

Live Happy

WINTER 2025 MAGAZINE

Lapland's
hidden
lodge

The Island of
Love: find your
Cyprus
soulmate.

Best budget
destinations

Your guide to the most
affordable trips for your
next beach getaway.

Think holidays,
think TUI.



Helping you to holiday happy makes us smile. Here are seven reasons to choose us for your next trip...

① **Flying from your local airport feels goood!**

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② **Trusted by families, loved by kids.**

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Like what you've read? There's more at tui.co.uk/value

Welcome!

There's nothing like that holiday feeling – the countdown, the 'where should we eat first?' chat. And just because it's winter, doesn't mean the excitement has to cool down. This edition is packed with ways to keep the feeling alive, whether you're sun chasing or leaning into the season's chill.

Before we get into it, if you're flying on select TUI Airways 737 planes, look out for the QR code stickers on seatbacks. Just connect to our TUI Wi-Fi network with your phone, scan the QR code, and you'll be straight into our brand-new wireless inflight entertainment system. Check out our onboard *Shop* magazine for more info.

And speaking of entertainment... we're proud sponsors of this year's season of *Married at First Sight UK*. Catch episodes on Channel 4 and browse our honeymoon spots inspired by the show at tui.co.uk/mafsuk

Keeping the love alive, turn to **page 30** for a spotlight on Cyprus, the Island of Love. Swipe through Paphos' and Larnaca's 'profiles' to find out which resort could be your holiday soulmate. Turkey fans are in for a treat, too. On **page 34**, take your own Eras Tour of the Turkish Riviera.

But if you're more about wrapping up, we've got you covered. Check out our

packing tips for cold-weather trips on **page 8**, and don't miss the lowdown on Lapland's hidden lodge on **page 46**.

On **page 13**, discover the secrets of the save-cation – because holidays are great, but holidays with savings? Even better. And for a bit of fun, take the quizzes on **pages 10 and 16**.

Wherever you're heading – sunshine, snow, or somewhere in between – I hope these pages spark ideas and keep that unbeatable holiday feeling going. PS. That's me, enjoying a TUI River Cruise.

Happy travels!



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On the cover

Aphrodite's Rock
in Paphos, Cyprus.



Staying safe and healthy abroad

The Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) and National Travel Health Network and Centre have up-to-date advice on staying safe and healthy abroad.

For the latest general FCDO travel advice, including security and local laws, plus passport and visa information, check gov.uk/travelaware and follow x.com/FCDOtravelGovUK and facebook.com/FCDOtravel

See FCDO travel advice about individual destinations and sign up for FCDO travel advice email alerts, so you automatically receive the latest travel advice updates and travel requirements for the destinations you want to know about, at gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice

For travel advice from TUI, see tui.co.uk/destinations/info/travel-aware

For current travel health news, see travelhealthpro.org.uk

Advice can change, so check regularly for updates.





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Pages with personality

Are you a researcher or a risk-taker?
Find out what your holiday book
genre says about you...



34

Turkish Rivi-Eras Tour

Taylor Swift had her Eras Tour - now
you've got yours on the Turkish Riviera.



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Some of the flights and flight-inclusive holidays in this magazine and on our website are financially protected by the ATOL scheme. But ATOL protection does not apply to all holiday and travel services listed in this magazine. If you do not receive an ATOL Certificate then the booking will not be ATOL protected.

If you do receive an ATOL Certificate but all the parts of your trip are not listed on it, those parts will not be ATOL protected. Please see our booking conditions for information or for more information about financial protection and the ATOL Certificate go to: www.caa.co.uk. TUI, First Choice and Crystal Ski Holidays are trading names of TUI UK Limited (registered in England No.: 2830117) members of TUI Group. Registered Office: Wigmore House, Wigmore Lane, Luton, LU2 9TN, UK. Excludes TUI Holidays Ireland Limited.



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Where's

Here's a handy list of holiday hotspots,



22°C

January
Dubai

Dubai's mild winter is perfect for a post-festive fix. Think sunny strolls around the souks, sandy toes on the beach, and warm nights watching the Burj Khalifa fountain show.



24°C

March
Egypt

March hits the sweet spot in Egypt. The weather's just right for cruising the Nile, temple-hopping the Valley of the Kings, and snorkelling in the Red Sea. You'll steer clear of the summer crowds, too.



26°C

May
Morocco

Sun, spice, and everything nice - that's Morocco in May. Agadir's six-mile-long stretch has you covered for catching rays, while slightly smaller crowds make it easier to wander Marrakech's medinas.



25°C

February
Mexico

February kicks off Mexico's dry season. Cancun - on the Caribbean Coast - boasts white sands, balmy nights and beachfront bars. Mayan ruins and cenote swims are just a daytrip away, too.



22°C

April
Turkey

Spring in Turkey means beating the heat with ancient ruins in Istanbul, balloon rides over Cappadocia's fairy chimneys, plus chill time on the Turquoise Coast and Bodrum's beaches.



25°C

June
Italy

June in Italy is pure la dolce vita. Toast the start of summer with an Aperol spritz on the Amalfi Coast, or cool down with a traditional granita and brioche in Sicily.



hot when?

so you can chase the sun all year round...



33°C

July
Greece

The Greek islands go full spotlight in July. Hit headline acts like **Santorini** and **Crete**, or slip into slow-mo mode on **Skiathos** and **Naxos**, where there are more Blue Flag beaches than you can count.



25°C

September
Portugal

Portugal's shoulder season brings sunshine without the sizzle. It's prime time to paddle the **Benagil Caves**, stroll **Albufeira's** long stretches, or head to **Lisbon's** rainbow streets.



22°C

November
Florida

The Sunshine State still lives up to its name in November. It's a great month to hit the rides at **Walt Disney World Resort** and **Universal Orlando Resort** while dodging the summer heat.



31°C

August
Spain

August is like **Spain's** golden hour. Fill your days with sunshine on the **Costas**, and your evenings with flamenco beats, sangria jugs, and late-night plates of tapas.



24°C

October
Canary Islands

Autumn in the **Canaries** means temps in the mid-twenties and fewer crowds. You could be on **Tenerife's** black sands, **Gran Canaria's** palm-lined coast, or **Lanzarote's** lava trails.



26°C

December
Dominican Republic

Swap your sweater for a swimsuit in the **Dom Rep. Punta Cana** serves up a coastline straight from a travel mag - all white sands and swaying palms. And what better way to round off the year than by sipping from a fresh coconut?



All temperatures listed are averages.

LIVE HAPPY

TRENDING

WINTER SUITCASE HACKS



Packing tips for cold trips

Rachel Tysoe-Bailey shares some **smart packing tips** to keep you warm and stylish on your next trip to a cold destination.

Smart packing

It's out with your shorts and t-shirts, and in with your coats, thermals, warm boots and hats. But nothing says bulky like a fleece-lined puffer jacket. Travel packing cubes are a great way to compress your clothes and keep your items organised at the same time. Also, they make for a fun and satisfying

game of suitcase Tetris. Vacuum storage bags are another easy way to fit in all those much-needed extra layers.

Stay snug

There are all sorts of clever items to keep you extra toasty in the cold. Some heated socks, shoe insoles, scarves and gloves can even be charged via USB (just remember to pack anything rechargeable in your hand luggage, not your checked-in luggage). Handwarmers are a winner when you're out and about - try the classic snap warmers that you bend to heat up. When it comes to clothing, thermal layers are a must-have, whether you're out on a husky-pulled sleigh ride or simply taking a scenic stroll through the snow.

Handy items

Stay warm, and stay savvy, too. Smart phone gloves make life so much easier when you want to take 100 photos of a fairytale-like winter scene. The touch-screen tech means you won't

have to keep taking your gloves on and off to get the perfect snap. An insulated flask for your tea or coffee is also a great shout - your beverage stays hot, and so do you. And don't forget your winter sunglasses. Snow plus sun equals endless squinting, and a pair of sunnies will keep your eyes comfortable. Suncream's also something easily forgotten for a chilly getaway, but an SPF 30 or higher will keep your skin safe in the sun, so add this to your bag before you go.

Good to know

On a **TUI holiday to Lapland**, your all-in-one snowsuit and snow boots hire are included - ideal for saving on packing space.

Crystal Ski Holidays include 20kg of luggage for adults, and 10kg for children.*

*See crystalski.co.uk for the full terms and conditions.



Seeing double

The perfect evening on holiday? According to our recent survey, it's watching a **tribute act**. Karl Taylor pulls back the curtain...

So, you've had the best day soaking up the sunshine on the beach. The 20-minute nap hit just right, and you've sampled loads of different plates at the buffet. Next on the agenda - the evening's entertainment.

We've been busy uncovering the secrets to a great night out on holiday, and it turns out 75% of us prefer watching a tribute act over going to the pub. And, nearly three quarters of the people in our survey spotlighted tribute acts as their fave form of entertainment on holiday, beating nightclubs and karaoke. Nobody needs to hear another terrible version of *Tom Jones' Delilah* when you can have the almost-real deal. Fact.

Freddie Mercury tributes came out on top when it comes to who we want to see, closely followed by *ABBA* and *Whitney Houston*. More recent acts also made an appearance in the top 10, including *Ed Sheeran*, *Coldplay* and *Take That*.

And, talking of *Take That*, Jon Fisher, the UK's number one *Gary Barlow* tribute act, has spent 12 years honing his craft. When we asked him about the secrets to his success, he said, "I watched a lot of footage, especially live footage, to get a feel for Gary's personality and the way he moves." Jon's career has allowed him to see the world, both onboard our Marella Cruises ships and at our Sensatori by TUI BLUE resorts.

Shelley O'Prey, our Senior Entertainment and Customer Experience Manager, said, "We handpick the UK's best tribute artists for our five-star Sensatori by TUI BLUE resorts. Interestingly, the most popular acts can vary depending on the location and time of year. In Turkey, for example, you can expect to see packed audiences over the summer with contemporary acts like *Pink* and *Dua Lipa*. Come winter, in destinations like Egypt and the Spanish islands, favourites include *Tina Turner*, *Dolly Parton*, and of course *Gary Barlow*."



Ready to sing along to a top tribute act? Head to tui.co.uk/sensatori

Pages with personality

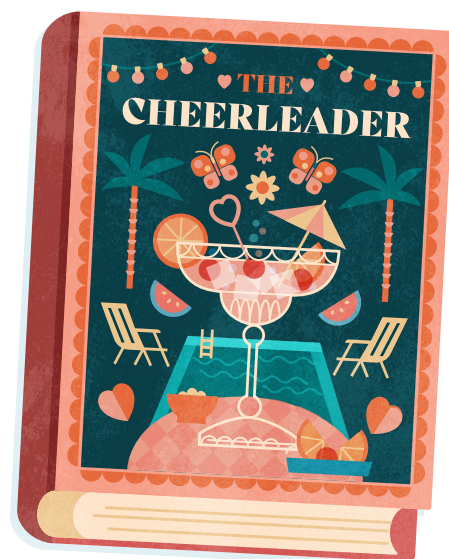
Are you a researcher or a risk-taker? Here's what your fave holiday book genre says about you...

Reading a good book on holiday is like the *Inception* of breaking away from real life - it's literally an escape within an escape. And given that 54% of Brits are most likely to pick up a book on holiday compared to any other time in their day-to-day lives, it's no surprise that the most popular genres of holiday reading include fantasy, romance and sci-fi. So, which books have you got in your suitcase this year... and what do they say about you when you start to peel back the pages?



Thriller: You're the risk-taker. Holidays are all about adrenaline for you, and that rush starts with a last-minute booking. Forget planning ahead - you've got your bag packed at a moment's notice. You crave the thrill of the journey, from bagging a next-day flight to catching a taxi at 2am to the airport. You don't care about tired - you just want the spontaneous adventure. You're the person watching *Twisters* on the plane when everyone else is watching *Wicked*. And, you're a fan of making a rash decision. Karaoke in front of 200 strangers in the hotel bar? Early morning mountain trek to see the sun rise over the ocean? "No" just isn't in your vocabulary.

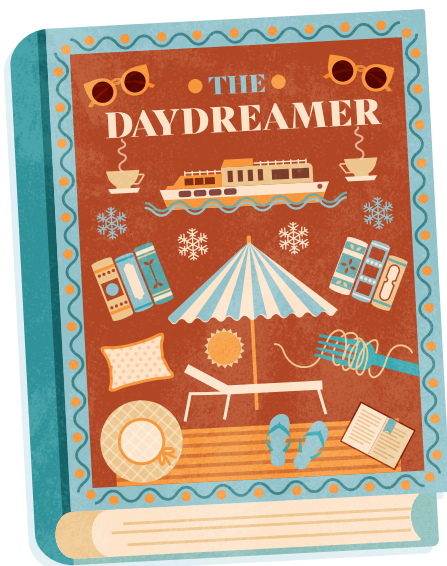
Thrill seekers, assemble - with Stephen King, Gillian Flynn and James Patterson.



Romance: You're the cheerleader. You're super passionate about all aspects of your getaway - and you want everyone else in your party to feel the same levels of enthusiasm. You've got bags of positivity, even when you're waiting for your suitcase to come around the carousel, or stood behind someone deliberating at the dessert section of the buffet. Your zeal for life means you holiday in HD. You want the big flavours in the restaurant. The multi-coloured evening shows. A swim-up room, preferably with a cocktail to hand. And above all, you're a people person. You befriend every member of staff during your holiday - and you'll be on best-friend basis by the time you head home.

