

Live Happy

SUMMER 2025



Mexico's
magnificent
seven

Beyond the
buffet: a new
era of All
Inclusive.

Trending in
travel

TikTok's most viral hotel, the
rise of the cowboycation and
much more.

Why
choose
TUI?



Helping you
holiday happy –
it's in our DNA.
Here are seven
reasons to choose
us for your
getaways...

- ① **Flying from your local airport feels goood!**
Start your holiday sooner, with flights from over 20 UK airports.
- ② **Clubs for kids. Bliss for parents.**
Stay at an exclusive TUI hotel designed for the whole family.
- ③ **Peace and relaxation? Yessss please.**
We've got exclusive TUI hotels designed just for adults, too.
- ④ **More choice and flexibility than ever**
Tailor-make your trip to you, with a range of flight options and holiday durations.

- ⑤ **Loads of ways to book**
App, website and in-store – Book Happy, whichever way you choose.
- ⑥ **Help as and when you need it**
Call, message or face-to-face – we're here for you 24/7, every step of your holiday.
- ⑦ **Every trip type, covered.**
Beaches, city breaks, cruises? You name it, we've got it, so you can holiday your way.



Psst! There's more
at tui.co.uk/value



Welcome!

Hi, there! Thanks for taking the time to flick through the summer 2025 edition of *Live Happy*. If you've been on board with us before, you'll know our mag is packed cover to cover with inspiring stories, expert recommendations and top tips. There's a poke around Tunisia's history on **page 34**, Mexico's magnificent seven on **page 38**, and we even get in on the recent cowboy craze on **page 10**.

Behind the scenes, we've been transforming our approach to neurodiversity. I'm really proud that more than 2,500 employees have had neuro-inclusive travel training, we've launched neuro-friendly shopping in 300-plus TUI Stores, and we've just opened our first ever sensory rooms in a couple of TUI BLUE hotels in Ibiza and Cyprus. We truly believe TUI holidays are for everyone, and you can read a bit more about our award-winning accessible holidays in a chat with influencer sisters, the Cheethams, on **page 66**.

Psst... have you seen our new flight routes? I'm delighted that TUI Airways is taking off from Southampton Airport for the first time in 15 years this summer, and we're flying to more destinations from Cardiff Airport. That's a load more options for your next trip, so consider this your sign to

start dreaming (the best time to plan a holiday is while you're on one, after all). And you're in good hands – since I last spoke to you, TUI scooped a whopping 20 gongs at the British Travel Awards 2024, all voted for by you.

Right, I'll leave you to it. If you're just heading out, have a wonderful holiday, and if you're on your way home, we hope to see you again soon.

Happy reading!



Neil Swanson,
Managing Director TUI UK & Ireland

Editor-in-Chief:

Jessica Houtby

Editor: Lee Dasilva

Writers: Charlotte Baldwin, Conor Braniff, Chloe Brightwell, Carla Fabian, Sophie Heward, Darren Notley, Lily Owen, Alice Preece, Shaun Ringwood, Matt Robinson, Karl Taylor, Rachel Tysoe-Bailey, Laura Wilkinson

Senior Photography Editor:

Rebecca Forde

Photography Editors: Faye Delahunt, Natalie Earthy, Josh Gibson

Photography Assistant:

Siobhan Davis

Creative Image Retoucher:

Ed Marshall

Design Manager:

Janine Common
Designers: Gabby Bond, Tiegna Caulfield, Will Clement-Jones, Matthew Josephs, Shona Lett, Patrick Walton, Sarah Wilson

Production Editor:

Louise Bett



On the cover

Xcaret, a natural eco-park near Cancun, Mexico

**travel
aware**
gov.uk/travelaware

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.





23

The 1% club

Find out which hotels took the trophies at this year's prestigious TUI Global Hotel Awards.



52

Let me entertain you

Going away with your family *is* cool. Check out all the things your tricky teens and tweens can get up to on a TUI holiday.

**Trending**

Where's hot when?	06
Skincare tips for hot trips	08
Saddle up!	10
Glasto to glacier	12
The gate escape	14
Wanderlost	16
Out of the ordinary	18
In full bloom	20

Hotels

#TikTokMadeMeBookIt	24
BLUE with a view	26

Destinations

Spain	28
Tunisia	34
Greece	36
Mexico	38
Jamaica	42
Dubai	45
Thailand	46

Families

Magical milestones	50
Ready for something epic?	54
Best. Holiday. Ever.	57

Food & drink

Feast mode	58
When life gives you lemons...	60

Interviews

Meet the Cheethams	66
First Choice Insiders	68
Keeping it in the family	70
<i>Pack Your Bags: unpacked</i>	73

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.



This magazine was produced using 100% carbon-balanced paper.

Where's hot when?

Here's a handy list of holiday hotspots, so you can chase the sun all year round...

January

St Lucia



26°C

Banish the January blues in the Caribbean. This tropical island serves up the classics: white sands and swaying palms, plus volcanic peaks, rainforests and waterfalls.



22°C

February

Abu Dhabi

Abu Dhabi's home to toasty temps all year round, but if sweltering summer highs of 44°C sound too much, then February is a top pick. You'll still get your sun fix on the beach, and sightseeing at the **Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque** is more bearable.



26°C

March

Mexico

Mexico's a warm weather spot for most of the year, but you can expect less rainfall outside of the summer months. Head to **Cancun** for big beaches and big nights out, and to **Riviera Maya** for one of the world's biggest coral reefs.



29°C

April

Sri Lanka

Just outside peak season, April brings smaller crowds, warm weather and minimal rain. The average temp hovers around 29°C - perfect for ticking off temples and tea plantations in the sunshine.



26°C

July

Ibiza

It might be known for its nightlife, but that's only one chapter in the island's story. Its sleepy villages, pretty beaches and old town aren't to be missed.

May

Florida



26°C

When it comes to the heat in **Florida**, less is more. If you fancy a trip to **Walt Disney World Resort** or **Universal Orlando Resort** without melting between rides, May's a safe bet - temps in the Sunshine State don't peak until later in the summer.



