rain."

MAKE IT HAPPEN: *To plan your dream honeymoon, see kuoni.co.uk/honeymoons*



“There are 33 suites and villas that are ideal for couples, multi-generation families and large groups”

I’m trying to find a holiday that will keep all three generations of my family happy! What do you recommend?

Mel says: “A private resort villa would keep everyone happy as there’s lots of space and a great variety of on-site entertainment to be enjoyed by all ages. **The Pine Cliffs Resort** in the Algarve, Portugal, has eight swimming pools and is a firm favourite with Kuoni clients. There’s a huge choice of rooms, suites and residences.

For something more far-flung, the **St Peter’s Bay Resort** in Barbados is another excellent choice for families or larger groups. It feels like a home away from home and is within walking distance to shops and restaurants.

On a smaller scale, there’s the **Elounda Gulf Villas and Suites** in Crete. I stayed there this year on my family holiday. It’s a private villa resort, 30 minutes’ walk or 10 minutes in a taxi from the beautiful centre of Elounda and close to Agios Nikolaos. There are 33 suites and villas that are ideal for couples, multi-generation families and large groups. For families with younger children, there’s a great kids’ club, or there’s a private beach club offering watersports just a 10-minute drive away by courtesy minibus. A villa resort with plenty of facilities will give you privacy as well as things to do – the best of all worlds.”

MAKE IT HAPPEN: For more family holiday suggestions, see kuoni.co.uk/family-holidays

Canada’s always been on my bucket list. What’s the best way to see the country?

Claire says: “A multi-centre trip that includes one of Canada’s iconic rail journeys is a great way to connect you to vibrant cities and take in the country’s epic scenery along the way.

Canada is a country that lets you experience so much in just one trip – scenery, wildlife, wilderness, culture and history. Most itineraries start and end in a landmark city. What you sandwich in along the way will be totally different and nothing short of breathtaking.

One of our featured trips – Journey Through the Clouds – starts in the cowboy city of Calgary and traverses the Trans-Canada Highway, before stopping at Banff and Jasper to join the Rocky Mountaineer.

This spellbinding journey on a luxury vintage train skirts around Mount Robson, the highest peak of the Canadian Rockies, past the spectacular Pyramid Falls and along the banks of the Thompson River, before finishing in the cosmopolitan city of Vancouver. This trip can be tailored further with the addition of an Alaska cruise adventure, departing right from the centre of Vancouver’s bustling waterfront. I remember flying down to Vancouver and over the Rocky Mountains was incredible. I could see why my customers rave about this region.”

MAKE IT HAPPEN: Create your dream Canadian adventure, see kuoni.co.uk/canada



“This spellbinding journey on a luxury vintage train skirts around Mount Robson, the highest peak of the Canadian Rockies”



Where can I go for good-value winter sun??

Mel says: "With a warm and balmy climate during the UK's winter months, the Canary Islands of Tenerife, Gran Canaria and Lanzarote are my top choices for an excellent value winter break. You get plenty of warmth, but at a short-haul price and a flight time of less than five hours. Add delicious Spanish food and a huge choice of activities – plus your pick of beautiful resort hotels – and you've got an all-round winner.

On Lanzarote, I'd recommend a hike through Volcanoes Natural Park, exploring its dramatic landscape of startling rock formations. Moments from a private sliver of volcanic sands, I love the stylish **Secrets Lanzarote Resort & Spa** for its grandstand ocean views and grown-up glamorous vibes.

Tenerife's **Bahia Del Duque** is a lavish beachfront village-style resort with fantastic facilities for all ages and stunning gardens stretching down to a golden beach. Get to know one of the least-known corners of southern Tenerife on a guided jeep safari and discover what it means to live on the slopes of the mighty Mount Teide.

If Gran Canaria catches your eye, I've found the island's **Lopesan Baobab Resort**, close to the stunning sand dunes of Maspalomas, is the perfect base for a family holiday filled with activity and adventure. Take a dolphin-watching trip aboard a modern catamaran specially designed with two viewing decks, a glass bottom and sound equipment for listening underwater."

MAKE IT HAPPEN: For more winter sun options, visit [kuoni.co.uk/spain](https://www.kuoni.co.uk/spain)

What's your top recommendation for a winter sun destination?

Michelle says: "For guaranteed winter sun, I would recommend Dubai. With little to no rainfall, the temperatures rarely dip below the mid 20s during the day, and it's extremely pleasant for al-fresco dining in the evening.

Dubai has first-class hotels, amazing restaurants and nightlife, high-end shopping and traditional souks. I've had some of my top meals ever here, from Ling Ling at **Atlantis The Royal** to celebrity haunts Shimmers or Nuska at **Jumeirah Beach Hotel**.

The city also has amazing activities for families – Motiongate Dubai Theme Park, Legoland, Aquaventure water park at Atlantis Dubai, the world's longest urban zipline at Dubai Marina, dune buggy safaris and the Sky Views observatory where you can zoom down a 220m transparent glass tunnel.

Having been to Dubai a few times now, I do have my favourite hotels. JA Resorts have something to suit all pockets. The **JA Ocean View Hotel** is on The Walk boulevard – a great-value option close to the beach. Then there's **JA The Resort** – three all-inclusive and beachfront hotels that offer watersports, golf and 25 restaurants and bars. **JA Palm Tree Court** is perfect for family groups."

MAKE IT HAPPEN: For more Dubai holiday ideas, see kuoni.co.uk/dubai



WIN A LUXURY HOLIDAY TO CYPRUS

Spend a week in the *birthplace of Aphrodite*

Surrounded by olive groves on a peninsula high above Paphos, five-star **Cap St Georges Hotel & Resort** looks across the bright blue sea to fabled Yeronisos island. Located just 20 minutes from Paphos – the mythical birthplace of Aphrodite, Greek goddess of love – the resort is the ideal base to enjoy Cyprus, an island steeped in ancient legends and archaeological wonders.

And the resort – the focal point of which is a breeze-dappled infinity pool – has a magic all of its own. At once luxurious and coolly minimalist, the natural stone and marble pavilions tumble down to a dazzling Blue Flag beach. An enormous, hand-blown glass chandelier depicting a shoal of fish sets the tone of the resort, shimmering above the atrium in the lobby.

The masterstroke is the resort's stylish member-club vibes. Staff welcome guests in a relaxed manner and are willing to meet your needs in any way they can. Staff in all the restaurants – which serve Asian, Italian and Mediterranean flavours under age-old olive trees – are personable and make diners feel instantly at ease.

Local experiences make this place memorable, from yacht trips in the Med to horse riding along the cliff tops and picnicking at White River Beach. The Cleopatra Spa is vast, with a pool, thermal saunas and Rasul mud chambers offering indulgent massages and wellness therapies.

HOW TO ENTER

To enter, visit kuoni.co.uk/kuonimagazine and answer the following question before 31 March 2024:

Who is the Greek goddess of love?