Pack your bag with **romance** writers like Nicholas Sparks, Jojo Moyes and Jilly Cooper.





Fantasy: You're the daydreamer. Forget sunnies - you've got rose-tinted glasses on, and you've got big visions for what your holiday's going to look like. You're dreaming of the whitest beaches, the longest spaghetti, the perfectly frothed morning coffee. Plus, you seek out the magic in your holiday destination. A husky ride through gently falling snow in Lapland. Sunlight glinting like gold as you sail down the waters of the Danube on a river cruise. Hidden bookshops packed with rare editions, tucked along cobbled streets in Portugal. Oooh, we just did a little shiver of anticipation...

Add a touch of **magic** with Brandon Sanderson, Sarah J. Maas and John Gwynne.

Sci-fi: You're the adventurer. Getting away means expanding your horizons, diving headfirst into new cultures, and fully embracing the traditions of other countries. Your holidays come with no limits, and you'll give anything a try - whether that's tucking in to a spicy phaal curry in India or embracing a fire and water ritual in Mexico. Activity-wise, we'll find you having a nosey down neon-lit city streets and trekking up a hill to star-gaze at midnight. Albania, Thailand, Serbia, the Caribbean, Mars... it doesn't matter where you go - you just love hitting up new destinations, and you don't need the safety net of the familiar.

Ian M. Banks, Arthur C. Clarke and Frank Herbert have got **science fiction** in the bag.



Historical fiction: You're the researcher. In fact, the planning's as much fun as the holiday in your eyes. You'll lovingly dedicate loads of your time to finding the best holiday deal. And then some more time to researching must-see landmarks - and how best to secure tickets. You'll spend hours checking out where to find hidden foodie hotspots, rainbow-splashed city murals, and modest vineyards where wine tastings are guaranteed. Soaring cathedral spires, guided tours of age-old buildings, and the hushed rooms of a museum are always on your radar.

Turn the pages of **history** with Rosanna Pike, Philippa Gregory and Bernard Cornwell.

Words: Rachel Tysoe-Bailey

Amphitheatre of El Jem



Set your sights on Tunisia

...where ancient relics, forgotten
villages and maze-like medinas
await.

INSPIRING
Tunisia

Secrets of the save-cation

There's nothing like that just-booked feeling. But it's even better when you've scored a saving. Here are our top tips on where to go to **save on your next beach getaway...**

🕒 [Read more](#)





Santa Maria, Cape Verde

Cape Verde Tropical beaches on a budget

Picture the scene: you're on a long sandy beach, staring out at the blue sea while sipping on a cocktail from a coconut. Sounds like long haul, right? Well, this is Cape Verde. The coastline surrounding this group of islands - off the west coast of Africa - could easily be mistaken for somewhere super far away. The difference is, Cape Verde's only around a six-hour flight from the UK - and generally much cheaper - so you can shave off a longer flight time, save some pennies, and still touch down to beaches worthy of the front cover of an exotic travel mag. Oh, and unlike some places close to the equator, Cape Verde tends to avoid major storms during hurricane season, so you can expect toasty temps and dry weather whenever you choose to go. It's a win-win.

Menorca Pay £0 for your little one*

Sheltered coves with soft sand and shallow waters make Menorca a top pick for family getaways, but that's not all this Balearic Island offers. It only takes two-and-a-bit hours to fly there, which means less stress about your little one having the world's biggest mid-flight meltdown. But beyond its beaches and quick flight, our holidays to Menorca come with thousands of free kids' places, even in the school summer holidays. So, you can take your little one away without paying a penny for them. Yep, that's their flights, transfers and hotel all for absolutely nothing. Want even better value? Go All Inclusive and you'll also get their food, drinks and snacks included, too.



Rhodes Get away either side of summer

If the first thing you do when you arrive at your room is switch on the air-con - even before you've checked out the view - then this one's for you. Head to Rhodes in April, October or November and you'll not only land to cooler temps, but also save some serious £££s. Flights to Rhodes start earlier and finish later in the year than most Greek islands, and prices at these times are often much lower than in the peak of summer. So, take off during these months and get a taste of the good life. Think gyros from traditional tavernas and wandering whitewashed towns that feel like you've stepped onto the set of *Mamma Mia!* The best bit? It's one of Greece's southernmost islands, which means the temp still sits in the twenties in the months before and after summer. Sunshine and savings, sorted.





Blue Lagoon, Olu Deniz

Turkey

Don't stick to the status quo

Remember when holidays were always either seven or 14 nights – nothing less, nothing more? Now, it's so much easier to get away for however long – or short – you like. A trip to Turkey is a great choice for either a short break or an extended stay. Thanks to our flexible flight times and trip durations – from as few as two to as much as 28 nights – finding your perfect pick is easy, wherever you choose to fly from. Plus, you might find that going away for odd durations, like nine or 15 nights, actually costs less than the usual week or two. Imagine how smug you'll feel sitting poolside on those extra two days with your second cocktail of the day.

Bulgaria

Save on holiday spends

'How much money do I need to take?' is probably one of the biggest questions (second only to 'how many outfits do I need?') when planning a getaway. If you're heading to Bulgaria, the answer's less than you'd need for pretty much any other EU country. The cost of living is a lot lower here, which means you can save on everything from daytrips to dinners. For example, £40 can easily cover an evening meal out for a family of four, with spare change to secure your balcony snacks. Fanta Lemon and a bag of Lays, anyone?



Ibiza

Go All Inclusive

Ibiza's famous for nights out that can cost almost the same price as your holiday, but – news flash – a trip to the White Isle doesn't have to break the bank. The secret to a great-value getaway here is going All Inclusive. That way, you can get away knowing all your food and drinks are taken care of, without the worry of having to budget while you're there. At most family-friendly hotels, kids' clubs, activities and evening shows are usually part of the All Inclusive deal, too, so you can easily spend a couple of days – or more – without ever having to open your safe. What. A. Dream.



Visit tui.co.uk/ value for more tips, discounts and deals.

Words: Karl Taylor

So, you think skiing's not for you...

It's time to think again - because ski hols are about more than just skiing.

Holidays are all about relaxing, right?

Start here

Obviously

Not necessarily

What's your chillout vibe?

Sitting back with a view

Great views are made better by...

Food and drink

A spa sesh

A pool

Exploring the local area

Ultimate unwinder

After pools and pamper time? Luckily, skiing and spas go hand-in-hand. Sit back in a sauna with snowy views, or soak in a steamy pool with mountains all around... Aaaaah.

Head to: **Zell am See**, Austria or **Soldeu**, Andorra

Full-on foodie

Love to try local food? Mix Italian classics with Austrian faves for a taste of Ladin culture, or tuck in to tapas - and sangria - after a day on Spain's sunny slopes.

Head to: **Selva Val Gardena**, Italy or **Baqueira-Beret**, Spain





CRYSTAL

SKI HOLIDAYS

What kind of energy
are we talking?

Go hard or go home

Getting
stuck into activities

Prefer your fun by day
or by night?

What are you hungry
for on hols?

I'm a night owl

Bring on
action-packed
days

Trying local
dishes

Tipples
and tunes

Party animal

Like to let your hair down?
Not much beats alpine après-
ski. Hit up a slopeside party
as the sun sets for a night
you'll never forget. Table
dancing optional.

Head to: **Val Thorens**, France
or **Saalbach**, Austria

See ski deals
and more
destinations at
crystalski.co.uk

Action seeker

Always on the go or after
family fun? Pick a spot with
way more than just skiing.
Think snowmobiling and sleigh
rides, plus climbing walls
and swimming pools.

Head to: **Ruka**, Finland
or **Alpe d'Huez**, France


H₂O highs

Pushing the reset button on mind, body and soul just got a whole lot cooler - or warmer - as Laura Wilkinson finds out...

From sleep retreats to silent holidays, wellness-led travel is driving our desire to get away. The industry's booming, with reports it'll hit over £1.8 trillion by 2028. Two trends making waves - cold plunging and geothermal bathing - aren't going anywhere. And we're hooked...

If the thrill of the chill appeals to you, **Finland**'s the place to try sub-zero dips. Avanto - AKA ice-hole swimming - has been going strong here since the 17th century. Dippers tout it as an exhilarating way to build resilience and boost health, digging the holes themselves and donning swimwear - not wetsuits - for that dopamine rush. Where to try it? **Lapland**'s Lake Joutolampi. Here, it's so hardcore that swimmers wear waterproof floatsuits to brave the Arctic Circle's icy waters. But what a location to take the plunge, beneath the candy-coloured Northern Lights and surrounded by towering pine trees. A back-garden ice bath could never compare.





Turn the dial from blue to red, and you've got the healing power of heat. First settled by the Ancient Greeks almost 3,000 years ago, the Italian island of **Ischia** - a short ferry ride from Naples - boasts a thriving geothermal spa culture, thanks to its warm climate and mineral-rich waters, said to help with everything from rheumatism to skin conditions. Tucked away in the hillside village of Buonopane is Nitrodi Natural Springs - the oldest spa in the world and the perfect place to live out your dolce vita dreams. Its crown jewel is an open-air mountain waterfall. Stand or sit under the flow, and let the mineral-rich, wild rosemary-infused water wash over you. Surely, there's nothing more zen than that...

noctourism

(noun)

1. A fusion of the words 'nocturnal' and 'tourism', this emerging travel trend is all about exploring destinations around the world after dark.



The ancient city of **Ephesus**, in Turkey, illuminated at night.



More night owl than early riser?

Well, there's a new buzzword on the holiday scene, tailored just for those who like to burn the midnight oil. 'Noctourism' is getting its moment in the spotlight - literally - in 2025, as more holidaymakers swap sunrays for the moon's glow. And before you jump straight to stargazing, there's more to this trend than just a telescope and a clear, twinkling sky.

The real hype is about seeing famous spots in a totally different light - one that simply can't be replicated during the day. We're talking landmarks bathed in dramatic bat signal-like beams, natural wonders that dazzle in the darkness, and festivals that favour noir over blanc.

In fact, noctourism is often a little misunderstood - some people assume that light pollution must be the enemy, but that isn't always the case. The sun can't pick and choose what gets illuminated, but when night falls, some special spots maintain their glow. The shadowy spires of Palma Cathedral stand out under shafts of LED light in **Majorca**, and when you assume it's too late in the day for sightseeing in **Turkey**, the Roman ruins of Ephesus also get the spotlight treatment.

But, history isn't everyone's cup of tea - we get it. Luckily, noctourism isn't all about ancient sites - there's beauty in how broad the definition can be. Some places add a little individuality, rather than doing their best impression of a travel mag cover. In **Croatia**, the seaside town of Pula hosts the Visualia Festival of Light every September. As

well as the city's iconic Roman arena earning a Guinness World Record for the largest sign made from people holding lights, there are huge neon recreations of everything from floating lily pads to exotic animals. And buildings on the surrounding streets that might seem unremarkable by day become flowing light murals once the sun goes down.

Over in **Malta's** capital, Valletta, things are a bit less disco. Every October, a part of the city called Birgu switches off all its electric lights, and the entire district is illuminated with thousands of candles. Think traditional church chapel, but spilling out across street after street. It goes on for a little while, too, so you're unlikely to have many crowds spoiling the ambience.

Now, I know I said earlier this wasn't all about stargazing, but this final nighttime activity treads the line, and it's too good not to mention. Step forward the humble boat trip, in Calabria. At the toe of **Italy's** boot, sightseeing vessels wait until dusk to raise anchor. After a short sail, they loiter around the shores of Stromboli volcano, waiting for firework-like splutters of lava to paint the night sky.

So, when you're scouring the web, doing the usual holiday research - top temps, nearest beaches and sunny daytrips - it's worth checking out what's in store after dark. Who knows, if you wade into noctourism's waters, you might even earn yourself a lie-in the morning after.

📖 Words: Shaun Ringwood



Lava erupts from **Stromboli volcano**, just off the coast of Sicily.



DESTINATIONS

CANARY ISLANDS

Colours of the Canaries

Copper-tinted landscapes, mountain villages nuzzled in greenery and rolling sand dunes with an amber glow – the **Canary Islands** boast a kaleidoscope of colours. Let's open the paint box...

 Words: Sophie Heward

The Maspalomas Dunes sit on **Gran Canaria's** south coast, and at these ever-changing sandbanks, it's golden hour all day long. They cover over 1,000 acres – that's about the size of 625 football pitches. Swing by early in the morning and you'll catch the sunlight in its prime and the sand a blank canvas – the only pattern you'll see is ripples etched by Mother Nature. The scenery gets really dramatic when the sun starts to dip, too. The peaks of the dunes cast inky shadows across the sand like brushstrokes across a sketchbook, and that tangerine tint of a Canarian sunset is the final flourish. Be sure to bring your camera – views this good deserve to be framed.



Maspalomas Dunes, Gran Canaria





Over in **Tenerife**, things are greener. The Teno Mountains stand to attention on the western side of the island, and they're blooming with apple-hued flora. If you're up for exploring, you can drive along twisty roads into the hills, passing clusters of spiky cacti and valleys filled with laurel forests. You may even stumble upon the tiny village of Masca, where pencil-straight palm trees perch by cobblestone pathways and local cafés serve coffee and cake. Keep your eyes peeled on the menu for barraquitos - these signature Canarian cocktails are layered with condensed milk, coffee liqueur and espresso, and they taste all the better in a leafy mountain setting. If you look carefully, you can see the sea beyond the highlands from here, too.