June

Croatia



23°C

With 1,185 islands floating off its shores, 10 UNESCO World Heritage sites and eight national parks, **Croatia** is the ideal spot for some early summer exploring.



August

Madeira



24°C

August is a great time to visit **Madeira**, otherwise known as the Hawaii of the Atlantic. Hike above the clouds on the **Pico do Arieiro** trail or relax with a refreshing glass of poncha.

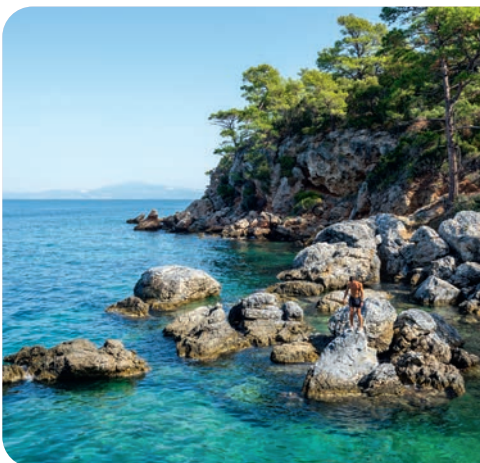
September

Greece



21°C

With the British summer on its way out and crowds thinning after peak season, September's a great time to make a dash for the Greek Islands. Check out **Santorini's** whitewashed houses and vineyards, or fly and flop on one of **Rhodes' Blue Flag** beaches.



October

Turkey



22°C

October is just right in **Turkey** with temps ranging between 17°C and 27°C. Whether you're bartering at the bazaars in **Antalya's** old town or kicking back on the beach, it's the ideal time of year for a mix of sightseeing and sunbathing.



23°C

November

Egypt

Ditch the coat and dig out the suncream - **Egypt's** calling. With toasty temps still the norm, November's a top time to kick back in **Hurghada** or snorkel in **Sharm El Sheikh**.



29°C

December

Maldives

When are you in need of a tropical island escape more than in winter? December is one of the driest months in the **Maldives**, so you don't need to worry about packing a brolly.



Maximise your annual leave

2025 packs in plenty of bank holidays to take advantage of.

- 01 Double bank holidays over Easter weekend mean you can take a large chunk of April off. Book Mon 14th to Thurs 17th and Tues 22nd to Fri 25th for 16 consecutive days off.
- 02 May serves up bank holidays at the start and end of the month. Book four days off after each, and you can fly away for nine days - twice!
- 03 Increase your time off over the summer and turn four days into nine by tagging your annual leave onto the end of the bank holiday on 25th August.
- 04 When winter sets in, you've got Christmas Day, Boxing Day, and New Year's Day, so you only need to book four days to get 13 off.



Skincare tips for hot trips

Sophie Heward spills the need-to-know holiday skincare tips from beauty expert, **Natacha Derian**.

Hydration, hydration, hydration - it's the key to holiday skin that glows. When your skin's hydrated, it gets more oxygen and essential nutrients, making it look as bright as the view from your plane window. You can start building up hydration before you travel - in fact, it's been proven that drinking two litres of water every day for a month pre-flight will help keep your skin moisturised on the plane, where the humidity levels can be drying. Don't worry if you missed the memo, though - the **Clinique Moisture Surge Set** has your back.

Some of the best skincare staples are overnight products, so you'll apply them after sundowners. Your skin regenerates while you sleep, and your natural collagen production peaks at night, so it makes sense to add a little something to enhance the process - we particularly love the **Estée Lauder Advanced Night Repair Serum**. Getting that trusty eight hours' slumber works wonders for your skin, too. If you're out a little late, treat yourself to a lie in the next morning - it's in the name of skincare.

Routine's another big factor for healthy skin. Even if you like to pack a lot into your days on holiday, keep things simple by cleansing, exfoliating, moisturising and applying SPF each morning. If you're really short on time, check out the **Kaplan MD Diamond Contour Supercharged One Minute Daily Facial**. It takes just 60 seconds to work its magic, and it combines multiple products in one bottle, so it's a space-saver for your toiletry bag, too.

Btw, all these products are from our *Shop* mag, so you can buy them onboard, subject to availability.

- 01 Facial mist is an essential. It keeps your skin fresh and cools you down - a win-win.
- 02 Wear an SPF of at least 30 every day, even if it's cloudy.
- 03 To give your tan a boost and keep your skin nourished, add a pump of **Tan-Luxe The Glow Body Oil**.
- 04 Look for products that contain hyaluronic acid - they help plump your skin, preventing water loss while you're under the sun.
- 05 Don't forget to keep your lips hydrated in the heat. For a vibrant, glossy lip, the **Clarins Lip Comfort Oil Duo's** just the ticket.





Blue skies, bluer waters.

Tucked away in a secluded bay,
the Blue Lagoon Village majors in
scenic stays.



TRENDING

COWBOYCATIONS



Saddle up!

Trips centred around the Wild West and country music? Yee-haw!

From TV's *Yellowstone* and *America's Sweethearts: Dallas Cowboys Cheerleaders*, to Beyoncé's *Cowboy Carter* and the revival of denim

waistcoats, the cowboy craze is riding high. And I'm all in - I've been a country music fan since before it was cool (shoutout to my grandad for that).

And the world's Wild West obsession isn't just shaping music and fashion - it's influencing travel, too. Horseback adventures and country music getaways are on the rise, and there's no sign of the momentum slowing. A quick search for 'cowboy TUI experiences' brings up a full-day horse riding experience on the historic Camí de Cavalls trail in Menorca. Or, if you're craving the real American frontier, you can hop on a guided TUI Tour to see the canyons, lakes and valleys of the USA's legendary national parks. But if you ask me, the real hidden gem is the Dominican Republic.

Leaving nothing but a trail of hoof prints in the dust, you can trot, canter





Horse riding experience in
Punta Cana, Dominican Republic.



or gallop through forests and along white-sand beaches on a guided horseback ride in the Dom Rep - and you don't need to be a pro to join. You'll be picked up from your hotel and taken to a traditional ranch, where you'll get geared up and matched with a trusty steed. You might be coupled with 'Caramelo' or paired with 'Pinky'. Then, it's into the stirrups and up into the saddle to set off towards the mouth of the River Maimon, a protected natural area where local fishers vie for a catch. After that, country roads will literally take you home - you'll go through scenic countryside, past beaches and back to the ranch. It's the perfect way to see the Dominican Republic's landscape.