TERMS AND CONDITIONS: The prize is 7 nights at Cap St Georges Hotel & Resort for two people sharing a Cap Thalassa Room on a half board basis including economy flights and transfers, valid from 01 April 2024 until 15 December 2024, subject to availability. Some blackout dates apply; the prize cannot be taken in peak season, i.e. school holidays, Christmas, New Year and Easter. The Prize Promotion closes at 11.59pm GMT on 31 March 2024. Entrants must reside in the UK and be aged 18 or over. The prize is non-exchangeable, non-transferable and non-refundable. There is no entry fee and no purchase necessary to enter this competition. The winner will be drawn at random from valid entries received before the closing date. The winner will be notified by email and/or letter within 14 days of the closing date. You have the option to opt in for email and postal marketing from Kuoni but your entry to the competition does not require this. You can unsubscribe at any time. We will not share your details with any third parties. For full terms and conditions see kuoni.co.uk/kuonimagazine



THE WONDER *years*



His life has seen filmmaker, adventurer and author Simon Reeve hunt with the San bushmen of the Kalahari and survive a bombed-out Mogadishu. But, he tells *Donna Hardie*, seeing the world through the wonder of his son's gaze has been one of his most life-affirming travel experiences.

"I come from a very ordinary background in west London. So being able to see the delight on my son's face as we watched lions in the Maasai Mara in Kenya was an experience and a thrill on multiple levels, which will stay with me until the end of my existence. There were spectacular sights to see in the Mara, but to sense the joy in my own son was so meaningful, it became a priceless experience. It was nothing like a giant safari park. It felt raw and wild and wonderful.

Nurture and nature

Going to these places and seeing these communities, and the wildlife that they coexist with, is critical to teaching my son and guiding him towards an awareness of the natural

world. It's not something you can get just by learning about it. I can see the impact that being there has had on him. These experiences can transform a child's – and an adult's – world understanding. And that's part of the joy of travel – when you're shown something, it can fill your heart and expand your brain.

We are in a race to restore the natural world and it's a race we can and must win. WWF reported that the size of global wildlife populations has plummeted by 69% since 1970. Unless children learn about protecting the planet, they can't really care about it. Unless they care about it, they can't really love it. And unless they love it, there's not much incentive to look after it and protect it.

Screen break

Everywhere I go – even in the more remote places – you see everyone tap-tapping away on their phones. So, lifting our eyes from those little screens and getting into the real world with our eyes, our hearts, our bodies and our stomachs is so important. We've got to keep pushing and inspiring that, otherwise we're going to lose the profound experiences we get from travel, the interactions we get from going on a holiday and the life-changing memories we bring back.

Here's a perfect example. Last year we went by train to Romania and climbed up into the Carpathian Mountains where we stayed in remote wildlife hides. There was no wi-fi,



“Last year we went by train to Romania and climbed up into the Carpathian Mountains where we stayed in remote wildlife hides”

Left to right: Simon hiking with his son; herds of wildebeest on the Maasai Mara, Kenya; Carpathian Mountains, Romania

so my son and his friend had to be glued to the environment instead. We saw bears every single day – an amazing family experience that was just wonder and joy. Less screen time, more green time.

Thrill-seeking

I hope being a father hasn't made me too cautious in my TV adventures because then I'd be short-changing the people watching. At the same time, I hope that I don't take too many risks because my primary responsibility is to be a dad. So, I have to find a balance. I feel we reduce the risks in a sensible way. And it's not like I was ever an adrenaline junkie.

I think we were pretty careful before I had my lad and I'm pretty careful now. We still want to go to interesting, sometimes troubled, places. I mean, the first place I went to after Jake was born was Mogadishu in Somalia. With hindsight, that was probably not an acceptable thing to do when I had a tiny baby. And my poor wife had to look after him while I was gadding around in a war zone. Most countries are still safe enough for us to film in without being terrified – even places people think of as war zones.

Beyond the beach

I don't want to force adventure and experiences onto Jake – there would be no more guaranteed way of turning him off my interests. We as a family, his school and his friends, encourage him to be a little bit adventurous anyway. And my wife Anya is great at selecting the perfect adventures for him.

Even on a family holiday, we try to incorporate something that gets us away from the swimming pool or beach. That doesn't mean just driving up to a taverna in the hills. We like to get up early and do something physical and adventurous. We won't be put off by rain. We'll climb that peak, go and camp on an island, or go on a homestay visit in Kenya.

Where in the world?

Kids need these experiences, and they need to be taken out of the sanitised zone of a holiday, just as adults do. And when they get outside that sanitised zone, they think, 'This is brilliant and memorable and exciting. And I want to do this more.'

We've been chucking around ideas for our next family adventure while walking the dogs.

My son is now 12 years old, so he's rapidly approaching his teens – obviously a time that's known as being completely harmonious in a family! Whether we can find somewhere we all agree on, I'm not sure.

We're definitely going to travel through Spain by train. We'd love to go to beautiful Costa Rica. I'd love us to go and see the astonishing marine life in the Maldives. We'd all like to go to Japan and feel like we've experienced somewhere totally different.” ➤

Look out for Simon's new series *Wilderness* that sees him travel to the Congo, the Coral Triangle (Indonesia), Patagonia and the Kalahari Desert.

“The journeys and treks we did for *Wilderness* are some of the trickiest I've ever undertaken. It was exhausting, but brilliant.”

Simon Reeve's top 4 family travel destinations...

Our resident adventurer reveals his ideas for family holidays that offer adventure, relaxation and togetherness.



Clockwise from top: A green sea turtle on Hikkaduwa coral reef, Sri Lanka; Simon on a beach in Greece with his son; the River Ganges, India; Simon taking his son on safari in Kenya

Sri Lanka

"I'm keen to take my son diving and see the gorgeous underwater world – to me, strapping on scuba tanks and getting into tropical waters is as close to visiting another planet as it's possible to get. Sri Lanka's 1,000-mile coastline is dotted with some amazing dive sites, in particular a number of wrecks that are known for their marine life. If diving is your family's thing, combining Sri Lanka with a visit to the coral reefs of the Maldives will make for an unforgettable experience."

MAKE IT HAPPEN: *Balance downtime on honey-coloured beaches with exploring Sri Lanka's rich cultural heritage and natural bounty on a two-week trip. Sri Lanka Family Suggested Itinerary, from £8099 for a family of three (2 adults and 1 child under 12) including flights.*

For more family holiday inspiration, go to kuoni.co.uk/family-holidays



Kenya

"I've been lucky enough to travel planet Earth extensively, but I do think that Kenya and specifically the Maasai Mara gift the best wildlife experience anywhere in the world.

Kenya is a brilliant example of why tourism still matters, because it enables and allows communities in remote parts of the world to protect and look after wildlife and wild spaces that we all want to see protected now and into the future. Where you have carefully managed travel and tourism, you've got a reason to look after that space and the creatures that exist there. And I think we've got to hold on to that as much as we can."

MAKE IT HAPPEN: *Embark on the ultimate family safari adventure in Kenya's Maasai Mara to encounter animals only previously seen in books. Our 11-day itinerary takes you right to the heart of the action with time at the end for ice cream on the beach at Watamu. Kenya Fly-In Family Safari from £16,850 for a family of four (two adults and two children under 12) including flights.*

India

"In India, you can experience perhaps what's best about our planet – its human beings. There's an almost infinite number of encounters and stories to be had. I've stood at crossroads in Kolkata and Mumbai and just marvelled at how all these humans can pass by each other, with no traffic lights and just one bloke with a whistle controlling them. There's a sense of order and calm among the chaos.