📖 Read more

DESTINATIONS

CANARY ISLANDS



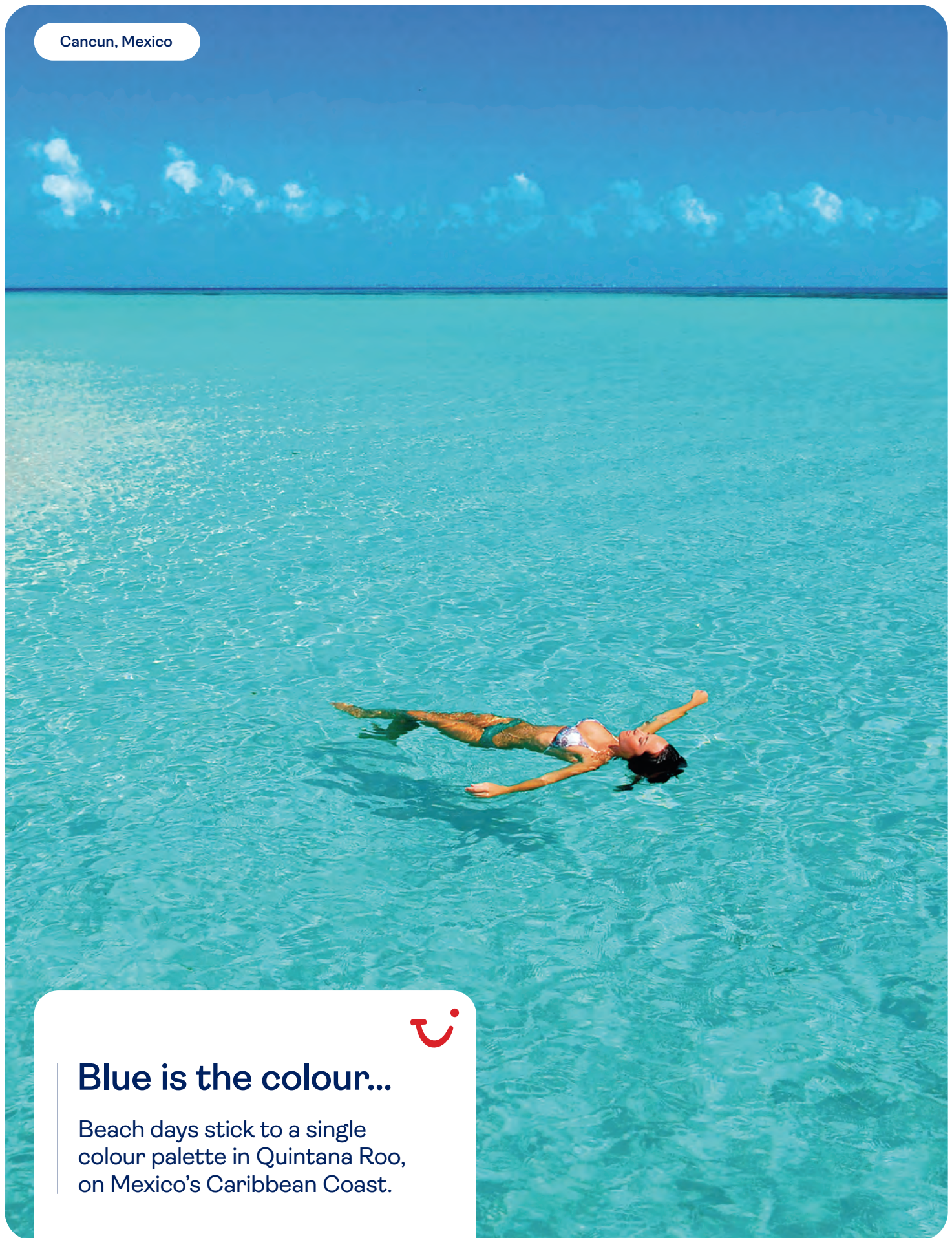
Timanfaya National
Park, Lanzarote

Some parts of **Lanzarote** feel like they could have been lifted from another planet. Mars springs to mind, especially in Timanfaya National Park. This place is made up of crumbly ash fields and hardened lava flows that look like a charcoal drawing, and the colours are exactly what you'd expect of a place famous for volcanic activity – think earthy browns, jet blacks and rusty shades of orange. You'll feel big *Star Wars* energy as you wander past rocky peaks and dusty craters, and it's a real eye-opener if you're into geology. The Montañas del Fuego – AKA the Fire Mountains – are home to a restaurant where your food's cooked using the natural geothermal heat from a volcano.

Each island in the Canaries is its own masterpiece, with different tones and textures bringing the picture to life. Which one are you setting your sights on?



Cancun, Mexico



Blue is the colour...

Beach days stick to a single colour palette in Quintana Roo, on Mexico's Caribbean Coast.

DESTINATIONS

EGYPT

Licence to dive

Come on in, the water's warm. Literally - it's typically a balmy 26°C, as Amabel Buck discovers on a diving trip to **Sharm El Sheikh**. But there's much more below the surface...



Dive at your depth

Scuba newbies

Clear, calm water and shallow reefs, like at El Fanar Beach, offer perfect conditions for dipping your toe into diving.



Reef rangers

Ras Um el-Sid reef was given hero status by French oceanographer, Jacques Cousteau, with a rainbow of coral and sea creatures to spot - from clownfish to sea turtles.



Wreck heads

If you can't resist the lure of a sunken ship, Sharm's got them in spades. The WWII SS Thistlegorm is a famous one to tick off your list.



Drop-off daredevils

For the more experienced, strong-current canyons at Thomas Reef and Dahab's drop-offs lead to thrilling plunges into the deep blue abyss.



➔ Read more

LIVE HAPPY



Scuba newbies

I learnt my PADI scuba diving qualifications in Sharm, and it's still one of my favourite places to dive. The sea is like a heated swimming pool - it's warm, clear and calm, which helps you take to diving like a fish to water. You'd probably laugh if I told you I used to be afraid of the ocean, but in Sharm, many hotels have in-house dive centres, so you can start by practicing in the pool. When you're ready to progress, you can check out beginner reefs like Turtle Cove and Ras Katy while learning essential skills like decompression stops. There's something very comforting about seeing what's beneath the surface at these clear-water spots. Spoiler alert: it's a kaleidoscopic world of fish and coral. The most popular entry-level PADI course is the Open Water qualification, which takes about three days and allows you to dive to 18 metres, anywhere in the world. Or, you can dip your toe in with a taster day or a PADI Discover Scuba Diving session.



Reef rangers

The Red Sea raises the bar for reef diving. I've never seen coral quite as vivid anywhere else - not even on Australia's Great Barrier Reef or in the Caribbean. It's like a live-action *Finding Nemo*, so be sure to look out for the resident clownfish in their anemones, parrotfish with their rainbow scales and distinctive beaks, and shoals of yellow butterflyfish. Some of my favourite reefs include Far Garden and Temple, which you can get to right off the beaches of Sharm El Sheikh, plus the bigger coral gardens of Ras Mohammed National Park, a short boat ride away. Both options offer perfect training grounds for practicing the buddy system. If you already hold a PADI qualification, most centres offer guided dives or boat trips with equipment hire, and multi-dive package options.



Wreck heads

When you've had your fill of fruit-salad-coloured coral, Sharm El Sheikh offers something a little deeper - both figuratively and literally. Shipwrecks are a good place to start, and the SS Thistlegorm was the prize I had my eye on this time around. This WWII British warship was sunk in 1941, and rediscovered by French oceanographer, Jacques Cousteau, in a 1956 edition of *National Geographic*. It's longer than a football pitch, and swimming over the armoured cargo onboard sent a little shiver down my spine. Once I'd ticked off the Thistlegorm, I directed my fins towards the SS Dunraven Wreck, a popular follow-up. This ship was sunk in 1876 and has slowly been reclaimed by coral ever since. If you're qualified to dive down to 30 metres, swimming through its hull is pretty special, surrounded by schools of glassfish as light pours in through the portholes.



Drop-off daredevils

Full disclosure: I'm a bit of a fair-water diver, but there are a few more challenging sites I've got my goggles set on. Shark Reef and Yolanda Reef are the stuff of diving legend - two underwater islands with coral-draped walls that drop to an ear-popping 700 metres. North of Sharm, the Straits of Tiran feature four reefs that form two deep canals with strong currents - a popular hangout for local reef sharks. Another one for the pro-divers' to-do list is a daytrip to Dahab, about an hour's boat ride away. Here, you'll find a canyon with a coral dome known as the Fishbowl, and a cavity in the reef called the Blue Hole. From the chimney-like entry point known as The Bells, you can descend to 52 metres, where a vast archway leads you out into the open blue.



Where to try it?

The dive centre at **TUI BLUE Sensatori Coral Sea**.

When to go?

April to October for the warmest water and best visibility.



A person with long brown hair is seen from behind, sitting in a silver kayak on a clear, turquoise river. The water is so clear that the sandy bottom and small fish are visible. The river is surrounded by dense green trees and bushes. The person is holding a black paddle. In the top left corner, there is a white rounded rectangle containing the text 'Rock Springs, Orlando'.

Rock Springs, Orlando



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DESTINATIONS

CYPRUS



Island of Love

Cyprus has entered the dating game. Swipe through Paphos' and Larnaca's 'profiles' to see which resort could be your holiday soulmate.





Paphos

Age:
3,000 years old

Location:
West Cyprus

*Looking for
someone to worship
the goddess in me.*

About me:

"I'm a sucker for a sunset,
and I love a legendary date. I
know all the best spots, from
romantic ruins to wine with a
view. If you believe in fate,
I'm the one for you - I was
literally made for love."

If sea-view serenades and mythological meet-cutes are your thing, then the Paphos region is ready to steal your heart. It's the kind of place that knows exactly how to make a first impression, thanks to resorts like **Limassol** - the biggest on the island - and **Aphrodite Hills**, an away-from-it-all retreat studded with pine trees and a PGA-approved golf course.

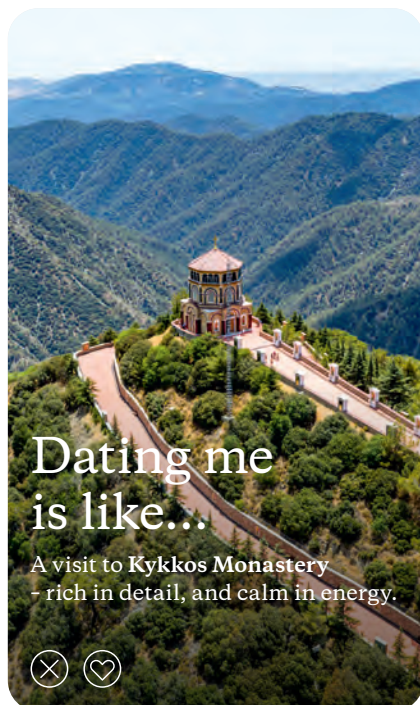
First dates in the Paphos area come with a side of mythology. Head down to the shore (at sunset for major aura points), follow the signs for **Petra tou Romiou**, and snuggle up in front of the legendary spot where the OG goddess of love, Aphrodite, is said to have risen - giving Cyprus its nickname, the Island of Love. Further inland, there's **Ancient Kourion**, where you can wander, hand-in-hand, beside intricate Roman mosaics and through a crumbly amphitheatre that'll have seen more drama unfold than *Casa Amor*.

Looking for something with a bit more sparkle? The **Blue Lagoon** might just be your type on paper. From the peaceful resort of **Latchi**, you'll cruise across

the water, with plenty of time for a dip in the diamond-clear lagoon. As the sun begins to set, you'll make your way to the harbour (golden-hour selfies hit different). By the time you get back, all the restaurants along the seafont will be twinkling under festoon lights - that's date night sorted!

Speaking of date nights, Cyprus knows a thing or two about wining and dining. In the Paphos region, that means mezze feasts that last for hours. In the summer months, villages, like **Kouklia**, even close off access to vehicles, so that tavernas can spill out onto the roads. It's the stuff of rom-coms - think candlelit tables, traditional music and spontaneous dancing. Expect to see Cyprus' most famous export, halloumi cheese, on menus all over the island, alongside a beef stew called stifado, as well as spanakopita - a flaky spinach-and-feta pie. And for a sweet ending, loukoumades - the local take on doughnuts that you can read more about on page 54 - will have you head over heels.

👉 Swipe left for more



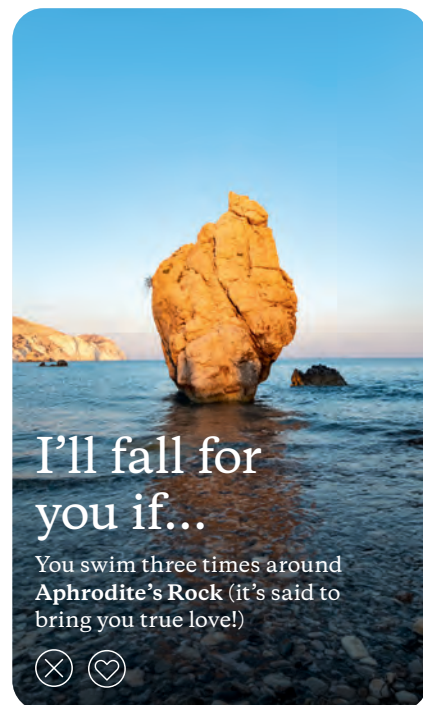
Dating me
is like...