I'm also adding our first ever country music-themed cruise, setting sail on Marella Explorer 2 in February 2026, to my cowboycation list. I'm talking four nights of country music with stars like

The Shires and The Dolly Show, plus a big barn party with line dancing and themed whiskey cocktails. Ports you'll call in at include Malaga, Gibraltar and Lanzarote, so you can add some sight-seeing to your toe-tapping agenda. Plaid = packed.

 Words: Jessica Houtby

Don't miss
the boat...
search for
Marella Cruises
Country Rhythms
for more info
on our country-
themed cruise.

TRENDING

WINTER FESTIVALS

Glasto to glacier

Gotta get your festival fix in 2026? Glasto's a no go, so for **Charlotte Baldwin** it's all about the mountains...



Electric Mountain Festival in Sölden, Austria
© Ötztal Tourismus / Nicolai Semrau



CRYSTAL

SKI HOLIDAYS

Glastonbury's taking a fallow year in 2026 (gutted).

But it's no biggie. I'll be partying on the piste at a winter festival instead - it's just a matter of which one. The mountains have got to trump a muddy field any day, and I've always wanted to try skiing or snowboarding.

First off, there's the Glasto of the winter world - Snowbombing in **Mayrhofen**, Austria. It's got a ton of fun events - think mountaintop brunching and chairlift speed-dating - and has hosted heavyweight headliners Fatboy Slim and Noel Gallagher. But it's not the only option.

What about Electric Mountain Festival? I can get free access to this massive piste-side party in **Sölden** with a lift pass. Oh, and I'd better ask for my martini 'shaken, not stirred' at après, as this Austrian resort starred in the James Bond film *Spectre*.

I'm as stoked about making my first turns on snow as I am for the beats. The good news? **Alpe d'Huez**, France, has standout beginner-friendly slopes, which puts Tomorrowland Winter high on my list. This festival's famous for its giant fantasy-inspired props, like an eagle guarding the decks - insanely cool, right? And the resort gets over 300 days of sunshine each year (that's gotta be more than Glastonbury...) The same's true for Spain's **Sierra Nevada**, so I'm factoring in Sun & Snow Weekend too. Spain's not your obvious ski destination, I know, but this place is a hotspot for first-time skiers AND festival goers.

Last up's Zermatt Unplugged in **Zermatt**, Switzerland, and a totally different different music vibe - goodbye electronic, hello acoustic. The scenic train transfer looks incredible, as does the Matterhorn mountain backdrop (the logo on the Toblerone bars we've all eyed up in duty-free).

Wherever I land, I'm sold on swapping my festival wellies for ski boots next year.



Start planning your trip to the mountains at crystalski.co.uk

LIVE HAPPY

The gate escape

Airport lounges are shaping up to be one of the hottest travel trends for 2025. Want in? Here are a few of our fave spots to relax before take-off...

Plaza Premium Lounge

Everybody loves a touch of plane spotting at the airport, and Edinburgh Airport's Plaza Premium Lounge is the perfect place for it. The floor-to-ceiling windows treat you to a **first-class view of the runway**, and you can pair your pre-flight panoramas with an **Edinburgh Gin-infused tippie** from the bar. The cocktails here are exclusive to the lounge, so you can really start your holiday in style.



Edinburgh
Airport



Manchester
Airport

Escape Lounge

Terminal 1, 2 or 3? You can relax in an Escape Lounge wherever you fly from at Manchester Airport. Once you're in, find a seat in a **quiet corner**, before heading to the buffet to tuck in to breakfast, lunch or dinner before your flight. There's plenty on offer, including a **selection of sweet treats**. Apple and cinnamon muffin for breakfast? Go on, you're on holiday.

My Lounge



London Luton
Airport

Luton Airport's My Lounge feels like a cosy living room. The **comfy sofas and soft lighting** give strong home decor inspo. It's a great pick for families thanks to a **separate family area** with a games room. That's a bit of pre-flight stress taken care of...





Newcastle
Airport

Aspire Lounge

Adults can relax in **quiet zones** while families keep kids entertained in **booths fitted with smart TVs** at Newcastle Airport's Aspire Lounge. Both are fitted with **charging stations**, so you can make sure your devices are topped up before take-off. Nobody wants to see a low battery warning on their tot's tablet just as the seatbelt sign has been turned off, right?



Montego Bay
Airport

Club Mobay

We're going overseas for this entry. Jamaica's Club Mobay Lounge gets you **free light snacks and drinks** before your flight home - one last Red Stripe beer for the road, sorted.

Clubrooms Lounge

Food and drinks are part of the deal at most airport lounges, but the adults-only Clubrooms Lounge at Birmingham Airport takes things up a notch. First up, there's its bar menu. Forget house wines - the **selection of reds, rosés and whites here is award winning**. What is it about a New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc that makes it sooo good?! The food menu fits the vibe, too - you know the brekkie's going to be great when tomatoes come on the vine. Our favourite perk is the service, though. All your food and drinks are **delivered to your table by a dedicated waiter**, leaving you free to kick back and get comfy.



Birmingham
Airport



Lounge life calling?

Sign in to Manage My Booking to add an airport lounge with our partner, Holiday Extras, **from just £26pp.*** You can also add airport parking, airport hotels and a fast-track pass to skip the lines at security, too. Or, upgrade to Premium on a long-haul flight with TUI Airways and you'll get a UK airport lounge pass and a fast-pass through security for free.

Words: Karl Taylor

*Prices are correct at the time of printing but may differ for the dates you require.

LIVE HAPPY

TRENDING

DETOUR DESTINATIONS

Wanderlost

A breath of fresh air, pine needles underfoot and an eyeful of mountain - taking a detour has never looked so good.