On top of that, there's white-water rafting, beaches, fishing and wonderful temples. I followed the holy Ganges across India and went to some of the holiest Hindu sites in the country. I came away with a sense of what makes India such a spiritual place."

MAKE IT HAPPEN: *Take your teens to the intoxicating Golden Triangle for a taste of Mughal empires, haunted forts and kite flying from Delhi rooftops plus tiger spotting in Rajasthan on our eight-day itinerary Taj Mahal, Tigers and Teens from £10,395 for a family of four (two adults and two children over 12) including flights.*

Greece

"We recently went to a place called Costa Navarino on the Greek mainland, where we enjoyed a spectacular family holiday. The beach was great, the food was fantastic and we took bike rides and explored local villages. My son loved it.

We had a Greek cooking lesson where we all got stuck into kneading dough and olives to make bread. That was a spectacular, memorable family holiday in a place that wasn't too far-flung."

MAKE IT HAPPEN: *Bring ancient history to life in Athens and introduce the kids to myths and legends before retreating to the coast for some quintessential Greek sun, sea and sand. Spend four nights in Athens at the Grecotel Pallas Athena, with its fun graffiti-splashed rooms that have been designed by local street artists, followed by three nights at the Athens Riviera at Grecotel Cape Sounio Boutique Resort. Seven nights from £6799 for a family of four (two adults and two children under 12) including flights.*

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THE WORLD

ON A PLATE

From filling up on pho among the heady scents of a Saigon street-food market to preparing fresh noodles with a farming family, turn up the flavour of your Vietnam odyssey with one of our top-notch foodie experiences.



Do-good gastronomy

Master the art of creating aromatic, flavourful classics at KOTO (Know One, Teach One) restaurant in Hanoi, founded by Jimmy Pham to provide training and job prospects to disadvantaged street kids. Spend a morning learning about how the project changes young lives before picking out fresh ingredients at the local market and preparing your own dish alongside a trainee.

MAKE IT HAPPEN: Take a Vietnamese cooking class in Hanoi supported by the Der Touristik Foundation.

“Work up an appetite on a bike tour out to the allotments of the Tra Que vegetable village”

Savour the flavour

Enjoy world-class dishes such as tempura softshell crab at the historic Caravelle Saigon's Reflections restaurant. People-watch over coffee or afternoon tea in the ground-floor Café de l'Opera – reputedly the best in the city. Or sip a lychee martini on the rooftop Saigon Saigon bar. If you can bear to tear yourself away, spend a night aboard a beautifully converted rice barge and hop on board a sampan to visit a Mekong River floating market and a local family who make traditional noodles.

MAKE IT HAPPEN: Tailor-make your itinerary with a Caravelle Saigon hotel and Mekong Eyes River Cruise.

Moveable feast

Work up an appetite on a bike tour from Hoi An or Da Nang out to the allotments of the Tra Que vegetable village – created by fishermen over 300 years ago when they discovered the benefits of using the lagoon's algae as fertiliser. Learn about their organic methods, get your hands dirty with a spot of raking, sowing, watering and crop tending and learn how to make delicacies like *tam huu* spring rolls with a local family.

MAKE IT HAPPEN: Add a Local Life Cycling Adventure.





Boating and banquets

Soak up the majestic sights of the limestone pillars, floating villages and calm jade waters of Halong Bay from the deck of a traditional junk boat on an overnight cruise. Enjoy a cookery demonstration of local Vietnamese recipes, before showing off your culinary prowess in a fun 'Masterchef' challenge.

MAKE IT HAPPEN: Ask your Personal Travel Expert about *Bhaya Overnight Halong Bay Cruise: Masterchef Edition*.



Pamper your palate

Once you've relished the culinary wonders of Vietnam's cities, factor in an indulgent stay by one of its many unspoilt, palm-fringed beaches. A 20-minute walk from the powder-soft sands of Long Beach on Phú Quốc island, you'll find paradise at the stellar Sailing Club Signature Resort, where dining is an experience in itself. Enjoy a multi-course food and wine celebration at the Chef's Table. Take part in a Vietnamese coffee-making class at Sandals, The Market restaurant, book a cooking class or savour vino from around the world in the Wine Room.

MAKE IT HAPPEN: Add a beach extension at *Sailing Club Signature Resort Phú Quốc*.

Bites by bike

Ride pillion on a vintage Vespa and eat like a local on a delicious tasting tour of Ho Chi Minh City's most vibrant foodie hot spots. Tuck into a divine *banh mi* – a baguette crammed with shredded pork, sour pickled carrot, radish and chilli sauce – at one of Saigon's best food stalls. Absorb the intoxicating perfume and dazzling colours of the Ho Thi Ky night flower market followed by pancakes and seafood at a local restaurant. As a final sweet treat, try a bowl of Vietnamese *che*, a dessert soup.

MAKE IT HAPPEN: Add a *Saigon Street Food by Vespa* tour.



Plan your Vietnam adventure with our travel experts, find out more at kuoni.co.uk/vietnam

SPECTACULAR *stays*

Whether they boast outrageous extravagance, astounding views or achingly beautiful interiors, our top trending hotels for 2024 offer a sojourn beyond your wildest dreams. You won't want to leave...

Wake up to... another time and place

Perched on a high plateau in one of the oldest villages in Turkey's Cappadocia region, the enchanting and eerily beautiful **Argos in Cappadocia** hotel is designed to blend into this unique landscape and has a dream-like magnetism. This ancient monastery turned luxury lodgings is a honeycomb of different styles of room. Cave dwellings, rock houses and underground passages are chiselled from the region's soft, volcanic stone. Surrounded by a surreal, moon-like landscape of valleys, towers and ancient 'fairy chimney' rock formations, it's unlike anywhere else in the world. Cosy up in a unique suite with bare stone walls and rock-hewn bathrooms, adorned with traditional Turkish handicrafts as well as modern furniture, and featuring a chiminea, fireplace or terrace. Indulge in Anatolian fine dining before watching Cappadocia's famous hot-air balloons floating overhead.

MAKE IT HAPPEN: Stay five nights in a Standard Room from £1599pp including flights. Ask us about upgrading to the Splendid Suite (pictured).

Wake up to... palatial penthouses and pool clubs

Dubai is famous for its opulence and the newest icon of its dazzling skyline, **Atlantis The Royal**, takes ultra-luxury to next-level heights. Such is its superstar appeal that Beyoncé performed at the hotel's three-day launch event, attracting celebrities from around the world. There's a young, cool energy about this glittering sibling to Atlantis The Palm and it has the VIP credentials to match. Gaze out onto knockout views of the Arabian Gulf in one of the hotel's Signature Penthouses, where you can swim in the sky in a private infinity pool. Chill to the sounds of famous DJs in Cloud 22 – the hottest rooftop pool club in town, with 360° views. And sample the finest dining at one of eight celebrity chef restaurants, including the Michelin-starred Dinner by Heston Blumenthal.