A visit to Kykkos Monastery
- rich in detail, and calm in energy.



My love
language is...

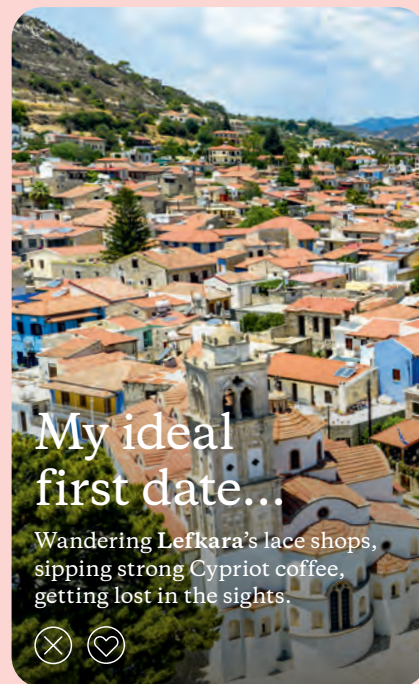
Long boat rides and turquoise
water - meet me at the Blue
Lagoon for heart-eye views.



I'll fall for
you if...

You swim three times around
Aphrodite's Rock (it's said to
bring you true love!)





Larnaca

Age:
6,000 years old

Location:
East Cyprus

Fun, flirty and big on family.

About me:

"Searching for someone who loves long walks on the beach... and dancing on tables after dark! Throw in the occasional cutesy village escape, and we've got a match."

The Larnaca region's the type to turn up with sand in their shoes and salt in their hair - laidback but never boring, and always ready to show you a good time. **Nissi Beach, Ayia Napa and Protaras** are the big resorts on this side of Cyprus. The capital city, Nicosia, is nearby, too, so if culture's the way to your heart, you can explore its honey-hued alleyways and ancient Venetian walls.

When it comes to first impressions, you'll be crushing hard over Nissi Beach. This stretch of shoreline's often billed as one of the world's best, thanks to its sugary sands and see-through shallows. In fact, Nissi's calm, clear water is just one of the reasons why the Larnaca area's a perfect pick for families - you'll find a bunch of TUI BLUE hotels with the Family Fun highlight dotted along here, plus nearby Protaras and Ayia Napa. Speaking of, you can't talk about Napa without mentioning its famous party scene. Here, boujie beach clubs spill out onto the sands, and once the lights go low, the vibes remain high.

If your ideal date day's more seaside swoons than dancefloor tunes, head to

Cape Greco, where you'll find Larnaca's own blue lagoon. The horseshoe-shaped bay's known for its rugged caves, bluer-than-blue waves, and a clifftop you can jump off if you're brave enough... or just trying to impress the future love-of-your-life. And if you want to slow the first dance down even more, Larnaca's full of traditional villages, like **Lefkara**. Basically a living love letter, Lefkara's a maze of cobbled streets lined with cafés and filigree shops, where yia-yias (AKA grandmas) sit outside weaving their traditional lace.

Long-distance relationship? Not necessary. From the UK, you can fly to either side of the island in just four-and-a-half hours. But perhaps Cyprus' biggest green flag is that, whether you swipe right on Paphos' natural charm or Larnaca's lively personality, you're in for much more than just a holiday fling.

📖 Words: Lee Dasilva



Falling for Cyprus?
Watch our travel guide at [youtube.com/tuiukholidays](https://www.youtube.com/tuiukholidays)





WONKY HOLS

ALWAYS ON THE HUNT FOR THE BEST DEALS? MEET OUR PERFECTLY IMPERFECT WONKY HOLIDAYS...

1 SHOULDER-SEASON STAYS

Snap up one of our spring or autumn trips to swerve the summer and winter-sun crowds. By April, Europe's warming up but holidays here aren't at their peak prices yet. Think southern spots like Greece or make the most of fewer tourists on a city break.

For a late summer, Turkey and Cyprus retain the heat in October. Either way, less demand = less spenny, and you'll find our best shoulder season hols on our wonky holidays page.

2 ALTERNATIVE AIRPORTS

PSA: You might get a major deal by switching up where you start from and travelling from a different airport to usual. It could mean a slightly longer taxi or transfer, but it'll be totally worth it if you save more money on your flights than the cost of your travel to the airport.

For example, try swapping London Stansted for Southend, Manchester for Teesside or Birmingham for Leeds Bradford when you search on our site.

3 ODD DURATIONS

Travelling Saturday to Sunday FEELS like the best value because you're making the most of two weekends away, but everyone knows that, including airlines. They're usually the most expensive days of the week to fly on and travelling midweek can be much cheaper.

So, look out for our trips with a Tuesday flight and a Thursday return or an 8-night trip rather than your classic 7 on our wonky holidays page.

4 LONGER TRANSFERS

You'll learn to love coach journeys when you find out longer transfer times could save you money. Everyone wants to get to their stay ASAP, which means the ones a bit further away tend to put people off – but not you. Instead of looking for the hotels with the shortest transfers, seek out the ones that are a good 2+ hours from the airport and you might just find a better deal.

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DESTINATIONS

TURKEY

Turkish Rivi-Eras Tour



Taylor Swift had her Eras Tour – now you’ve got yours. Only your stage is the **Turkish Riviera**, where every scene change – from cobbled alleys to canyon waters – brings a different version of you into the spotlight.

“It wasn’t until the late 20th century that the Turkish Riviera nickname took off,” says Mikkel, a proud TUI Expert and tour guide. To you, Turkish Riviera (or as you might hear it, Rivi-Era) sounds like the stadium stop you’d never skip on your world tour. “It’s famous for its beaches and clear turquoise waters,” he adds. But as you’re about to find out, this coastline has more than the classics waiting in the wings.

Your trip unfolds like a setlist – ancient ruins as the opening act, a canyon cruise for the acoustic track. And for the finale? A sunset sail worthy of a standing ovation. And with every scene change, you’re not just swapping outfits – you’re switching roles. From ruin romantic to main character on the Med, here’s how your Rivi-Eras Tour could play out...

 Words: Conor Braniff

Ancient chic era

Era one opens with marble columns, a casual linen look and your trusty handheld fan making its debut as the ultimate tour prop. As you step off the little train that shuttles visitors toward **Side**’s ancient heart, you’re told cars aren’t allowed entry, and honestly, it feels like the right kind of exclusivity for an opening act. You walk through cobbled streets dressed in purple magnolias, where even the pavement plays its part, doubling as a glass-floored gallery revealing remnants of ancient buildings beneath your feet. Here, you’re becoming the ruin romantic, wondering who else has walked this stage before you. You turn the corner and there it is – the **Temple of Apollo**, standing tall and stark against its blue-sky backdrop. Forget just beaches, Turkey’s been serving history from as far back as the 7th century BC. What a plot twist.

“Did you know the name Side means pomegranate?” Mikkel shares. “You’ll find it sneaking into plenty of dishes around here.” Pomegranate beer’s the first thing you spot. Not what you had in mind, but when in Side...

[➤ Read more](#)



Temple of Apollo,
Side



Back-to-nature era

The set flips to pine forests in the **Taurus Mountains**, and now you're sailing down the **Green Canyon**. You're sporting chunky double-buckle sandals - this trip's unofficial uniform. Cicadas (nature's backing vocalists) fill the air with their chirps as you glide through the narrow channel, cliffs towering on either side as if admiring their perfect reflection on the water's surface. You set your phone down - this is the acoustic moment when nature takes the lead, and it deserves your full attention. Here, you're rolling out the stripped-back version of yourself - pretending you've always been this outdoorsy.

Later, at the **Düden Falls** by **Lara Beach**, you're greeted with the view of white water crashing off a cliff into the sea - it's dramatic, loud and impossible to look away. Now, you're the waterfall explorer, wishing you'd packed hiking boots instead of these sandals.

Main character era

Another day and the stage resets. **Manavgat's** market bursts into view - spice towers in reds and golds, fruit stalls stacked high and locals calling out like they're working the crowd. This is where you switch roles again - tourist mode off, market boss on. You zero in on a lamp, and after haggling like a pro, walk away with newfound confidence and a trophy, wondering how it's going to fit in your suitcase.

It's time for the finale - a traditional gulet boat sailing out onto the Med. You claim a cushioned spot at the bow, front row to the closing act. The gulet glides, the wind sweeps in like a welcome co-star and your fan finally clocks off - its

big tour moment over. You edge closer to the rail, see the Taurus Mountains from a whole new angle, and think back to Mikkel's words. This stretch of coast doesn't just have a nickname, it's living up to it. Here, you're the headliner, the main character, and who knows what era is coming next? The curtain (and the sun) falls, ready to rise on a completely new scene.



Watch the full setlist in our Antalya travel guide at youtube.com/@tuiukholidays



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RESORT

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CANCUN

DESTINATIONS

LAKE COMO



Bellagio,
Lake Como



More than glitz and Insta-glam

Italy's Lake Como is known for its glamour – you've probably seen it splashed across your socials. But, as Robinia Wareham discovers, those got-to-be-there pics are just the beginning...

I'm in the town of **Bellagio**, also called the 'pearl of Lake Como', and whichever way I look, I see pine-swathed mountains, shimmering water and picture-perfect lakeside towns. Speaking of pics, there's plenty to post, and the 'likes' are rolling in.

But I'm keen to take Lake Como from reel to *real*. I wander winding stairways, dotted with flower-decked art galleries and artisan shops. My bag gets a delightful notch heavier thanks to a bottle of local Valtellina wine to take home (wine-tasting trips also available, I note, with tomorrow in mind). I'm awed by mosaics in San Giacomo Church, then amble along the lakeside to Villa Melzi's sculptures and immaculately pruned hedges.

As lunch beckons, I opt for a trattoria by the water's edge. The menu's full of fish dishes – my pick's the salt-cured Como speciality, *missoltino*, served with creamy polenta. I'm tempted by tiramisu, but with so much to see around Lake Como, it's time to keep exploring.

From boat-hopping to soaking up historic sights, I've got so much to choose from. There's **Tremezzo**, set among olive and orange groves, with Villa Carlotta the jewel in its villa-rich crown. **Como's** cathedral – 400 years in the making – mixes Gothic and Renaissance architecture. And **Lecco** and **Menaggio** offer up promenade strolls, people-watching from piazzas and clock tower climbs.

With film-inspired shots on my mind, though, I head to Villa Balbianello near Tremezzo. It's here that Anakin Skywalker stood in *Star Wars: Episode II - Attack of the Clones*. Lush gardens, glistening water, mountain backdrop and now me, standing right where he did.

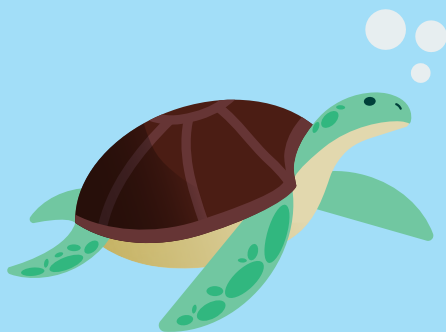
So, yes, I do have those Lake Como pics. Even better, I've a gelato-inspired double helping of memories from a lake break that delivers in *every* way.



Search **TUI Lakes & Mountains** to start your Lake Como adventure.

Triton's travels

This rehabilitated sea turtle has come a long way in the last two years...



Triton's story starts in 2023, when he was found on a beach in Greece with significant head injuries. Sadly, the ARCHELON Sea Turtle Rescue Centre sees this happen all the time due to things like boat collisions, but it knew exactly what to do. The centre - which is a partner of TUI Turtle Aid Greece, a TUI Care Foundation programme that protects vulnerable sea turtles - took Triton in and nursed him back to health.

That was only the beginning. Before releasing Triton into the sea near Athens, the centre set him up with a cutting-edge satellite system that uses sensors to gather, transmit and assess all sorts of different data, like his location. Importantly, the tracker doesn't harm or distress him in any way, and it lets ARCHELON see exactly where its latest patient travels post-rehabilitation.

Now, it's clear to see Triton's quite the globe-trotter. Since November, he's made his way along the west coast of Crete, the north coast of Libya and even as far as Egypt. He's not just

swimming around aimlessly, either. Sea turtles can sense the magnetic field of coastlines around the world, which guides them to where they want to go. Female turtles even store the magnetic signature of the beach where they were hatched, so they can return as adults to lay their own eggs. Pretty interesting, right?

Fast-forward to today, and ARCHELON's researchers are planning to use all the data they've collected about Triton's travels to gain a better understanding of how sea turtles adapt post-rehab. This information will help inform future efforts to protect sea turtles, which is key to preserving our ecosystems. And as an organisation committed to protecting the natural environment, that's one of the TUI Care Foundation's key priorities.

See where Triton is now at tuicarefoundation.com/turtletracking

 Words: Isobel Crow





The TUI Care Foundation also supports people in tourist destinations who may be facing social and environmental challenges. The focus? Gaining invaluable business skills. Through TUI Futureshapers Greece, they can attend networking events and take part in an online educational programme that rewards participants with grants to help get their ideas off the ground.