You're not alone if you're thinking about taking an alternative route for your next holiday. According to predicted travel trends for 2025, 'detour destinations' are the new hot thing. Over 63% of people surveyed said they'd be likely to take a detour from their main holiday destination to visit a lesser-known location - and to escape the typical tourist crowds.

And the easiest way to do it? In a hire car, we reckon. Seat belt on, music plugged in, snacks in the glove box - all that's left is to hit the open road. Ideally like the one in this photo. FYI, this is Canada's Icefields Parkway in Alberta, a province that's a rising star for detour destinations. Looks great, right? Rated one of the top drives in the world, this scenic highway links Lake Louise with

Jasper across 227 kilometres of rocky mountains, icefields and sweeping valleys.

There are loads of other places in Canada's great parks of the west you don't want to miss, either. Pack a picnic to eat in the wilderness of Jasper National Park, and bring your wellies for a trek around Moose Valley Provincial Park. Try and wrap your arms around a mammoth cedar tree in Glacier National Park. Or hike along part of the abandoned Canadian Pacific Railway line.

Luckily for you, we've got a self-drive TUI Tour that'll guide you through the lot. We'll give you a suggested route and a car, and whoosh - away you go. You're not chained to a strict agenda,

and our itinerary also gives you plenty of breathing room to find some of Canada's best-kept secrets on your own.

Wherever you fancy detouring next year, we're here for it. Stumble across a glacial lake. Hike through a forest of scented pine trees, with only birdsong for company. Slide the car window down so the breeze can tousle your hair as you zip past cornfields - no cities in sight. Getting wonderfully lost sounds ideal.

Words: Rachel Tysoe-Bailey



Get your detour
in the diary at
tui.co.uk/tours

TRENDING

NATURAL PHENOMENA

Out of the



Bioluminescent
waves breaking
on a beach.



ordinary

Some people travel for sun. Others for snow. But there's a new trend in the mix – travelling to see natural phenomena. **Karl Taylor** rounds up the top events and when to see them...

01 **Bioluminescence, the Maldives – June to October**

Ah, the Maldives. Home to over 1,000 islands of white sand, turquoise waters and gently swaying palms. You might want to forget the sunbathing sessions for a second, though – a trip to the beach after dark to spot bioluminescent plankton is what we're talking about here. The plankton's electric-blue glow is caused by a chemical reaction that happens when it's moved by the waves, and it can be spotted on the shores across the archipelago. The summer-autumn shoulder is the best time to see this phenomenon, which has been spotted on the shores of our TUI BLUE Olhuveli Romance hotel.

02 **Northern Lights, Iceland – September to April**

The Northern Lights were spotted across parts of the UK last year, but if you missed out – or fancy a second show – we'd recommend a trip to Iceland this winter. Why? It's near the Arctic Circle and has minimal light pollution, so it's one of the best places

to see the Northern Lights in the world. You might want to move quickly on this one, though – 2025 is forecasted to be another year of strong solar activity, which means the Northern Lights will make an appearance more often and will be easier to spot. *Immediately books a holiday to Iceland*

03 **Alpenglow, Canada – June to August**

If you ask us, golden hour selfies are perfect for the front cover for your post-hol Insta drop. And, in Canada, you can switch up the usual beach backdrop for one with pink-hued peaks and valleys in Banff National Park. The colour change is caused by a phenomenon known as alpenglow, when the sun's light hits the mountains at a low angle, scattering blue light and leaving the longer wavelengths of red and pink light to illuminate the peaks. Visit from June to August for the perfect selfie – the Canadian Rockies light up at golden hour throughout the year, but there's a better chance of a cloudless sunset in the summer.

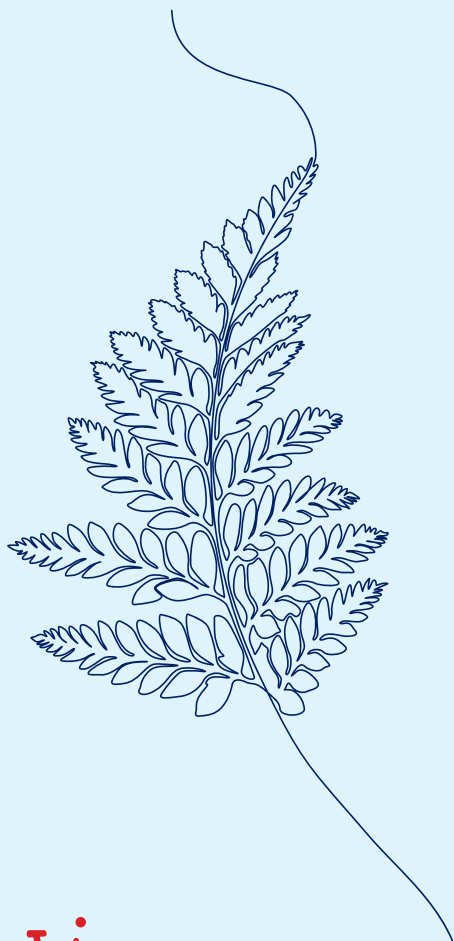
04 **Solar eclipse, Spain – August 2026**

The next full solar eclipse is on the calendar for the 12th of August 2026. And, although the UK is missing out on a total eclipse this time, you've only got to take a short flight to witness the real deal. The path of totality will travel through east Greenland, west Iceland and northern Spain and we've got the deets on a super special way to see it. Marella Cruises' seven-night Cosmopolitan Charms itinerary will begin in Palma, Majorca and arrive at Palamos – on Spain's mainland – on the day of the eclipse. That evening, after you've set sail for your next destination, you can witness the solar eclipse while you're at sea. So, when you're asked where you were for the eclipse, you can mention the cocktail you were sipping on the ship's top deck. Bragging rights, secured, for life.



In full bloom

Get your kicks in the garden? You're in good company. This year's freshest travel trend is about slowing the tempo and taking in the beauty of green (and other coloured) spaces. **Laura Wilkinson** shares her pick of the bunch...