MAKE IT HAPPEN: *Stay five nights in a Seascape Room from £2049pp including flights. Ask us about upgrading to a Sky Pool Villa (pictured).*



Wake up to... sweet treats in a rainforest retreat

Set in a tropical Saint Lucia rainforest to the symphony of chirruping birds and tree frogs, **Rabot Hotel from Hotel Chocolat** is an elegant, colonial-style haven founded by the eponymous brand on a 140-acre cacao farm with dramatic views of the island's Petit Piton mountain. It's unique in that it caters to a chocolate lover's every whim. Drinking chocolate and homemade chocolate treats are topped up daily in the shuttered lodges, which feature a four-poster bed and open-sky rain shower. A forest trail leads you to a chocolate-inspired restaurant where you can dine on beef fillet in freshly roasted cacao. Book a Bean to Bar experience and taste fresh cacao pulp from a pod, learn the history of cacao cultivation and craft your own chocolate bar. And check into the spa for a wild coffee scrub or a cacao and almond oil massage.

MAKE IT HAPPEN: *Stay seven nights in a Lodge from £2599pp including flights.*



Wake up to... the best of urban architecture

Remodelled by esteemed British designer Thomas Heatherwick from part of a 1920s concrete grain storage complex, **The Silo** hotel rises majestically over Cape Town's Victoria & Alfred Waterfront like a magnificent industrial cathedral. This building's soaring, cylindrical exterior is topped by a lattice of concrete pillars and floor-to-ceiling pillowed ironwork windows that frame views of ocean, skyline and Table Mountain, and glow like a giant lantern at night. Hotel residents enjoy access to the Zeitz MOCAA (Museum of Contemporary Art Africa), whose unrivalled collection fills the floors below the hotel. Swim in the sky-high infinity pool then lounge among the opulent antiques, African art, Chinoiserie and colourful silks in your lofty room. At the end of the day, look out across panoramic views of the city as you relax in your bathtub.

MAKE IT HAPPEN: *Stay six nights in a Silo Room from £4695pp including flights. Combine with a safari in Kruger National Park or a visit to the Winelands.*



Wake up to... futuristic design

The Standard, Bangkok Mahanakhon is a head-turner of a hotel, retrofitted with sci-fi-style interiors in one of this city's most iconic landmarks – the King Power Mahanakhon, otherwise known as the Pixel Tower because of the pixelated ribbon effect swirling around its exterior. The hotel in the Thai capital's commercial district boasts that it's 'anything but standard', and Spanish designer Jaime Hayon's maximalist clash of pattern, colour and world-class art makes sure of that. The funky rooms are filled with graphic patterns, furniture in groovy silhouettes and a riot of colour. But never mind sleeping – this extrovert of the hotel world is all about having a high old time in one of its many restaurants, lounges, bars and nightlife venues. Soak up some rays around the outdoor pool, take tea with a boozy twist in the Tease tearoom, or try a coconut, pineapple and Thai jasmine Tropical Night cocktail in the 78-storey-high Sky Beach.

MAKE IT HAPPEN: *Stay four nights in a Standard Prince Room from £1349pp including flights. Make it a multi-centre with a visit to Chiang Mai, an elephant jungle adventure and the beaches of southern Thailand.*



Wake up to... the ultimate sea view

Delightfully blending castaway vibes with luxury touchpoints, **Gili Lankanfushi** is one of the Maldives' smallest and most exclusive resorts. This is an away-from-it-all hideaway with just 45 overwater villas offering the highest standards of luxury and privacy. Surrender your shoes as you arrive, leave any stresses behind and prepare to indulge your senses in an environment where attention to detail is everything, and you can enjoy carefree comfort in tune with the rhythms of island life. Each Villa Suite features an open-air living room and rooftop sundeck. Dine under a star-filled sky while contemplating snorkelling, diving or surfing in the bluest of seas. This is one of the most sustainably minded resorts in the Maldives with an impressive roster of eco-credentials, including an organic garden where chefs pick home-grown produce for you to enjoy alongside the freshest locally sourced seafood.

MAKE IT HAPPEN: *Stay seven nights in a Villa Suite from £5299pp including flights.*

Wake up to... pared-back luxury

Imagine the first dawn rays of sunlight glowing orange over Santorini's mist-kissed, crescent-shaped caldera. That's the daily promise of the **Ambassador Aegean Luxury Hotel & Suites Santorini**. Not only does it possess one of the most privileged spots on the island for an incredible view of the volcano, each of this cliffside show-stopper's sugar-white rooms features a private pool where you can look out across unobstructed ocean vistas. Minimalist, monochromatic interiors are showcased against cool, vaulted ceilings in keeping with the typical traditional cave dwelling style of the region. The luxury is ramped up in its range of Infinity Cave Suites, with private pool and spa tub, accessed by a steep tunnel through the rock. A private and peaceful Greek idyll – book the honeymoon suite and watch the island's famous sunset in all its glory from the bliss of your bed.

MAKE IT HAPPEN: *Stay seven nights in a Superior Deluxe Room Sea View from £2479pp including flights.*





ATLANTIS
THE PALM, DUBAI

A World Away From Your Everyday

This Dubai icon is the ultimate holiday destination for both couples and families to make lifetime memories. From thrill-seekers to foodies, sun lovers to explorers, there is an unforgettable experience for everyone.



FOR COUPLES

Dine surrounded by stingrays, sharks and fish at Michelin-star restaurant Ossiano.

Awaken your senses at the spa with a traditional therapy or bathing experience.

Adults-only WHITE Beach Club with oceanfront cabanas and an infinity pool.

Spend a night in the Underwater Suite and be mesmerised as sharks, rays and fish glide right past your bed.

Indulge in world renowned Japanese cuisine at Nobu Dubai with stunning views of the Palm and Dubai Marina skyline. Indulge in celebrity chef Nobu Matsuhisa's iconic black cod miso, premium wagyu beef tacos with a Japanese twist, and Dubai's best sushi.

FOR FAMILIES

With 36 restaurants, bars and lounges, families have lots of options to enjoy each meal including Wavehouse, home for fun food and family entertainment.

Atlantis Explorers Club for kids and The Zone for teens, from Playstation 3s to the Underwater Theatre, climbing wall, arts and crafts and an exclusive hangout with mocktails!

Aquaventure Waterpark: Conquer the World's Largest Waterpark! Get your pulse racing with over 105 record-breaking slides and relax on 1km of private beach.

Upgrade to an Imperial Club Room and you'll get access to the Imperial Club Lounge with a huge range of additional inclusions, including express check-ins, a private beach, continental breakfast, afternoon tea, evening drinks and more.

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INFINITE POSSIBILITIES in the MALDIVES

Two islands, infinite possibilities. The only limit is your imagination.

Enjoy castaway luxury where you can unwind in our spacious villas and pavilions. Indulge in world-class dining in the treetops, underwater dining, in the sand or hovering over the water. Incredible flavours, spa rejuvenation, surf safari, largest Kids Club in the Maldives, and a host of oceanic experiences – they all lie in wait for you at Niyama Private Islands.

To book your escape, call a Kuoni Personal Travel Expert on 01306 230 469 or visit your local Kuoni store.




NIYAMA
PRIVATE ISLANDS
MALDIVES

A picture tells a thousand words...