Ways to do your bit

You can adopt a sea turtle through TUI Turtle Aid or grab a TUI Turtle Aid product from the Shop magazine – money from every sale goes towards helping protect this endangered species.



Dive in

TikTok's @thep00lguy tested every pool at this Ibiza hotel, so you don't have to (but you'll want to)...

If you haven't heard of Miles - AKA @thep00lguy - you're seriously missing out. With over 15 million followers, Miles Laflin is the viral sensation who turned a pool-cleaning career into TikTok gold. He even took home the TikTok UK & Ireland Award for High Quality Content Creator of the Year in 2024. We wanted to get an expert's opinion on our own pools, so we sent Miles to **TUI BLUE Aura**, in **Ibiza**, to review every splash-worthy detail. Here's the verdict...

Waterpark and splash park*

"Great fun... something for everyone," says Miles, reviewing everything from splash fountains that kept his toddler nieces entertained, right up to super-fast slides. He jokes, "When my brother Oli shot down the big red slide, I thought he'd land on the other side of the hotel!"

Infinity pool

Miles describes it as "chill perfection" - iced coffee in hand, sea stretching to the horizon. And the sunsets from here? "Absolutely stunning - the perfect way to end a day."

Main pool

"Splash-tastic and super clever," Miles says, praising the main pool's three-tier layout that's shallow for kids and deeper for everyone else. Daily activities like water aerobics kept his boys happy. With sunbeds, umbrellas

and a bar serving drinks and ice-creams poolside, it's a dream family hub.

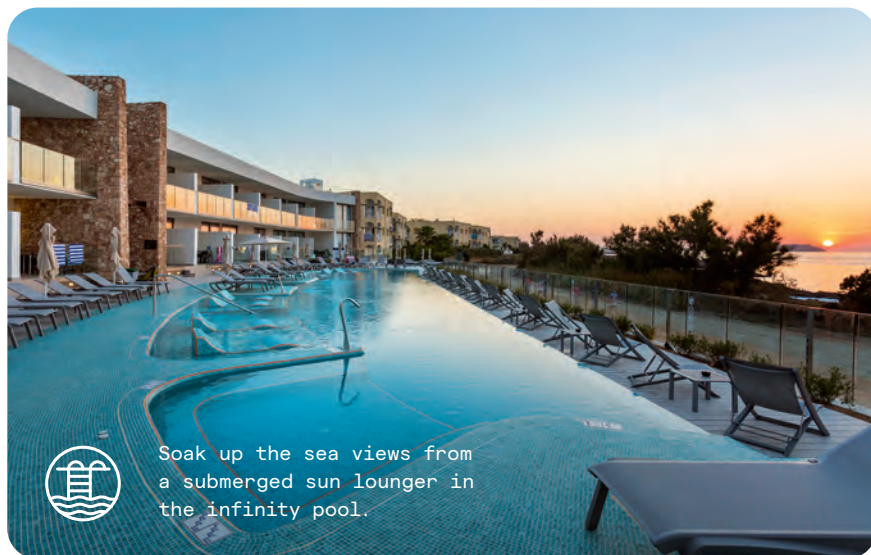
A closer look at TUI BLUE Aura

This swanky All Inclusive pad is set among peaceful Mediterranean gardens, just 150 metres from Port des Torrent beach. You'll love it for its kids' club, big activity offering and restaurants. We're talking everything from swimming classes** and yoga to tapas and Asian cuisine.

 Words: Jessica Houtby



*You get free entry to the waterpark next door when you stay at this hotel. It's home to fast slides and a pirate-themed play zone.



Soak up the sea views from a submerged sun lounger in the infinity pool.





Padel power

Step aside, tennis – there’s a new sheriff in town when it comes to racket sports. Padel has taken off in a big way over recent years, and if you’re not familiar with it, you soon will be. There are an estimated 30 million players worldwide, and in the UK alone, the Lawn Tennis Association is aiming to double the number of players to 400,000 in 2026. Courts have been springing up all over the place and it’s one of the fastest growing sports in the world.

So, what exactly is it? In a nutshell, it’s a cross between tennis and squash. Like tennis, it uses the same scoring system and a net, but it all takes place in an enclosed court, and doubles is the more standard format. Now, you might be wondering what all this has to do with travel? Well, a number of our hotels have joined the trend and built their own courts, like **TUI SUNEО La Conchiglia Resort & Spa** in Calabria. As well as the padel court here, this adults-only hotel comes with a by-the-beach postcode and a spa for post-padel pampering sessions.

Still in two minds about giving padel a go? I’ll leave it to our Photography and Video Production Executive – and regular padel

player – Ashley Crichlow to explain some of the benefits. “It’s very social and the padel community is the most welcoming of any sport I’ve tried.” Ash says you don’t need to worry about ability either.

“There’s space for everyone. I’ve played with people who’ve never held a racket before, to some who may as well be Olympic-standard!”

And as for fitness? “Well, it’s a great way to burn off the buffet,” Ashley reckons, “I regularly burn around 500 calories in a one-hour session.”

So, what are you waiting for? Next time you spot a padel court at one of our TUI hotels, sign yourself up.

Words: Darren Notley



Search **TUI SUNEО** to find out more.

Riad retreats

Behind the tall walls of a riad, everything's hushed. Instead of music from street performers and chatter floating in from markets, you hear the trickle of a courtyard fountain, and the soft rustle of leaves on a orange tree.



A riad, in case you don't know, is a traditional Moroccan house with a garden courtyard. And in Marrakech, a lot of these grand homes have been converted into boutique hotels, offering a little pocket of peace among the buzz of the surrounding souks and squares. Sounds like heaven, doesn't it?

Traditional touches are everywhere in a riad. Take the central courtyard, for example. You'll see grand stone archways and heavy, carved-wood doors leading you from one area to another, and mosaic tiles adding a pop of colour. When I picture Marrakech, these are the details that complete the scene.

As well as looking good, riads often, quite literally, give you a taste of Moroccan culture. Some operate as restaurants, where you can try authentic dishes handmade by local chefs. Anything from tagine – a stew-like North African dish that's cooked slowly in a cone-shaped pot – to freshly baked flatbread could be on the menu. The service feels personal, too – most riads have just six to 10 rooms, so by the end of your stay, it feels like you're with family.

On the topic of guestrooms, in a riad, they tend to feel homely and cosy. They face inward, overlooking the courtyard, and they're usually filled with hand-carved furniture and fabrics of all colours – think rustic oranges and midnight blues. Again, it's that sense of leaving the hustle and bustle of the city behind and escaping to your own little haven, where it's as quiet as a library and scents of spices and botanicals hang in the air.



The word 'riad' means 'garden' in Arabic, so as you'd expect, there's plenty of foliage brightening up these buildings.

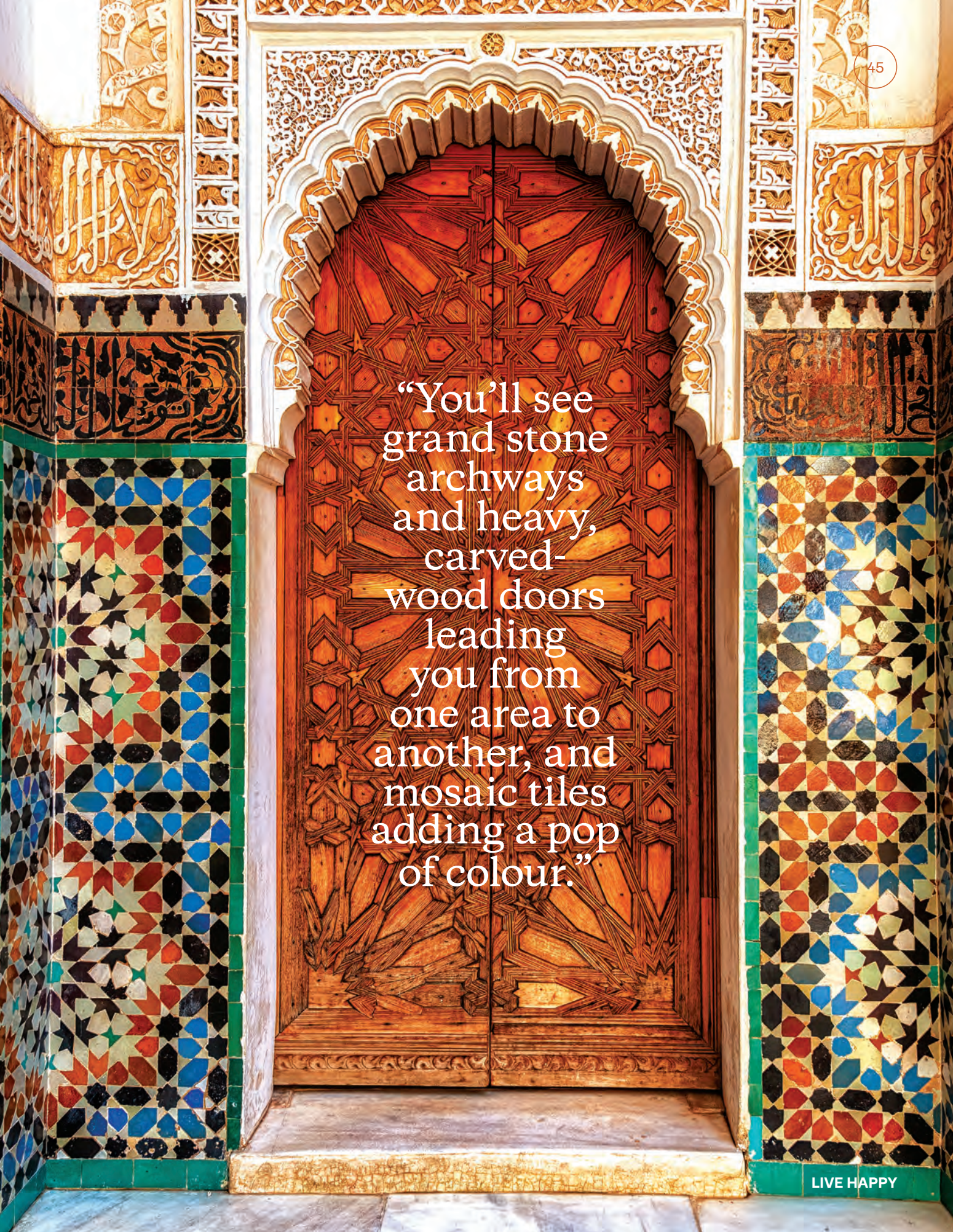
You might spot flamingo-pink bougainvillea overflowing from balconies, or fragrant citrus trees planted by a pool. The greenery only adds to the natural, calming feel of the place – where better than an inner-city oasis to switch off and recharge?

Speaking of self-care, some riads come with their own spa. These aren't the wellness spaces you might be used to back home – they're smaller and more intimate, with steam baths lined in patterned porcelain and comfy daybeds shaded by huge linen drapes. And, if you want a true Moroccan spa experience, you can opt for a traditional treatment, involving everything from purifying clay masks to argan oil massages.

There's a maze of gardens, bazaars and palaces waiting outside Marrakech's riads. But when you stay in one of these ambient abodes, turning in for the night feels just as much of a treat as a day spent exploring the Red City.

 Words: Sophie Heward





“You’ll see
grand stone
archways
and heavy,
carved-
wood doors
leading
you from
one area to
another, and
mosaic tiles
adding a pop
of colour.”

HOTELS

LAPLAND LODGE

Call of the wild



Rugged wintry fells and snow-blanketed hills set the tone in **Lapland**, so a toasty lodge is as important as packing your thermals. Shaun Ringwood has a perfect fireside spot in mind...

Lapland might be the go-to spot for meeting the big guy in red, but we're here to tell you - don't sleep on its scenery. When you've finished reeling off your Christmas must-haves, and promising you're worthy of a spot on the nice list, it's Lapland's natural side that does the talking. Pointy pine branches droop under the weight of the latest snowfall, and husky sleds and snowmobiles leave zig-zagging trails in the powder.

But when Jack Frost starts to nip, you'll want somewhere homely to hang your woolly hat. That's where the **Snowy Wilderness Lodge** comes in. Now, don't get me wrong, there are loads of great places to stay in Lapland - from glass-roofed domes to boutique boltholes. But there's a certain charm to this place. It's not flashy or modern, but takes you back to Lapland's wintry rural roots.

It's hard not to start with the setting. The hotel's right in the heart of the Pallas-Yllästunturi National Park - the third biggest in Finland - so you'll likely see outdoorsy types strapping on skis or hiking boots to head off exploring the fells. Birdwatchers come



to spot Siberian jays and snow buntings swooping between the conifers and creeks, and kayakers paddle across the icy waters of vast Lake Pallasjärvi. Other than that, there's not a soul in sight for miles, and the nearest town of any note - humble Kittilä - is an hour's drive away. It's safe to say you won't find a delivery app or a local pub to dive into, but fear not - this lodge is prepped for the remote life.

After you've shed your layers indoors, pull up a fur-lined pew beside a roaring open fire and cosy in with a warm drink. This is one of the only hotels in Lapland where you can snag an All Inclusive deal, so you can really switch off when it comes to meal planning after a day in the cold. Hearty bowls of soup send steam curling towards the restaurant's beamed ceiling, and it's customary to toast a marshmallow or two once your mains have been polished off. And the only ones not feasting or warming their cockles by the fire tend to be in the sauna, simmering away.