01

The Netherlands

Flowers are what the Dutch do best. And from March to May every year, bright tulips colour the bollenstreek - bulb region, to you and me. But the real magic's at Keukenhof. A smidge over 20 miles south of Amsterdam lies the world's largest bulb-flower garden, where you'll find a whopping seven million bulbs and 800 varieties of tulips - no wonder it's the national flower of the Netherlands.

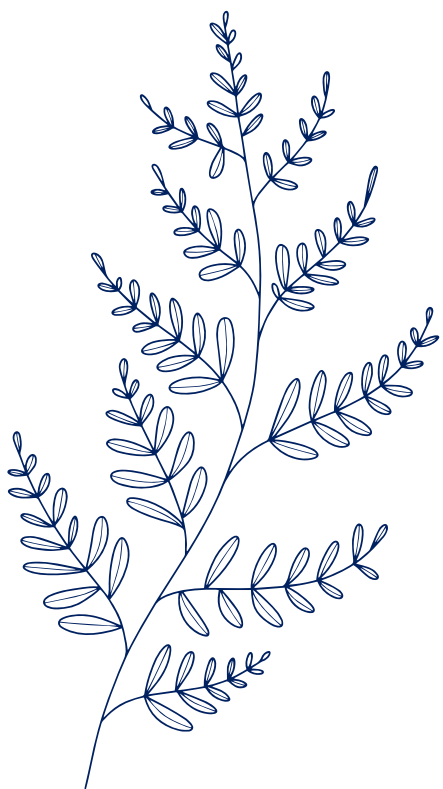


02

Italy

Flowers don't immediately spring to mind when you think of Europe's boot, but Umbria - nicknamed Italy's green heart - changes that. Wild, wonderfully unspoilt and wedged between the peaks of the Sibillini Mountains, Castelluccio's Piano Grande (or great plain) comes alive with colour every summer. It's creamy crocuses one week, scarlet poppies the next - both stretching out in stripes for miles.





03 Japan

Think Japan, think gardens. The green spaces here are all about tranquillity. Come spring, locals flock to the gardens, parks and squares for hanami - or flower watching. Our fave spot? Tokyo's Shinjuku Gyoen National Garden. It's got more than a thousand sakura, or cherry blossom trees, which symbolise love and new beginnings in Japanese culture.



04 Morocco

Gardens in this patch of Africa are a sanctuary from the desert dust. Beyond the maroon marketplaces of Marrakech, you'll find oasis-like pockets. Majorelle Gardens, made famous by fashion designer Yves Saint Laurent, wears the crown. Over three thousand plant species live here, including palms, cacti, coconut trees, weeping willows and water lilies.



05 Madeira

This Portuguese island is the ultimate paradise for plant lovers. Nicknamed the Floating Garden, Madeira's carpeted in colourful stuff - bougainvillea burst from every backstreet, purple jacaranda trees line terracotta terraces and jade green vines cascade like chandeliers from pergolas. Pen in a visit to the Quinta da Boa Vista estate in the capital, Funchal, which has over 50,000 plants - from passion flowers and aloes to rare towering orchids.



06 Thailand

Escaping to Eden couldn't be easier in Thailand. From flower markets to botanic gardens, colour here is kaleidoscopic - nowhere more so than the rosy Nong Han Lake, AKA the red lotus sea. Thousands of buoyant blossoms burst into life in spring, marking the end of the rainy season. The lotuses are best viewed by boat before noon, when the flowers are fully open.

Miles and monuments

Last year was the first of our title sponsorship of the TUI Palma Marathon Mallorca. To mark the milestone, **Darren Notley** reveals some of the sights you'll see along the course.



La Llotja

As you go past this 15th-century seafront building, you'll probably catch a glimpse of its twin turrets and an angel over the door, then ask yourself, "Is it a castle or a church?" But the answer's neither. During Majorca's maritime trading boom, it was used as a storage space for goods and guns. Since then, it's been a fine art gallery, and nowadays it hosts cultural exhibitions.

Palma Cathedral

While you're running in the race, you'll be forgiven for slowing down as you go past this Gothic masterpiece. It took 400 years to build, and the race route covers all four sides. Keep your eyes peeled for the enormous rose window, which features over 1,200 pieces of glass.



Search for **TUI events** to secure your spot.

Es Baluard

This waterfront museum of modern and contemporary artwork celebrated its 20th birthday in 2024, and it's home to more than 700 works of art, including pieces by Pablo Picasso and Salvador Dali.

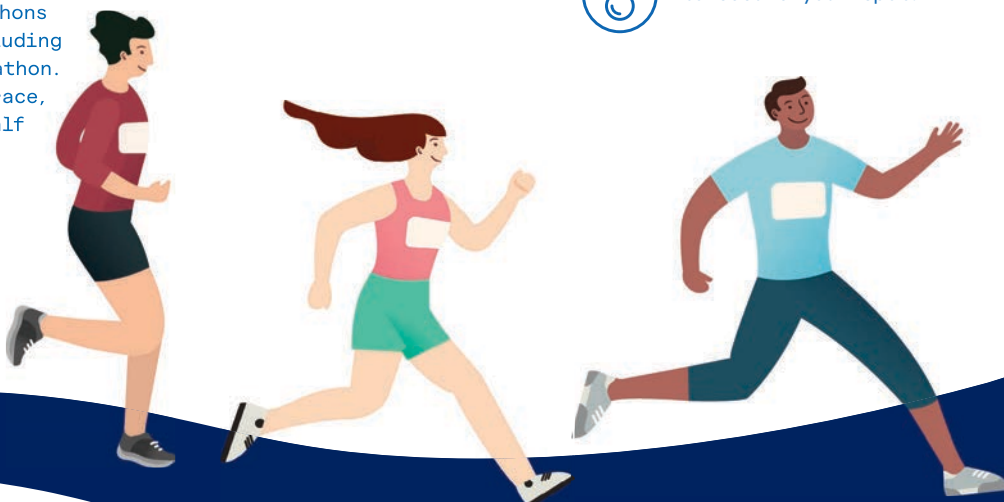
Castell de Bellver

You'll really have to keep your eyes peeled for this 14th-century fortress, which is nestled up in the hills above the city. For a close-up, hang around Palma for a day or two after the race. It's worth visiting just for the sweeping views across the city and the bay, while the history museum here is a bonus.