*... but on their honeymoon to Kuramathi in the Maldives,
Emma and Connor discovered that even professionally taken
pictures don't do this remarkable destination justice.*



“With so many different restaurants to choose from, serving everything from Indian to Thai, we never felt there were limited options. The island barbecue was our favourite restaurant and we’ve already made a reservation there for our first-year anniversary!”

“The Maldives has always been a bucket list destination for us,” says Emma Rayner, who travelled to our most popular resort, **Kuramathi Maldives** with new husband Connor this summer. “And we couldn’t think of a better time to go than for our honeymoon. After two years of wedding planning, we really needed time to relax.”

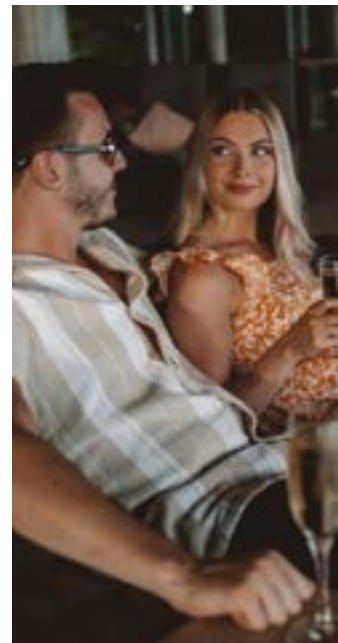
The couple chose Kuramathi after hearing Emma’s parents’ travel tales. “They’ve been twice and always say how special it is and make us jealous with pictures. But after going there I realised that the pictures just don’t do it justice! It exceeded my expectations – there’s nothing the staff wouldn’t do for you, the food was incredible and the island was like something out of a dream.”

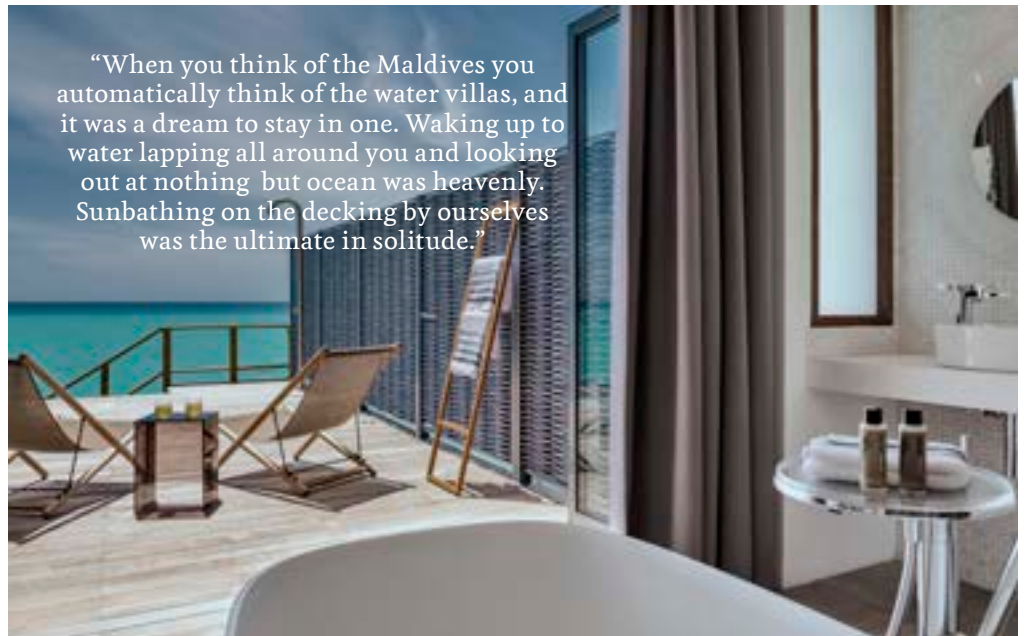
Kuramathi holds Travelife Gold status for its commitment to sustainability. “We visited the eco centre several times,” says Emma. The centre was founded in 1999, following El Niño and the subsequent coral bleach, so the resort could better understand the island’s fragile ecosystem and learn how to protect it. “We learned lots about how they take care of wildlife and even saw a hawksbill turtle on a snorkelling trip.”

The honeymoon coincided with Kuoni’s competition to find a photographer in residence, who just so happened to be in Kuramathi at the same time as Emma and Connor. “Having someone there to capture our extra-special holiday was just fantastic,” says Emma. “She made us feel very comfortable, we had so much fun and we will treasure the photos forever.”



Photography by Danielle Veitch Photography





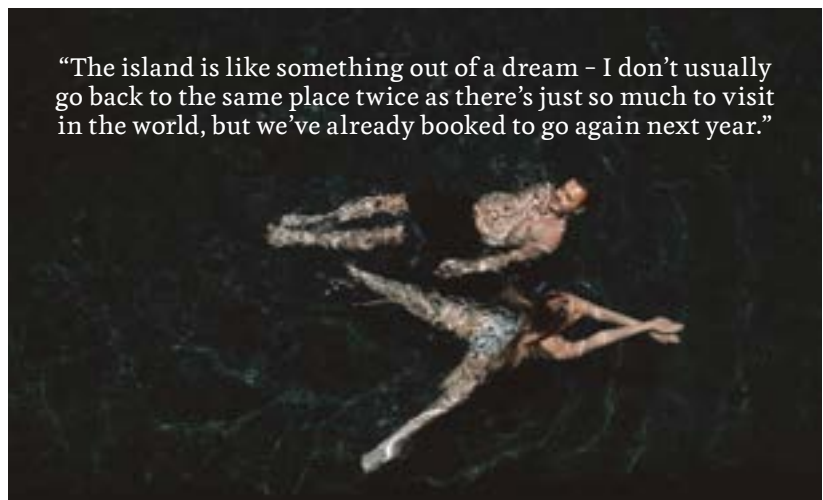
“When you think of the Maldives you automatically think of the water villas, and it was a dream to stay in one. Waking up to water lapping all around you and looking out at nothing but ocean was heavenly. Sunbathing on the decking by ourselves was the ultimate in solitude.”



“The staff were so friendly and attentive, there was nothing they wouldn't do for you. We felt like VIPs despite there being plenty of guests on the island.”



“The island is a haven for wildlife - from teeny-tiny hermit crabs to brightly coloured birds and the dolphins we saw on our sunset cruise. We hired snorkelling equipment and saw dolphins, sharks, turtles and many wonderful multicoloured fish just swimming around our villa.”



“The island is like something out of a dream - I don't usually go back to the same place twice as there's just so much to visit in the world, but we've already booked to go again next year.”

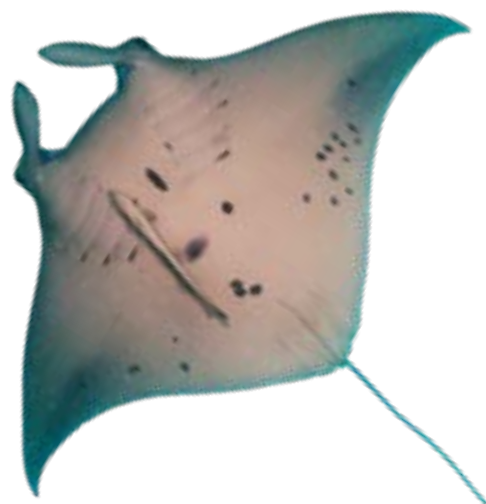
MAKE IT HAPPEN: Stay seven nights at Kuoni exclusive* Kuramathi Maldives in a Garden Villa, full board from £1749pp including flights. Find our latest offers at kuoni.co.uk/maldives (*in the UK).