You'll not miss your mod-cons at this place. In fact, it's the sort of back-to-basics environment where you'll be glad to be shot of them for a bit.

Elton John famously sang *Step into Christmas*, and that's a lot like how it feels to stay here.



Full-on festive

The All Inclusive set-up at Snowy Wilderness Lodge has been dubbed **Santa-Clusive**. It's not all Christmas themed, but leans into traditional Lappish recipes and ingredients. As for drinks, house beer, wine, soft drinks, tea and coffee are included.

Kids get their own wintry perks - the hotel's **SnowClub** runs family activities in the snow every day. There's even an Elf Academy, where little ones can try sledding, snow football and cookie decorating.



For your own snow, Santa and seclusion fix, search for **TUI Lapland**.



Raising the bar



Constellations glittering in the ceiling, lavender-smoked martinis, plush velvet sofas that demand to be lounged upon... **Bar Helios** is bougie with a capital B.

Nothing says *drama* like an interactive dessert that involves you smashing a frozen rose between your bare hands before the eating begins. The now-viral Shattered Rose dessert requires at least one person (you) to smash and eat it, and one person (probably your best pal) to film and post on social media. Babka bread pudding and cardamom gelato, along with the fun interactive element of a rose frozen in liquid nitrogen and shattered at your table, definitely take things way beyond your standard Mr Whippy.

Say hello to Bar Helios - in Universal Helios Grand Hotel, a Loews Hotel - where we dare you to not feel a fizzle of excitement. The Shattered Rose is just one item on a menu that's oozing with schmoozey dishes and drinks.



The cocktail menu alone - where drinks are themed to air, fire, water and earth - is a masterclass in flair. We're talking sake-infused mojitos, a milk punch that tastes like mint ice cream, and a Negroni that's been aged in a crystal decanter - just for the plot, right? The food menu goes all out, too. Charred octopus, crunchy crab cakes, fresh oysters, and ora king salmon are standout dishes. And the go-hard-or-go-home seafood tower is the star of the show, flaunting Florida blue crab claws, tuna sashimi, and other fancy niblets.

Even arriving at this bar is an experience - you'll swoop up in a golden lift, glide past velvet ropes, and enter a world that whispers decadence. Gilded décor, a next-level chandelier, and a ceiling that flaunts a sprawling celestial painting... this place is a vibe, for sure. Whether you're toasting an occasion with an Apollo Old Fashioned or living your main-character moment under the domed ceiling of stars, you can expect an ultra-chic experience from start to finish. Bar Helios is a love letter to luxe living, and one we wouldn't mind reading again and again and again...

 Words: Rachel Tysoe-Bailey

Say hello to Bar Helios - in Universal Helios Grand Hotel, a Loews Hotel - where we dare you to not feel a fizzle of excitement.



Where can I find it?

On the top floor of **Universal Helios Grand Hotel, a Loews Hotel**. It's right on the doorstep of Universal Orlando Resort's newest theme park, **Universal Epic Universe**, so it's easy to visit even if you're not staying in the hotel.



Why stay at Universal?

There are 11 themed hotels to pick from when you holiday at Universal Orlando Resort, with somewhere to suit every budget. Plus, staying at a Universal hotel comes with a heap of benefits, including free transport to the parks, and Early Park Admission* to selected rides and attractions.

*Valid theme park admission required.

FOOD & DRINK

ITALIAN STREET FOOD



frittatine di pasta



suzzetello



sfogliatella riccia



pizza a portafoglio



nuvola



cuoppo

zeppola di san giuseppe



sfogliatella frolla



pizza frita



babà al rhum

Nibbles in Naples

Loud, messy and full of flavour – that’s **Naples’ street food scene** in a nutshell. Olivia Torre, half Neapolitan and full-time foodie, shares the city’s best bites – all for just a few euros.

Let’s start with what this city in southern Italy does best – pizza. One of my favourite spots for all things pizza is Via dei Tribunali, a street right in the heart of the historic centre. Between tight alleys, buzzing scooters and blue football flags, you’ll find legendary pizzerias like Di Matteo, Sorbillo and La Figlia del Presidente serving Naples’ classic Margherita. But the real local secret? **Pizza a portafoglio**. It’s a smaller, handheld take on the original – still bursting with juicy mozzarella and San Marzano tomatoes, but folded into quarters like a wallet.

You’ll probably spot queues for its deep-fried cousin here, too – the **pizza fritta**. Think pillowy pockets stuffed with ricotta and more of that Vesuvian tomato sauce. And while you wait, keep an eye out for **frittatine di pasta**. These

golden little goodies are a Neapolitan’s nonna’s invention (call me biased, but I think my own grandma’s are the best). Leftover pasta is mixed with béchamel, ham and peas, then fried until crispy on the outside and creamy in the middle. They’re ‘buonissime’, AKA very delicious!

Make sure to stop by Naples’ famous masked trickster, Pulcinella, next. Rub this statue’s nose for good luck, before winding your way to San Gregorio Armeno for a sweet pit stop. If there’s one pastry that truly screams Naples, it’s the **sfogliatella**. Often the highlight at Italian Sunday dinners, these spark a lively debate – are you team sfogliatella riccia (crisp and layered) or sfogliatella frolla (soft and smooth)? Riccia is made of delicate, paper-thin layers shaped like a shell,

while frolla (my pick) has a smoother, melt-in-your-mouth crust. Both are filled with sweetened ricotta and citrus peel – all dusted with icing sugar.

From flaky layers to boozy sponge, Naples has plenty to tempt your sweet tooth. Take **babà al rhum** – a soft, rum-soaked sponge cake, sometimes finished with fresh cream or fruit. Leopoldo bakery’s your go-to for the best, but heads up – the pastry counter is a total love affair in the making. Then there’s the **zeppola di San Giuseppe**, a swirl of pastry filled with velvety cream and crowned with a glossy cherry. And for something impossibly light, go for a **nuvola** or two. This fluffy bun, literally meaning ‘cloud’, hides a secret filling of cream, pistachio or Nutella.

As much as I love a sweet fix, Naples’ savoury scene wins me over every time – and is the perfect end to your foodie tour. Tuck in to **cuzzetiello** first – a hollowed-out chunk of crusty bread stuffed with steaming ragu, meatballs or parmigiana. It’s rustic and slightly messy, but that’s all part of the fun. For a no-fuss bite on the move, cut across to Via Toledo next – the city’s main shopping street – and finish with a **cuoppo**. These paper cones are packed with fried treats like potato croquettes, mini rice balls and courgette flowers, or seafood if that’s your thing. Either way, you get a handy stick for easy eating.

With your final nibbles in hand, stroll past the large public square, Piazza del Plebiscito, to the promenade – where Mount Vesuvius meets the sea – and congrats yourself on truly tasting Naples.

Tequila's sunrise

There's a new dawn for the age-old Mexican spirit...

Tequila has long been tainted with a reputation drenched in salt, lime and bad decisions. But if one too many in your teenage years put you off for life, I've got some news that just might change your mind. Tequila's grown up, and the maestros of Mexico are keen to show you just how much.

You see, most mass-produced tequilas – like the ones you probably had in your teens – are what professionals call 'mixtos'. They're hastily made and blended with up to 49% sugar from other sources. Plus, industrial equipment scorches what's left of the agave, leaving that telltale throat-burning aftertaste (and a dreadful hangover) in its wake.

The good stuff, it turns out, is a lot like wine. The quality of the soil and growing conditions of the blue weber agave plant, from which tequila is made, have a big influence on the finished taste. The fancy word for this is 'terroir'.

With demand for sipping tequilas on the rise, more and more master tequileros are going back to their roots, so to speak. Small-batch producers are reinstating traditional equipment, paying attention to terroir, and crafting spirits made from 100% agave. If you're ever shopping for tequila, that's a good thing to look out for on the label.

And as the popularity for binge drinking continues to trend

downwards, classic party destinations are also being reborn, turning back to their cultural roots for inspiration.

Much like tequila, Cancun has a reputation for provoking the proverbial party animal. And while there are still confetti cannons for those who seek them, the city's iconic resorts are tapping into the desire for a more refined taste of the real Mexico.

Tequila tasting sessions are now on offer in lots of All Inclusive hotels, giving you a chance to meet the new-and-improved spirit as part of the package. Try **AVA Resort**, an upscale spot in the hotel zone with tequila tastings on the agenda, or **Secrets Playa Blanca**, a hotel in the quieter, Costa Mujeres area, where you can sample top-shelf spirits in a tasting session.

These workshops give you a chance sip quality craft tequilas and mezcal, learn a little more about the influence of terroir, and make amends with a spirit you'd long-since relegated to slammers and salt-rimmed margaritas.

 Words: Amabel Buck



In Mexico, there's a special way to toast your tequila.

Start by raising your glass and saying "**arriba**" – that means 'above' in Spanish.

Then, lower your glass as you say "**abajo**" – 'down below'.

Next, clink glasses while saying "**al centro**" – 'in the middle'. Finally, take a sip after saying "**pa' dentro**", which basically means 'down the hatch'.

So, all together it's "**Arriba, abajo, al centro, pa' dentro!**"





Mexican farmer
harvesting agave for
tequila.

FOOD & DRINK

A TASTE OF CORFU

Sites &

After the right balance of **culture** and **cuisine** on your holiday? Charlotte Wilson shares a new way to have it all in Corfu...



The **Old Venetian Fortress** of Corfu proudly looks over the Ionian Sea.



Bites

Holidays are the most relaxing time of year, right? Well, not always - there's a battle brewing between me and my husband. You'd think working in travel means I'd have our trip precision-planned to see and do it all. But I have to confess, the lure of the lounge, pool and All Inclusive buffet is strong for me. Meanwhile, my culture-vulture other half is desperate to see a bit of the 'real' Corfu.

Thankfully, I've hit the perfect balance to keep the peace, thanks to Sites & Bites - a new collection of experiences designed by TUI that pair the area's top landmarks with local flavours. It'll give him the shot of culture he yearns for, and gets me back on my lounge in time for an afternoon siesta.

Our two kids in tow, we head off on the **Sites & Bites: Corfu Old Town, Greek doughnuts and ouzo tour**. It's an early start to beat the heat - and to my delight, it means we'll squeeze our fill of culture into one morning. We meet Eleni, our guide, who introduces us to Corfu Town on a walking tour that shows off the island's Venetian fortress and the famous Liston Promenade. Best of all, it's peppered with tasting stops that champion Corfu's favourite snacks and drinks.

After wandering through the jumble of narrow Medieval streets, known as kantounia, and soaking up the elegant architecture and history with Eleni's expert commentary (wow, does she know her stuff), it's time to get stuck



in to the grub. I smell them before I see them - loukoumades, or Greek doughnuts, freshly made at a cosy, family-run café.

They're balls of doughy deliciousness, lusciously soaked in warm honey. I bite into the crisp shell and I'm rewarded with a sweet, soft centre that instantly brings a smile to my face. I don't even care that I've dribbled honey down my chin - honestly, I'm messier than the kids!

After sampling more local delicacies like ouzo, kumquat liqueur and olive oil, we've got some free time to roam. I'm a sucker for a pretty harbour, so we head there for a bit of yacht spotting and souvenir shopping before we're done.

Climbing into the welcoming blast of the bus' air-con, we're a content bunch.

Hubby's need for a good poke around to learn about where we've been is sated, and I'm happy to have had a taste of the place without sacrificing my precious pool time. I only wish someone had reminded me to dab my honeyed chin before I got back on the bus...



Hungry for more?
Search Sites & Bites on
tui.co.uk/things-to-do

FOOD & DRINK

TUI MAGIC LIFE



Wait, that's vegan?



Yep, that's right. This vibrant dish is plant-based, and it's on the menu at **TUI MAGIC LIFE clubs.**

Ask a vegan what they eat on holiday, and you'll probably get one answer: chips. For some, that's no issue – after all, add a bread roll and a bowl of plain pasta and you've got yourself a beige banquet. Others, meanwhile, wish they could scoop all sorts of colourful concoctions onto their plates, rather than heading straight to the salad station. And at TUI MAGIC LIFE clubs, they can. These places have been serving up vegan-friendly foods across the board for some time now, and the spread's got even better. Here's a taste of what's on offer...

Buffet bits

There are vegan options for every meal of the day at all TUI MAGIC LIFE clubs. That's thanks to Magico, the main restaurant. Depending on where you're staying, you can expect things like fresh fruit and vegan porridge at breakfast, plus the likes of herby lentil patties and hearty chickpea stews at lunch and dinnertime. Some places also serve sweet treats like vegan cakes, dairy-free rice pudding and pistachio pastries for dessert. Vegans who tend to get peckish between meals are in luck, too. All TUI MAGIC LIFE clubs offer 24-hour All Inclusive, so you're free to help yourself to snacks from dusk 'til dawn. Soya ice-cream, vegan pizzas and veggie-filled wraps are just some of the things ready to grab and go at different clubs.