Did you know?


The TUI Palma Marathon Mallorca is one of several TUI-sponsored marathons across Europe, including the TUI Rhodes Marathon. As well as a full race, they all offer a half marathon and a 10k route.



The 1% club

The annual TUI Global Hotel Awards are the ultimate celebration of our best properties.

We listen to 16 million holidaymakers and whittle down a list of the most-loved 100 hotels. Representing the top 1% of our huge global portfolio, these properties are invited to the TUI Global Hotel Awards, for the chance to take home one of 19 gongs. So, if you're looking for tried-and-tested quality for your next stay, our top 100 is a great start. Take a peek at some of this year's standouts, then punch **TUI Global Hotel Awards 2025** into your search engine to see the full list...

 Words: Lee Dasilva



TUI BLUE Barut Andiz

Five-star service secured this adults-only hotel – in Antalya, on the Turkish Riviera – one of the awards' biggest accolades: Best Hotel TUI UK & Ireland. It's the kind of place where staff members will gather, unprompted, to wave you away on your last day, or make you feel like a VIP when you sit down for dinner. Speaking of food, it's another thing this hotel does so well – Tripadvisor raves about its three restaurants, especially its Italian à la carte.

Constantinou Bros Asimina Suites Hotel

What do Tom Hardy, Dua Lipa, and this hotel have in common? They've all walked away from awards ceremonies clutching a Best Newcomer trophy. It's hardly surprising, though – this Cypriot spot is the epitome of holiday opulence. Suites come with espresso machines and marble bathrooms, while luxe touches include cold towels delivered to your sunlounger, and a bottle of bubbly left in your room a few days before your leave.



Riu Gran Canaria

More is more, and this XL spot in the Canary Islands – officially crowned our Best Large Hotel – proves why. From above, the property looks like it's in the middle of a desert oasis, thanks to an expanse of lofty palms. Zoom in, and there's no shortage of pools (including a boujie infinity pool for adults), as well six places to eat and as many bars. Cleverly, some of them are self-service, so there's always somewhere to keep yourself topped up with cocktails and snacks.

#TikTok MadeMe BookIt

There's no limit to what can become an overnight success on social media (air fryer, anyone?)

Kitchen gadgets aren't the only thing trending - as Laura Wilkinson finds out...

Ah, TikTok - the guidebook to pretty much everything. As a self-confessed scroller (home decor and holidays - totally my bag), I can't help but turn to TikTok when the inspo well runs dry.

Picture the scene: it's an average Sunday evening, phone in hand, cuppa on the coffee table and you're on the sofa scrolling. The algorithms know you well - for me, the feed's full of furniture hacks, paint swatches and "get ready with me" reels. Then, something interrupts your scroll - a hotel with super-stylish interiors. **Riu Palace Tikida Taghazout** has entered the chat 🗨️

You're instantly hooked. With every swipe on the trending vids, something new piques your interest - from the floor-to-ceiling windows with views of the Atlantic Ocean to the marble

accents. You'd expect nothing less with the reputable name of RIU on the door. This place nails interior trends left, right and centre. The lobby bar is botanical chic to a T. Plants cascade from ceiling chandeliers, there's greenery growing out of the bar, and the seating spaces - with rich fabrics reflecting the colours of Moroccan riads - look like the place to sip traditional mint tea.

The rest of the lobby has a whole different vibe. It's pretty neutral - a world away from the oranges and blues of the bar - and filled with faux peacocks and zebras. And light floods in from giant skylights - another hint this hotel does everything in style.

A pretty pool is high on my holiday wishlist ✅ (shoutout to the water babies), and Riu Palace Tikida

Taghazout delivers on the detail. The hotel's swish geometric shape extends to the pool area, where tall, leafy palms line the edge, giving the illusion they're growing out of the water. Daybed platforms jut out into the blue. And the lounge-lined terrace? Chef's kiss.