The Maldives



Meet your
Personal Travel Expert

Georgina Doherty has worked at Kuoni for six years, and the Maldives still stands out as an incredible holiday destination.



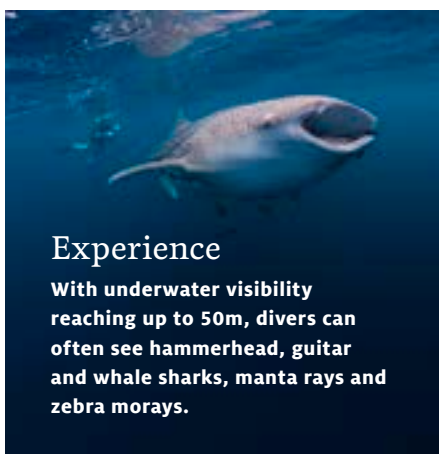
“On arrival, you feel instantly soothed by the warmth of the place, the people, the balmy evening sunsets and quiet tranquil days. When you step onto the jetty of your chosen Maldives island, time stands still. The Maldives is a place to totally relax, to recharge and to reconnect and let all your worries melt away.”

When to go

The Maldives is a year-round destination – it’s always 30°C – although the ideal season to visit is from November to April. This is when rainfall is at its lowest and the water visibility is crystal clear so perfect for snorkelling and diving. If you visit from May to October, you will still have amazing weather but will have the odd shower or overcast day. Rainfall here doesn’t last long.

Getting around

We arrange your flights and there are several different airlines to choose from, including British Airways, Qatar, Emirates, Etihad, Virgin, Singapore Airlines, Sri Lankan Airlines and others, which connect into Malé, the capital of the Maldives. To ensure your smooth transfer to your chosen island, Kuoni representatives will greet you on arrival and take you to your transfer, which could be by boat, seaplane or another domestic flight. Whatever you need, we look after the fine details of your trip, so that when you arrive in the Maldives, everything is taken care of.



Experience

With underwater visibility reaching up to 50m, divers can often see hammerhead, guitar and whale sharks, manta rays and zebra morays.

beauty. Or **Kandolhu** with just 30 villas is a gem of an island in the most pristine of coral reefs, even by Maldives standards. Memories made in the Maldives leave a lasting imprint on your heart and it’s a place that if you are lucky enough to tick off your bucket list once, you will want to move heaven and earth to get back there again.

Insider knowledge

At **Kuramathi**, I set my alarm early and walked to the very tip of the sandbank to watch the sunrise. A rainbow danced across the horizon and there wasn’t another person around, it was so peaceful.

We are the original Maldives experts and have been creating luxury Maldives holidays for over 50 years. We can tell you where you will find the best house reefs and the swankiest water villas, or the best-value all-inclusive offers, and what the kids’ club offers. From rustic escapes to ultra-luxurious pool villa retreats, we’ve been there and can help you choose the right Maldives island for you.

Where to stay

The Maldives is home to some of the most luxurious hotels in the world, the famous **Conrad Maldives Rangali Island** with its underwater residence is a ‘once in a lifetime’ experience. The stunning island of **Baros** has been welcoming our guests for over 50 years and is the original island of undiminished

The Maldives at a glance



Best value for money

Adaaran Club Rannalhi is a fantastic all-inclusive Maldives escape. It’s well equipped with a diving centre and boat trips out to some amazing dive sites.



Best for wellness holidays

Kagi Maldives Spa Island has the most incredible holistic spa, and dinner at Ke-Un was the most memorable meal I’ve had in the Maldives.



Best for romance

Idyllic **Kandolhu** is a tiny, picture-perfect island. With just 30 villas, its boutique size gives it an exclusive feel perfect for couples seeking a memorable romantic getaway.

What to eat

Try the local fish in the Maldives – my favourite was the yellowfin tuna that was caught daily, grilled to juicy perfection and served simply with lemon or my choice of sauce, a tapenade of kaffir lime leaves with wild garlic oil. Incredible.

Try something new

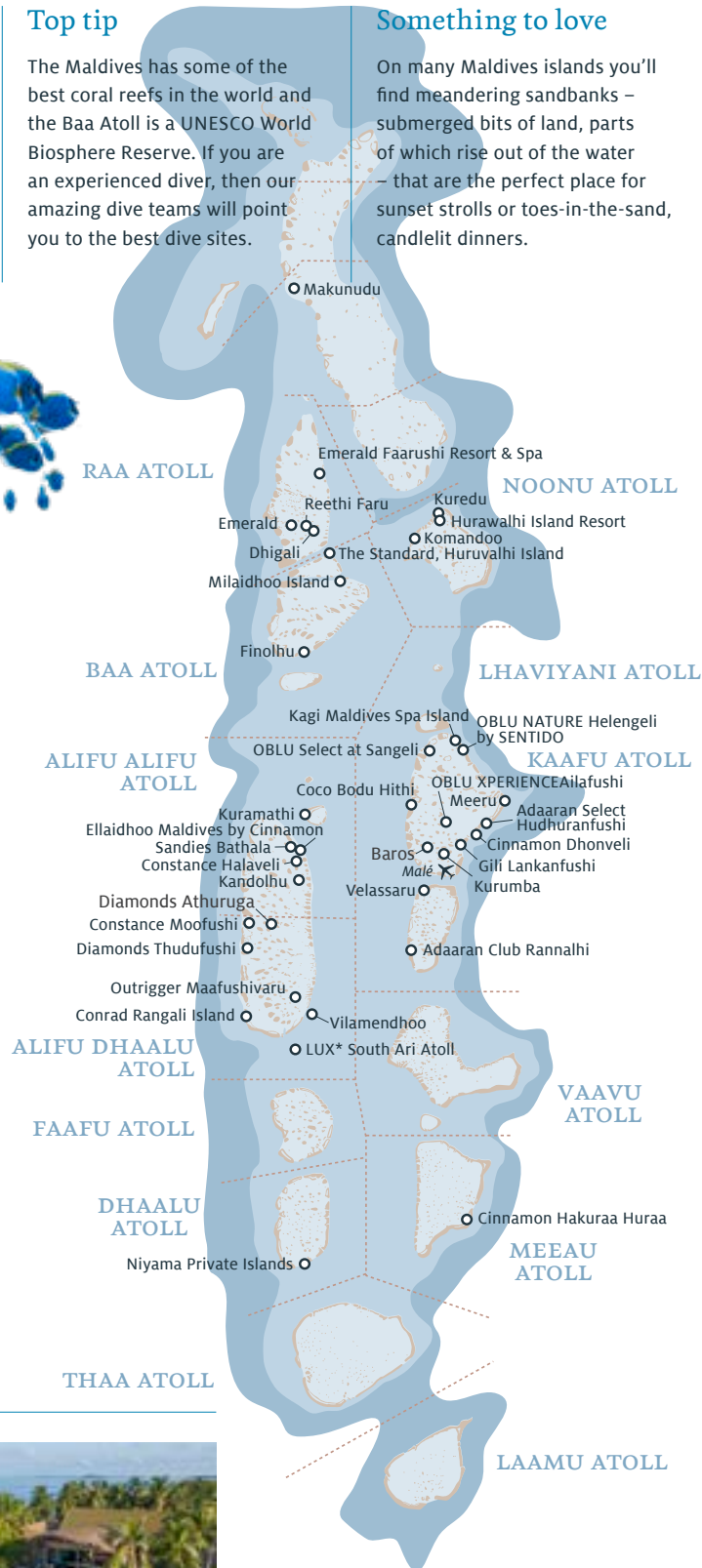
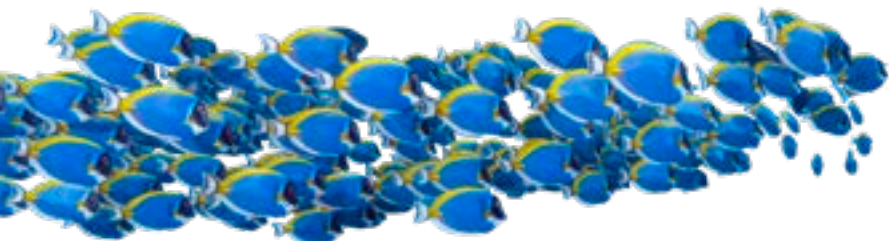
Lots of the magic here is beyond the shoreline so make time to experience the richness of the marine life – try stand-up paddle boarding or a sunset dolphin cruise. If you've never tried snorkelling before then this is the place to take the plunge.