Local cuisine

Think being vegan means missing out on trying the local cuisine while you're away? Think again. There are at least two specialty restaurants at every TUI MAGIC LIFE club, lots of which serve local dishes. And, as of summer 2025, they've not just got vegan options – they've got a whole vegan *menu*. So,

there's no need to order the same veggie burger every night while everyone else takes their tastebuds on a tour of the region. You can get things like vegan moussaka and samosas in Levante restaurants, as well as Mediterranean vegetable medleys and baked polenta squares in The Flavour. Plus, you get one free visit per week to a speciality restaurant at all TUI MAGIC LIFE clubs, and you can always pay a little extra to dine at one of the chargeable à la cartes. Teppanyaki eateries are well worth a visit – they offer vegan sushi, spring rolls and pad thai.

Creamy curries

Drumroll, please... one of the latest additions to the TUI MAGIC LIFE offering is the Green Curry restaurant, and – you guessed it – it's got plenty of plant-based dishes to pick from. Nab a table in select clubs, and you'll get the chance to try Asian eats like pillow-soft naan bread drizzled with spiced oils. Use it to scoop up nutty Thai-style Massaman curry, best served with fluffy rice. Or try something different – crispy vegan potato balls called bonda, a zingy kachumber salad, and fiery pickled peppers are also on the line-up here. Just be sure to save some room for dessert. There's vegan gulab jamun – sticky fried dumplings soaked in syrup – and sweet carrot halwa spiced with cardamom up for grabs. Good luck deciding what to order...

 Words: Isobel Crow



We're always working on something new. Right now, it's a vegan six-course experimental menu, currently on offer at **TUI MAGIC LIFE Masmavi** in Turkey.



Hungry for more? Search for **TUI MAGIC LIFE**.

FAMILIES

WALT DISNEY WORLD

Curtain up

New shows. Fresh adventures. An all-new nighttime parade. The **entertainment scene** at *Walt Disney World Resort* in Florida gets even bigger in 2025. Conor Braniff has the lowdown...





Artist's impression

★ Disney Villains: Unfairly Ever After

POV: you find yourself trapped in the realm of the Magic Mirror. Yes – *that* Magic Mirror. Welcome to Disney Villains: Unfairly Ever After, the brand-new live show at *Disney's Hollywood Studios*, where iconic baddies are ready for another shot at the spotlight. The Mirror's counting on you to choose which villain has been treated the most unfairly of them all. No pressure...



Expect to see

Cruella de Vil, Captain Hook and Maleficent sharing their side of the story.



Artist's impression

★ The Little Mermaid - A Musical Adventure

She traded her voice for legs, but now she's got a whole stage. The Little Mermaid - A Musical Adventure joins the entertainment line-up at *Disney's Hollywood Studios* with cool effects bringing Ariel's underwater world to life. This 20-minute show follows her dream to be part of the human world – and let's just say one familiar villain decided it was way more fun under the sea than stuck in a mirror.



Expect to hear

Iconic hits from the animated classic, like 'Part of Your World', 'Under the Sea' and more.



Artist's impression

★ Zootopia: Better Zoogether!

Step into *Disney's Animal Kingdom Theme Park* and get ready for a wild ride with *Zootopia: Better Zoogether!* – the new 4D experience coming to the Tree of Life Theater in 2025. You'll join Judy Hopps, Nick Wilde and the whole gang as they take you on a family-friendly adventure through the colourful world of *Zootopia*.



Expect to smell

TBC – but we're hoping for fresh doughnuts wafting from Officer Clawhauser's desk.



Artist's impression

★ Disney Starlight: Dream the Night Away

It's 9pm at *Magic Kingdom Park* and Main Street, U.S.A is buzzing. Mickey-ear-wearing magic seekers of all ages line the pavement, and the smell of fresh popcorn from a nearby cart has you wondering if there's still room for dessert. You're hoping to catch a wave from Moana, or a little frost tossed your way by Elsa. Then the lights appear – bright, colourful and dancing in time with the music. First, the cool sparkle of the Blue Fairy, then the golden glow of the Madrigal's Miracle Candle, and before you know it, the all-new nighttime parade of Disney faves is gliding by like a river of light.



Best spot to watch

Grab a space at the Hub across from Cinderella Castle and catch the parade with the iconic castle as your backdrop.

Neon nights

Katie Gregory takes a closer look at the new **Holiday Villages party line-up**, which promises to get the whole family up and raving...



You're surrounded by clubbers on a neon-lit dancefloor, arms high in the air, smiles everywhere you look. Up on the stage, the DJ whips the crowd into a frenzy as costume-clad performers work the room. "Do you want another drink?" you turn and ask, face lit up in a kaleidoscope of laser stripes and strobe flashes. "Yes please," replies your six-year-old. "Can I have another one of those mocktails?"

Welcome to the Holiday Villages family rave - AKA all your best nights out, reimagined in family form.

It's one of several themed nights unveiled as part of the brand-new entertainment programme at Holiday Villages, which proved such a hit with ravers of all ages that it's now a permanent fixture.

Rhythm is a dancer

So, what can you expect when you stay at one of these properties? Neon Nights, for starters, teams vibrant staging and club lighting with face paints and DJ sets the whole family will love. Ibiza Sunsets, meanwhile, is all about chilled vibes, classic cocktails and a Café Mambo-inspired playlist of ambient tunes.

Alongside themed nights, the HV House Party promises floor-fillers with a side order of kid-friendly fun and games. And pint-sized party people are catered for at Little Ravers, where babies aged 0-35 months and their parents can bop to music in the bubble-filled HV Crèche.



You asked, we delivered.

The rave-themed revamp was inspired by research, when Holiday Villages delved into the dancing habits of the nation and found that

60% of parents missed their child-free clubbing days, while 67% were partial to a kitchen disco with their kids.

And with both daytime clubbing and family raves rising in popularity, it made sense to bring the party to Holiday Villages - where the focus is set firmly on fun.

From giant pool scenes to All Inclusive dining set-ups, and activities lists longer than the queue for your favourite noughties club, these holiday hubs leave no stone unturned when it comes to whole-family happiness. And now you can tick 'party all night' off your holiday wishlist - with a kid-friendly finish time that'll leave you feeling fresh as a daisy in the morning.

Guess what else is new?

Holiday Village AQI Skanes is the newest addition to our Holiday Villages collection, joining the fold in summer 2026. As well as all-new family raves, this beachfront resort in Tunisia will be home to a brand-new style of Aerial Adventure course. So, you can get your adrenaline pumping on suspended walkways, climbing walls and zip-lines by day, then keep it pumping on the dancefloor by night...



Ready to rave?
Search for **TUI**
Holiday Villages.



Sensory rooms, unlocked.

We're on a mission to **make holidays more accessible**, and last summer, we stepped things up (or took things down) a notch...

Waterparks and huge pools are all part of the fun on family holidays. But, for those with additional needs, having a quiet space to relax is just as important as towering chutes and games of water polo. That's why we've launched sensory rooms at a pair of our TUI BLUE hotels.

Ibiza's **TUI BLUE Aura** and **TUI BLUE Nausicaa Beach** in Cyprus opened their free-to-use sensory rooms at the start of summer 2025, and families have already found them invaluable.

The rooms offer a calm, low-stimulation zone for anybody who may feel overwhelmed by busy or unfamiliar surroundings. They're kitted out with soft lighting, bubble tubes and tactile objects, which are perfect for pressing pause on everything else going on at the hotel. The pool isn't going anywhere, after all.

Louise Bates, Director of Brands and Product for TUI Hotels & Resorts, said, "The introduction of sensory rooms

is based on insights from our guests and experts in neurodiversity, and it's a great step forward in our evolution. This is just the beginning as we work towards becoming the most neuro-friendly travel company."

Our sensory rooms aren't the only new addition, though. Parents and babies can swap the splash pool for Sensory Adventure sessions, where little ones can explore their senses through touch, sound and sight. Plus, there are separate sessions for parents and children aged three to 12, with the activities tailored to suit each family's needs.

Oh, and you can forget the FOMO if you're not staying at a hotel with a sensory room. All hotels with a TUI BLUE Kids' Club have sensory bags filled with tactile and visual objects to help keep your child calm.

Words: Karl Taylor





Top tips for using sensory rooms

Kelly and Hester Grainger, co-founders of the neurodiversity consultancy Perfectly Autistic, shared their advice. They're parents of neurodivergent teens and are neurodivergent themselves – Kelly is autistic and has ADHD and Hester has ADHD.



01

Get to know the space ASAP

"Use the room before a meltdown or shutdown happens. That way, you aren't waiting until your child feels overwhelmed."

02

Explore at their pace

"Let the person who's using the room explore at their own pace. Some might be drawn to the soft and relaxing lighting or calming music, while others prefer tactile objects."

03

Space for everyone

"Sensory rooms aren't just for children. If somebody in your family is feeling anxious, overstimulated or overwhelmed, a sensory room can be a perfect place to regulate emotions."



For more on
neuro-inclusive
breaks, search for
TUI accessible holidays.

The fun formula

Ever wondered what your little one *really* gets up to at the **kids' club**? It's time to find out...



Annie, Mum, Fred and Dad.

We're spending the morning with Annie, 9, and her little brother, Fred, 7, at the kids' club at **TUI BLUE Sensatori Akra Sorgun**, in Turkey. From cute convos over crayon creations to explosive scientific experiments, the session doesn't disappoint. Here's what we discover...

First up, we sneak a listen at the colouring table. "Let's draw our favourite holiday memory," Annie declares, reaching for the blue. "I'm going to draw the waterpark," Fred announces, "going down the red slide!" Annie leans over, curious. "Are you going to draw me and you, or just you?" "Me and you," he replies instantly - no question about it.

Cola rockets into the air. "Fred, how many centimetres do you think it went up?" Annie inquires. "35 million-billion," he exclaims. Another voice from the group shouts, "Who's going to clean it?" Silence. Until... "Nanny'll do it," states Fred, confidently. Meanwhile, Nanny's poolside - blissfully unaware she's been volunteered for clean-up duty.

Two colourful masterpieces, a Silly Science experiment and 35 million-billion giggles later, the morning session wraps up. Good thing there's another one in the afternoon, because these two aren't done yet...

 Words: Conor Braniff

"Let's draw our favourite holiday memory"

With the artwork finished, it's time to transform into scientists - complete with crazy wigs, white lab coats and safety goggles. "I've done science experiments before," shares Fred. "15ml of soap, 15ml of water and..." That's when Scuba Sue - AKA Kids' Club Host, Alice - swoops in with the supplies, including a bottle of Coca-Cola and a handful of Mentos. A quick countdown and... WOOOAH!!!

Kids' Clubs are designed for little ones aged 3 to 12 years and are packed with activities like eco-explorer missions, water-based challenges and more. They run six days a week at selected TUI BLUE hotels and all Sensatori by TUI BLUE resorts.





Bring me bubbles

Ever wish you could press a button and have a crisp glass of sparkling wine magically appear in your hand?



This fantasy is pretty much a reality in Marella Cruises' resident Champagne bar, Flutes, found onboard Marella Voyager and Marella Explorer 2. Here, house Prosecco's part of your All Inclusive package, and there's a 'bring me bubbles' button to hit whenever you fancy a top-up.

A pianist plays on a golden grand piano, and the lounge glows under an illuminated mural of two clinking glasses on the wall. The colour scheme covers dusky pinks and pistachio greens, and the velvet furniture adds a touch of Gatsby glam.

As I think about what to order, a vintage-style picture frame on the wall catches my eye. Inside, there's a button that says 'bring me bubbles', so I guess that seals it. I push the button, sink into a comfy armchair, and before I even have chance to get my phone out to snap a few photos, a friendly waiter appears with a flute of fizz on a tray. This is something I could get used to.

I opt for one more drink before heading for dinner, and this time, I pick from the bellini list*. It's filled with tipples that whisk your tastebuds away to Italy, using ingredients like limoncello and raspberry purée to jazz up your bubbly.

I settle on the Sweet Maggie - this cocktail laces together Absolut Vodka, white peach purée, fresh mint and Poeti Prosecco - and it's just as good as it sounds.

If sparkling wine's not your thing, there's plenty more on the menu to pour over. You can say cheers with soft sodas and fruit juices, glasses of wine, spirits with mixers or a selection of beers. Whatever your tipple, you'll feel a million dollars drinking it in the swish surroundings of Flutes.

I'm excited as I think about the evening ahead. There's plenty to come - a meal, a West End-style show and maybe even a silent disco. If the start's anything to go by, it'll be a night worth raising my glass to.

 Words: Sophie Heward





Flutes

As you know by now, two of the Marella ships have a signature take on a Champagne and Prosecco bar, and it's just the ticket if you fancy a glass of something sparkling. The venue has clusters of pastel-coloured armchairs, and you'll see bartenders buzzing around with trays of fizzing flutes, ready to serve when someone hits that 'golden' button.



The Exchange

Another top spot on Marella Voyager is The Exchange. You'll find this 1930s-themed speakeasy bar hidden away on deck eight, behind two red telephone boxes. Inside, it's like you've stepped back in time - there are big velvet banquettes, mirrored drinks trolleys and ambient lighting setting the mood. You can catch immersive shows here, too. Just so you know, they cost a little extra, and you need to book.



Squid & Anchor

If a pint at a good old British pub is more your thing, Squid & Anchor's the place to be. This lively alehouse is a staple on every ship, and it has all the basics covered, and then some - quizzes, game shows and live bands are thrown into the mix. Most drinks here are covered in your All Inclusive package, but you can push the boat out (pardon the pun) and sip a premium tippie if you fancy.