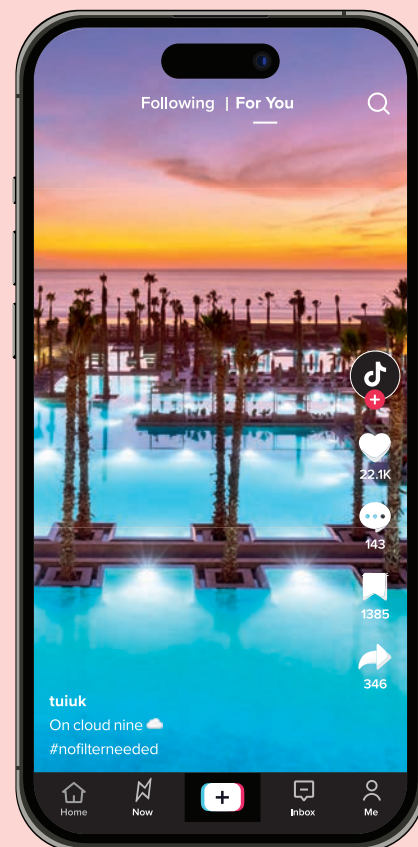
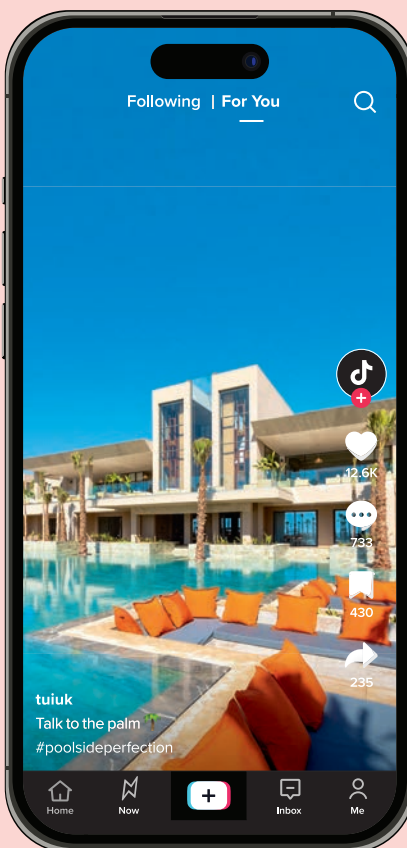
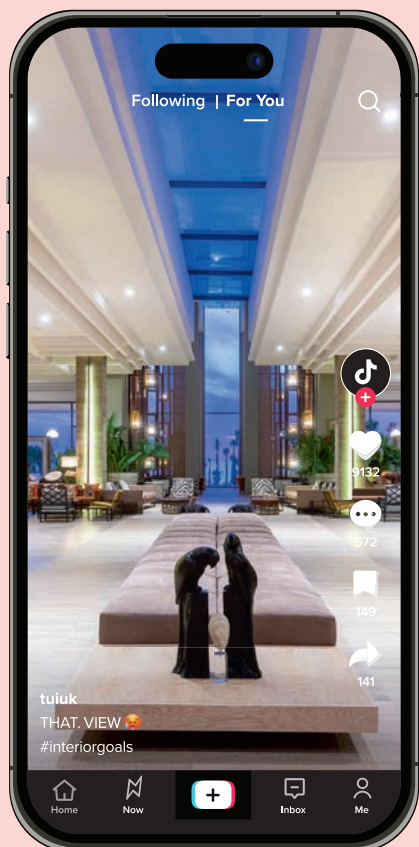
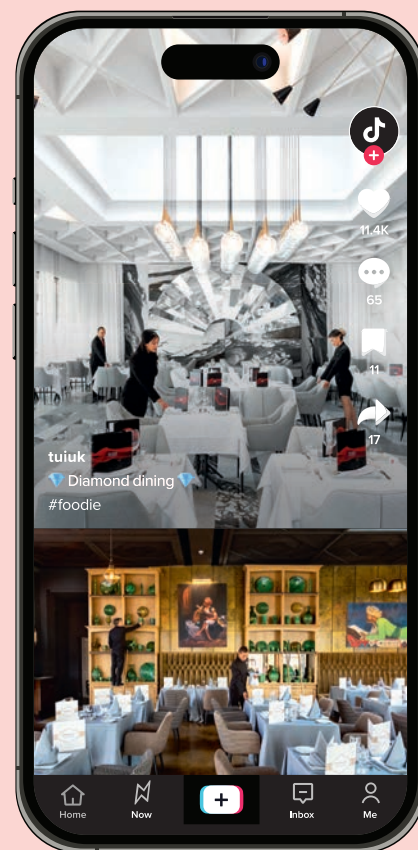
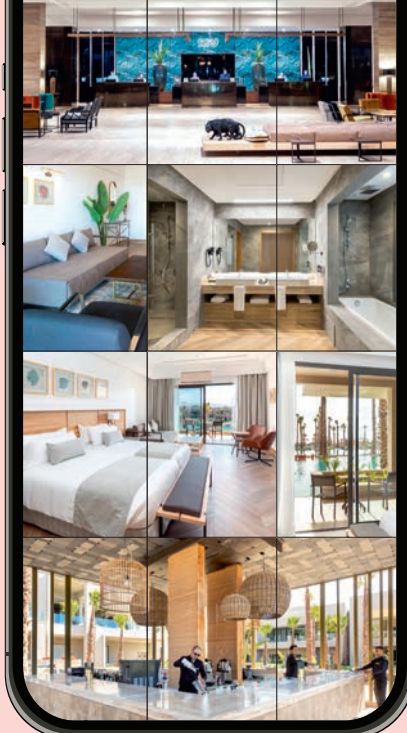
And speaking of the water, the swim-up suites = immaculate 🥰 I can picture myself wandering in a dressing gown through the Scandi-inspired space, catching a sorbet sunrise from my private pool terrace. It's POV access without having to leave your sofa.

If you ask me, the hotel's designer deserves a pat on the back - every inch of this place is social-worthy. With the cuppa untouched and a credit card in hand, I bet you can guess what happened next. #TikTokMadeMeBookIt...



Look for @tuiuk on your socials and connect with us.





BLUE with a view

Some hotels might have a slick infinity pool, a private beach, or even a luxe spa. Not to brag, but this place has the lot - but it's the views that trump them all.

Shaun Ringwood sees how they stack up...

TUI BLUE Seno is on a forest-clad hillside on the Turkish coast, tucked away from pretty much everything. As we zig-zag up sloping roads, I start to wonder just how remote this place really is. It turns out... very.

The address, in fact, is a bit of a red herring - the hotel's technically in the resort of Sarigerme, but the village centre passes us by as we follow the weaving inland lanes. And the reason this adults-only pad puts itself at arm's length from civilisation becomes clear when we arrive at the reception.

That's when a golf buggy materialises, and we trundle down flower-lined lanes to reach rooms that gaze out across a bright blue bay. They have a mountain chalet charm to them - pretty compact, with some peeking out from the trees and others beneath the canopy. At every



turn, my eyes are drawn to panoramas that look like a landscape painting brought to life.

The next morning, the hazy coastal outline of Dalaman comes into focus as the sun rubs the sleep from its eyes, and sailboats, canoes and jet-skis paint patterns across the water with their wakes. By midday, the islands off the coast become blocky silhouettes that twinkle as the rays bounce off the surf. When I gather up my sunbathing essentials at the end of the day, a dusky dance of colours keeps me guessing - will I see shades of pink and purple or a striking streak of red and orange?

And the best bit? I never feel stressed about finding a spot to soak it all in. A private beach treats me to the ebbing and flowing sounds of the sea, and one of the highest points of the hotel is furnished with a quiet pool where the seaside sunloungers seem to shrink to doll size when I peer down. In short, this hotel has the sort of scenery that makes the rest of your camera roll green with envy. All you need to do is find your favourite angle...



For a look at all our **TUI BLUE** hotels, head to tui.co.uk/tui-blue







Turning the tide

The TUI Care Foundation is working hard around the world to help look after natural environments and support local communities in travel destinations. In Majorca, it's all hands on deck to protect the Mediterranean Sea's 'super plant'...