Top tip

The Maldives has some of the best coral reefs in the world and the Baa Atoll is a UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve. If you are an experienced diver, then our amazing dive teams will point you to the best dive sites.

Something to love

On many Maldives islands you'll find meandering sandbanks – submerged bits of land, parts of which rise out of the water – that are the perfect place for sunset strolls or toes-in-the-sand, candlelit dinners.



Make mine a multi-stop

Sri Lanka

Add Sri Lanka to your trip – it's a short flight away and offers a rich cultural and culinary experience that will enrich your life in ways you didn't know were possible. It's a captivating teardrop-shaped island, with a diverse range of treasure to unearth, from the sacred Sigiriya rock to the tea terraces of Ella, and beyond to Yala National Park.

Dubai

A metropolis of glittering skyscrapers and palatial hotels, Dubai is a city of extremes where you can ski in the morning and sunbathe in the afternoon or combine luxury shopping with shark-spotting. With a four-hour flight time from Malé, it makes for an attractive addition.

South Africa

Eight hours from the Maldives, you'll find a continent's worth of diversity packed into one country, from the gorgeous vine-clad Winelands to exhilarating safaris on the savannahs of Kruger National Park. Add Cape Town to discover a busy cosmopolitan hive under the beautiful plateau of Table Mountain.



Best for families

All-Inclusive Premium here means that everything at **Dhigali Maldives** is included. Families can choose from a huge range of included activities, kids' clubs and excursions.



Best for design

Outrigger Maafushivaru Resort is a fabulous choice for those who love a clean and crisp, chic style, with tones of blues and whites reflecting the shimmering turquoise lagoon here.

MAKE IT HAPPEN:

Maldives holidays from £1749pp based on seven nights at Kuramathi Maldives, full board in a Garden Villa.

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Gorgeous GRENADA

From enjoying the comforts of a luxury beachside hotel to touring a cocoa factory and cooking with local chefs, this Caribbean island is distinguished by the breadth of the experiences it offers, writes *Katie Silcox*.



Katie Silcox, freelance travel writer
"Grenada's range of landscapes, wildlife, food and culture belies belief."

'Now you have the motion, you need to add the love,' our guide said, laughing. "You have to move your hips. Hips!" he repeated"

I didn't expect to find myself dancing, barefoot, through dried cocoa beans on my trip to Grenada – I'd focused more on the dreamy beaches that are so synonymous with the Caribbean. But Grenada is an island of surprises.

I'm at Belmont Estate, a 17th-century working cocoa factory. I've watched how the cocoa pod and its beans are grown, harvested and fermented. Now my guide – via my barefoot performance – is demonstrating the traditional way beans were turned by foot to dry. I notice the slightly sweet, slightly musty smell of fermenting beans wafting through the air as I dance.

It's not a dissimilar smell to that at the River Antoine Estate, a nearby 18th-century rum distillery that uses the same production process it did in 1785 – including the same

sugarcane crushing mill. I'm visiting both as part of a Kuoni-led island tour. Grenada is small and possible to circumnavigate in a day, but the range of landscapes, wildlife, food and culture you'll see in such a time belies belief.

Adventure time

The day began in the island's south, at **Silversands Grenada hotel**. Following a dip in the waters of Grande Anse – the hotel's beach and the prettiest on the island – I'd attempted a few laps of its 100m infinity pool, the Caribbean's longest. Nearby, boat, snorkelling and scuba trips are popular ways to see the vibrant array of reef and marine life, alongside the sunken secrets of at least 14 shipwrecks and an underwater sculpture park.

Though the cocoa and rum factories are in the island's northeast, they're only an hour's drive away and set among tree-dotted rolling hills.

Leaving them with a spring in my step – cocoa and rum will do that – we continued our drive, crossing steep valleys and lush rainforests while admiring meandering rivers and dramatic waterfalls. Tubing, rafting and hiking are popular pastimes here, too.

Hungry, we arrived at a local chef's home. Wandering his expansive gardens we collected fresh cinnamon, basil, pawpaw, ylang-ylang and "callaloo, one of the main ingredients in oil down [a salted meat and vegetable stew], Grenada's national dish", chef explains, before taking us to his kitchen to help him make it. Sitting to eat, the ambience – friendly and relaxed – and the mood – genuine and heart-felt – seemed to sum up that of the wider island. A place permeated with authenticity and tradition, and a nation of people keen to share their island's beauty – as well as its secrets.

MAKE IT HAPPEN: *Stay seven nights at Silversands, Grenada in a Garden View King Room from £2999pp including flights. Turn the page to discover more to love about this remarkable island with our expert guide >*



Clockwise from left: Silversands Grenada; Annandale Waterfall; a mona monkey; cocoa beans drying at a plantation; infinity pool and Grande Anse beach at Silversands Grenada

Grenada



Meet your Personal Travel Expert

Caribbean Expert Hannah Wright has worked for Kuoni for three years and fell in love with Grenada because the local people are so passionate about their island.

“The Caribbean has more to offer than just beaches. Each island has its own personality and scenery – with perfect locations for activities like birdwatching, hiking and spa breaks.”

When to go

The driest season is typically our winter months, between January and April, so this tends to be the most popular time to go. Consider travelling in November or May to avoid the height of the season, but be prepared for a few tropical showers.