CRUISE

RIVER CRUISES

All aboard for TUI Aria

Exciting news, cruise fans. Our latest **TUI River Cruises ship** is set to make her debut this summer. Darren Notley reveals where she'll be sailing and what you can expect onboard.

All the best things come in six-packs – think beers and abs for starters. Well, now you can add our river cruise ships to the list, with TUI Aria about to join her five siblings in the fleet. She'll be sailing along the Rhine, the Moselle and the Dutch and Belgian waterways in 2026, starting in late March, on our seven-night **Moselle Valley: Vines & Views** itinerary.

Big-name cities like Amsterdam and Cologne will get familiar with seeing her in port, as well as cosier spots like Rudesheim – home to some of Germany's biggest vineyards. And when you're not sightseeing or sampling local vinos, there'll be a tonne of to-dos onboard, starting with an indoor pool – a first for our river cruise fleet. What's more, it'll come with a retractable roof, so you can catch rays in the summer and keep out of the cold in winter. Plus, there's even more. In the evenings, the space transforms into a dining venue, with Italian-inspired dishes on the menu.

Elsewhere, the main restaurant, Verastro, and the lounge bar, Observatory, will both have a familiar feel if you've sailed on our other

European ships. A mix of panoramic and floor-to-ceiling windows make them the perfect spots for watching the world go by while you eat and drink. Speaking of which, it'll be a Full Board Plus setup onboard, so three meals and drinks at mealtimes will be included in your package.



Enjoy **nightly entertainment** onboard, including live music.



Join in with activities like **games** and **yoga classes** on the top deck.



Look out for: **Rhine Explorer** – a seven-night summer itinerary, stopping off in four countries.



Search **TUI Aria** to find out more.



Image for illustrative purposes only. Final appearance may differ slightly.

Waste not, want not.

We're boosting sustainability at our flagship TUI BLUE hotels with help from chefs like Andreas Chrysomallis - who shares his **insights on zero-waste cooking**.



What is zero-waste cooking, in a nutshell?

It's a philosophy - not just a technique - based on honouring every part of every ingredient. Think turning what's often considered waste, like citrus peels, bread ends and vegetable peels, into things like ferments, broths, powders and oils.

How did you get into it?

I was originally studying finance and maths, but I'd always been drawn to cooking. So, I took the leap and eventually became Head Chef at a restaurant focused on using imperfect-

looking produce. That's where I realised how much potential is lost when we throw food away.

And why is it important?

Because we've got heaps of great produce in the world, yet so much is thrown out. Zero-waste cooking lets us change that while unlocking new possibilities - something I aim to do every time I step into a kitchen.

Can you tell us a bit about the work you've been doing with TUI BLUE?

Absolutely. Over the past two years, I've developed inspiring, vegetable-driven recipes and hosted zero-waste cooking workshops to help make TUI BLUE's culinary concept more planet-friendly. It's been great to connect with international teams and share my belief that sustainable cooking doesn't have to be restrictive - it can be tasty, nourishing and innovative.

What's your top tip for anyone wanting to give zero-waste cooking a go?

Treat every ingredient like it's a prime cut of meat or a perfect piece of produce. You'll cook smarter, waste less and often end up making even more delicious meals.

Interview: Isobel Crow



Feeling inspired? Put fruit peels to good use with this recipe for **zesty zero-waste orange spread**.

Ingredients:

- 500g cashew nuts
- Peel from 10 oranges
- 50g nutritional yeast
- 10g garlic
- Water, as needed
- Salt and pepper to taste

Method:

- 01 Soak the cashews in water overnight
- 02 Blend the nuts with the orange peels, yeast and garlic
- 03 Gradually add water until you reach your desired consistency
- 04 Season with salt and pepper, then slather on savoury toast

To make this recipe allergen-free, try swapping the cashews for chickpeas. They can go in the blender as is, so you can skip step 1.

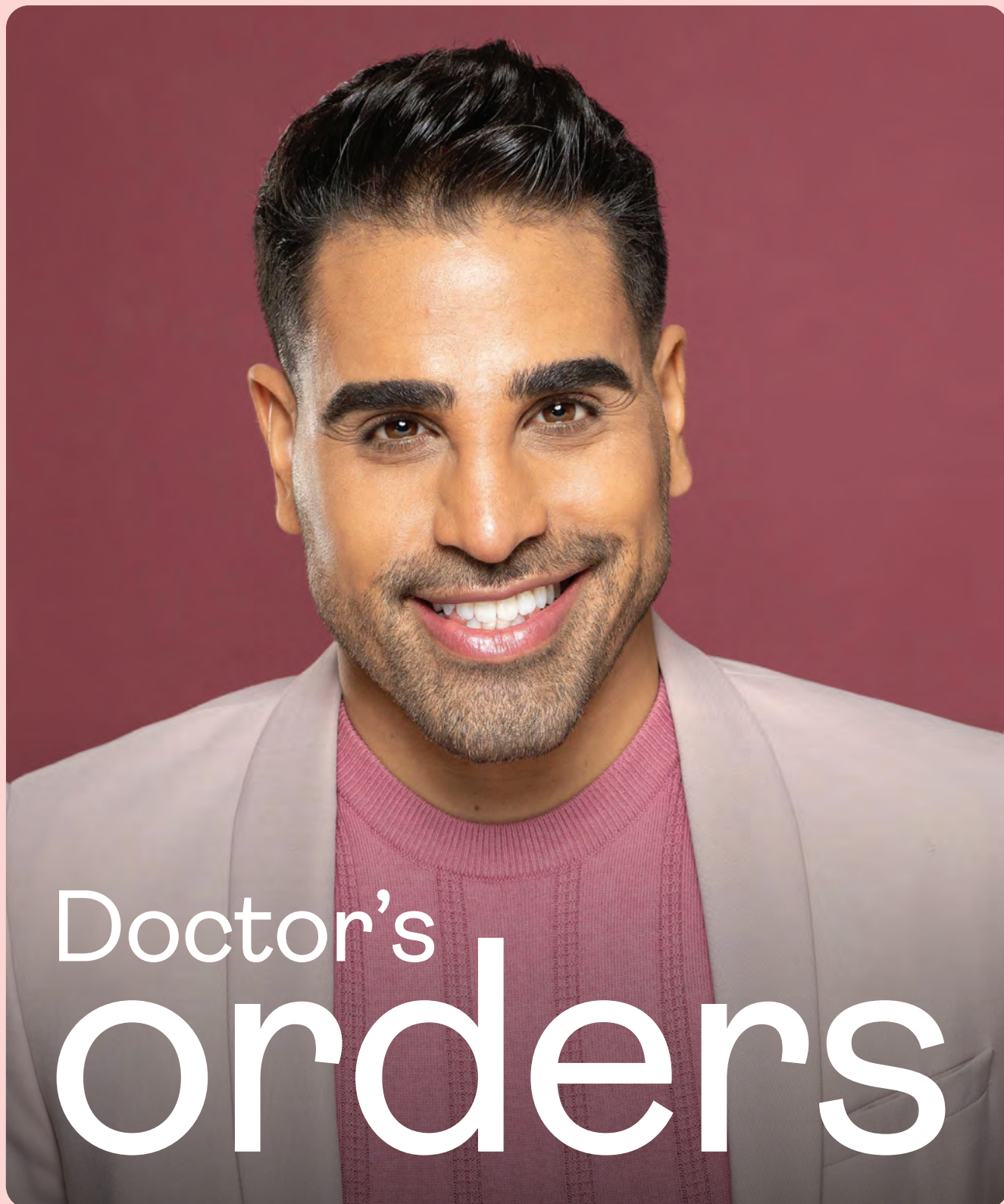
We've also put AI-powered cameras in TUI BLUE kitchen bins to find out the most frequently thrown-out items. This helps chefs adopt more efficient food preparation techniques, adjust buffet portion sizes and run kitchens more sustainably.



For more on what we're doing to support the environment, search **sustainability at TUI**.

INTERVIEWS

TV'S DR RANJ



Quotes have been edited for length and clarity.

Sometimes, medicine doesn't come in a bottle – it comes from a boarding pass. Lee Dasilva talks to TV's Dr Ranj Singh about swapping check-ups for check-ins.

As I sat down with Dr Ranj – in between his daytime TV appearances, theatre performances, and TUI's *Pack Your Bags* podcast recordings (wink wink) – I expected to chat about the medical benefits of holidays. On-screen charm and on-stage glitter aside, he *is* still a registered clinician. But what I hadn't banked on was such an impactful conversation about the restorative power of a trip, and the unexpected link between travel and identity.

"That's the point of going away, isn't it? You get to leave some of your worries, hang-ups and things tying you to the real world behind," he says. It's no surprise, then, that **New York** holds a special place in Dr Ranj's heart. "Stepping off the plane in New York feels like stepping onto a movie set," he tells me, lighting up, "and there's something magical about recognising places from all the shows and films I used to watch as a kid." The Big Apple's great for getting the step count up, too. "It takes a long time," warns Dr Ranj, "but you can walk most of Manhattan, and there are amazing bars and cafés and restaurants at every turn." We go on to discuss the foodie scene of cosmopolitan cities, like NYC. "I love food, so it's perfect for me." Dr Ranj recollects queuing around the block for bagels in Greenwich Village, and treating himself to a seat at the chef's table of a sushi restaurant. "New York's such a patchwork of different communities, so whatever you're into, you'll find it."

From taste, we segue into how all our senses come into play on a holiday, and Dr Ranj recounts memories from another destination fave, **Morocco**. "You're seeing so many colours,

smelling so many scents, and feeling so many different textures." And these sensory anchors go on to unveil a family-friendly travel hack. "We call them 'transitional objects,'" the doc, who specialises in paediatrics, explains. "By bringing your little ones' favourite snacks, toy or book – anything that they're familiar with the sensation of – you can make the whole experience of travelling less stressful." It's something Dr Ranj always recommends to families taking kids away for the first time.

Soon after, our chat takes an emotional turn. "Those moments of clarity when you change your environment – they really matter." Dr Ranj opens up about returning from a holiday and ending a marriage, and we get into the surprising ways travel can shape your self-discovery.

"It can help you realise that things aren't always what they seem, or even that you're not living your life the way you should."

For Dr Ranj, the physical act of moving yourself away can be the tonic. And that's really what he's prescribing – not just flights and hotels, but moments of reflection and freedom.

"Travel can help you find yourself again," he says. And sometimes, that's just what the doctor ordered.



Audio aftercare

Listen to more from Dr Ranj on our podcast, *Pack Your Bags* with Russell Kane. The comedian chats all things travel with famous faces including Paralympian, Ellie Simmonds OBE, popstar, Kimberley Walsh, and *Strictly*'s Oti Mabuse. Stream seasons one and two wherever you get your podcasts, or – if you're reading this on a TUI Airways 787 Dreamliner – from your inflight entertainment.

Flying fact file



Want the inside scoop on flying? We've rounded up some fascinating **flying facts** from the people in the know – our crew. Perfect pub quiz material...



Flight deck, discovered.

The Captain sits in the left-hand seat and is the only one who can taxi the aircraft to and from the runway.

Ever wondered what the stripes on a pilot's uniform mean? Three stripes = First Officer, four stripes = Captain.



Did you know?

There are more than 500 controls in a plane's cockpit.





No window at your seat?

You might be sitting where the fuselage (body of the plane) joins together, or where air conditioning pipes run from floor to ceiling.

On board a Boeing 737...

When you're sitting at the back of a plane during landing, you might hear a whistling or hissing sound. It's completely normal - it's just a valve opening to release some of the air pressure inside the cabin.

As the plane gets closer to the ground, the pressure inside the plane needs to match the lower pressure outside. So, the valve lets out some air to gently reduce the pressure.



Cabin galley secrets

Even with modern check-in systems and digital boarding passes, Cabin Crew still finish with a good old-fashioned manual headcount before take-off.

The front and back galleys aren't just where the crew make tea and prep your meals. Each crew member is assigned a specific section of the aircraft, and everything's choreographed in advance - from who pours the drinks and heats the meals to who serves which rows.

That classic 'ding-dong' you hear mid-flight isn't just random - it's how the crew talks to the flight deck without using the PA system.



The doors on the left are bigger than those on the right. That's because the left-side doors are for boarding and disembarking, while the right-side's for loading catering.

Dreamliner downtime

Boeing 787 Dreamliners have a hidden crew rest area above the passenger cabin complete with beds, so the team can get their 40 winks between longer shifts.



Words: Laura Wilkinson

Where's next?

So, there we have it - the end of the mag.

We hope you found it helpful for choosing your next trip. In case you need more inspiration, we've mapped out all the places you can fly to on our award-winning airline, TUI Airways.

That's not all though. We've teamed up with other leading airlines to open up even more destinations. So, whether

you fancy snorkelling in the Maldives or moseying around Christmas markets in Prague, we've got you covered.

And with the likes of Marella Cruises, TUI River Cruises and Crystal Ski in the mix, too, we really are your one-stop shop for all things travel.

Words: Darren Notley

Still deciding where to go next?

Search for **TUI bespoke brochures**, tell us what takes your fancy, and we'll build a personalised brochure just for you - complete with your name on the front cover. Or, pop into your local TUI Store and speak to one of our Travel Experts.



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