Getting around

We usually recommend short internal flights between Caribbean islands to maximise time in each destination. In Grenada, you can arrange a private driver to explore or join day experiences. One of the best ways to see Grenada is a twin centre combining the north and south. Start your adventure in the north of the island, taking in the surroundings and natural beauty the island has to offer. Spend time exploring the rainforests and swimming in waterfalls before heading down to the south for a relaxing beach stay.

Where to stay

I could give great recommendations on all the hotels we feature, however for something special I would recommend **Spice Island Beach Resort** or **Silversands Grenada**. Spice Island is an all-suite, all-inclusive resort on one of Grenada’s best beaches with fantastic dining and genuine local hospitality. Silversands is a newcomer on the island’s beach scene with cool and contemporary design and located at the quieter and more private northern end of Grand Anse beach. If you’re seeking authentic Grenada vibes and a focus on wellness, then

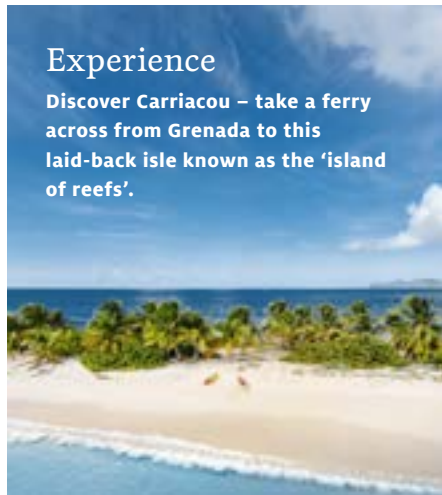
look no further than **Mount Edgecombe Boutique Hotel**, a back-to-nature bolthole.

Insider knowledge

Don’t miss the hiking trails, walkways and waterfalls of the Grand Etang Rainforest.

Make it a multi-centre

The Caribbean is the perfect destination to twin with US cities such as New York, Miami or Las Vegas. Within the Caribbean you could twin Grenada with Barbados, where you can visit the island’s famous rum distilleries, such as St Nicholas Abbey or Mount Gay. Or head to the legendary Oistins Fish Fry on a Friday night to dine al fresco on fresh fish cooked to order against a lively Barbadian backdrop of market stalls and sound systems.



Experience

Discover Carriacou – take a ferry across from Grenada to this laid-back isle known as the ‘island of reefs’.



Caribbean island-hopping

Aruba and Antigua

The tiny island of Aruba might be a mere 20 miles long and six miles wide, but what this tiny tropical treasure lacks in size, it makes up for with its dazzling coral reefs, clear waters and miles of stunning beach. It can be easily paired with the larger island of Antigua, where you can see the spectacular Shirley Heights, a restored military lookout spot – go at sunset to experience the most amazing views across the bay.

Dominica and Saint Lucia

The fertile volcanic soils of Dominica make for a dramatic undulating landscape bursting with greenery and rainforest and criss-crossed by almost 300 rivers. It’s an adventurer’s paradise – perfect for canyoning, rafting and hiking. A one-hour flight from here will take you to Saint Lucia, where you could plan a longer luxury-resort stay.

MAKE IT HAPPEN:

Caribbean escapes from £1449pp including flights*.

For our latest offers, call our experts on 01306 230 506 or visit kuoni.co.uk/caribbean

Local vibe

The locals are proud of how safe the islands are and they are incredibly friendly. Caribbean islanders are passionate about their rum production and Grenadians are no exception with several distilleries open for tours.

Try

Armadillo Guesthouse & Restaurant in the lush north offers a fine-dining experience and is the only restaurant in Grenada to be featured in *National Geographic*. Pre-booking is a must.

Top tip

Explore! Head to the Craft and Spice Market for sunset cocktails on Grenada’s Grand Anse beach and join locals for karaoke or a pop-up concert.

Something to love

As a relatively undeveloped island, Grenada offers some unforgettable nature experiences, including watching or swimming with sea turtles, and snorkelling over coral reefs.



*Based on seven nights at Mount Edgecombe Boutique Resorts in a Nutmeg Standard Room.

A woman with dark hair tied back, wearing a red one-piece swimsuit, is floating in clear blue water. She has her eyes closed and a serene expression, with her head tilted back. The water is calm, reflecting her and the sky. In the background, two large, jagged, green mountains (the Pitons) rise against a bright blue sky with scattered white clouds. The overall scene is peaceful and idyllic.

IMMERSE YOURSELF IN SHEER LUXURY

If you're looking for the ultimate in high-end style and sheer natural beauty, Saint Lucia is the Caribbean destination that soars above all others. Just imagine sailing through mesmerising ocean waters surrounded by the majesty of the Pitons. Picture breathing in the earthy smell of the lush rainforest and soaking in a healing natural hot spring. Envisage retreating to luxurious accommodation with views like no other and calling it home.

Make all this a reality by visiting kuoni.co.uk, or your local Kuoni store. Alternatively, call a Personal Travel Expert on 01306 230 506.


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BANYAN TREE

Renowned for world-class service, romantic dining experiences and signature spas, a stay at a Banyan Tree retreat in Thailand is guaranteed to rejuvenate your mind, body and soul. Come alive in a world of palm-lined beaches, delicious cuisine and warm hospitality.



BANYAN TREE BANGKOK

The elegant award-winning hotel in central Bangkok has one of the best rooftop bars in the city, exceptional dining options and a luxurious spa that feels a world away from the teeming streets below.



BANYAN TREE SAMUI

Nestled amid the jungle of a private bay overlooking the azure waters of the Gulf of Thailand. This 5-star all-pool villa resort is the ultimate haven for peace and relaxation.



BANYAN TREE PHUKET

Surrounded by a saltwater lagoon, this luxury resort in Phuket is the perfect destination for your tropical holiday in Thailand. With all-pool villas, the resort truly is a paradise within paradise.



BANYAN TREE KRABI

Step into a sanctuary for the senses, where the sapphire blue sea meets tropical white sands against a backdrop of lush jungle-green mountains, this serene resort is a luxurious haven.

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BRITAIN MAGAZINE (2023)



The Kuoni Difference

Your holiday, your way

Each Kuoni holiday is tailor made, so when you tell us what you want out of your next holiday – it might be the discovery and adventure of exploring somewhere new, the luxury of space and silence, quality time together or time to prioritise self-care – we'll find it at the very best value.

Real insight

A Kuoni holiday is full of stories you'll share for years to come and it all begins with our destination experts exploring the world and seeking out the most amazing experiences, hotels and itineraries to share with you. Visit kuoni.co.uk to discover our destinations around the world, find our latest offers and travel features to inspire your next holiday.

Total peace of mind

We take care of all the little details and arrange those added extras you wouldn't get with anyone else; that's how we make sure you get the most out of your time away. And on a Kuoni holiday, you're in safe hands. Our holidays are ATOL protected, we're members of ABTA and you'll also have our full support throughout your travels, from our teams in resort and back in the UK.

Award-winning

We are a Which? Recommended Provider for Beach & Resort Holidays and Family Holidays and we've scored 4.9* out of 5 for our customer service based on verified reviews from Feefo, so you can trust us to make your next holiday unforgettable. 2023 also saw us voted the UK's Best Luxury Tour Operator by readers of The Times and Sunday Times and named one of the world's best tour operators in the Condé Nast Traveller readers' awards.



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