Picture Majorca, and I'm guessing the likes of sandy coves, sweeping bays and towering mountains come to mind. However, there's a whole other side to Spain's biggest Balearic Island that rarely gets a look in - partly because it's a little harder to spot from your sunlounger - and it plays a vital role in protecting the planet.

I'm talking marine life, and more specifically, a 'super plant' called Posidonia (named after Poseidon, the Greek god of the sea, of course). The seagrass is native to the Mediterranean, and it can live for more than 100,000 years.

As well as helping to keep the waters around here clear, it also provides a haven for some of the 400-plus species of fish and mammals that call this area home, including sperm whales and dolphins. Safe to say, it's rather important, and the TUI Care Foundation certainly thinks so. That's why it's working with local non-profit organisations like the Marilles Foundation to try and reverse some of the damage that's been done to the seagrass before it's too late.

Jaume Amengual is a seventh-generation fisher, who's been sailing the waters around Majorca for more than three decades, and he's noticed the changes more than most. "Excessive maritime traffic, the noise produced by the engines and anchoring on Posidonia are all factors that threaten the ecosystems of our islands. There are more boats now than ever, sailing at enormous speeds, producing an awful noise and disturbing the marine life."

Together, both foundations and Jaume are working to protect and restore around 35 square kilometres of coast and seascapes to help create the perfect conditions for animals like sharks, rays and groupers to flourish.





But that's not all. As part of its TUI Sea the Change Balearics project, the TUI Care Foundation is training dozens of local fishers in marine conservation and increasing the number of sustainable tourism experiences on the island over the next few years.

"Protecting the sea is a shared responsibility," says Alex Panczuk, Executive Director of the TUI Care Foundation. "With our TUI Sea the Change Balearics project, we're on a mission to transform the Balearics into a beacon of marine conservation."

So, next time you're heading to Majorca, keep your eyes peeled for the super plant keeping the sea shimmering, and the locals doing their bit to preserve it.

 Words: Darren Notley

What is the TUI Care Foundation?

Building on the positive impact of tourism, the TUI Care Foundation leads the way in protecting the natural environment and empowering lives in travel destinations. It supports education and training opportunities for young people, drives the protection of natural habitats and the marine environment, and helps local communities thrive sustainably and benefit from tourism.



**TUI SEA THE CHANGE
PROGRAMME**

Visit
tuicarefoundation.com
to find out more about
the TUI Sea the Change
programme.

Quotes have been edited for length and clarity.

Thrifty, nifty and vintage



Scenario: you meet a friend for lunch, to catch up after her most recent holiday to Paris. She wants to talk fashion purchases and designer labels.

You're turned off at the thought of the prices. "But look," she says, "look at what I got in Le Marais - a Christian Lacroix wool coat for under €50, and a Nina Ricci leather bag for even less." Le Marais is right in the city centre, she tells you, describing how it's packed with second-hand stores and charity shops.

Interest piqued, you pick up your phone and start searching for city breaks to Paris. "Take an empty suitcase," your friend tells you. "You can buy your whole holiday wardrobe



while you're there - it doesn't have to be designer, but it could all be second-hand, and not expensive at all." OK, you're sold. A bit more scrolling and you've found yourself a perfect Parisian city break (with TUI, obv's). All that's left to do is count down the days until you leave. And to find a suitcase with plenty of room for your future shopping.

Sure, this scenario might sound cheesy, but the general gist is happening in real time. A 2025 travel predictions survey saw over a third of travellers say they'd be hitting shops and markets abroad to buy their holiday wardrobe, rather than doing it before their trip.



Influenced by climbing clothes prices at home, this shift isn't just about style – it's about staying savvy.

And there's no end of places to shop for holiday garb abroad, from thrift stores and local markets to charity shops.

Paris is a particularly good destination for jumping on this trend - it's not known as the fashion capital of the world for nothing. Le Marais, as mentioned, is a great shopping destination, and so are the streets of the 10th arrondissement district, which are lined with vintage stores - perfect for picking up a second-hand Chanel shirt or a pair of Louis Vuitton shoes. Elsewhere, the sprawling Marché aux Puces de Saint-Ouen, in the north of Paris, is the largest second-hand clothing and



antiques market in the world. Planning ahead also means that finding a bargain overseas won't be just a spontaneous holiday moment, but a pivotal part of your adventure.

The survey showed that nearly 60% of travellers intend to be thrifter on holiday, while 67% are tightening their money belts to maximise on experiences instead.

If you meet the brief because you're on a budget, we also recommend making a beeline for Ibiza. Es Cana Hippy Market, on the west coast of the island, has been kitting out fashion-forward holidaymakers for decades. It flaunts over 450 stalls, selling everything from colourful kaftans to beach dresses. You'll see a massive seventies influence in loads of the clothes sold here - think psychedelic patterns, cheese-cloth shirts and leather sandals. Plus, a lot of it's handmade by the locals, so you'll be supporting the community by spending your money here.

We've also got Dubai on our radar for cheaper fashion choices. The souks in Bur Dubai - the oldest neighbourhood in the city - specialise in locally produced textiles. There are tailors to hand in the cubby-hole stands, who can measure you up for whatever holiday outfit you might be after. Dubai's got a lot of attractions and religious sites that require modest clothing, so Bur Dubai's a great shout for picking up cover-up clothes on the cheap.

Wherever your next destination, leaving space in your case is key if you want to buy your holiday wardrobe abroad. Fitting, then, that you get a 20kg luggage allowance as standard when you fly with TUI Airways*, so there's no need to debate whether or not you'll have room for those new shoes on the way home.

 Words: Rachel Tysoe-Bailey

What's your Roman Empire?

With our interest in the Roman Empire renewed (thanks TikTok and *Gladiator II*), we reveal four of your favourite amphitheatres in the world.



01

The Colosseum, Italy

It's a no-brainer this one's first on the list. Hailed as one of the New 7 Wonders of the World, the Colosseum is the world's largest amphitheatre. Twice as long as a football pitch, it was big enough to flood for mock naval battles (though, there's no evidence of sharks à la *Gladiator II*). Live your best historical life and pair your visit here with a trip to the Roman Forum and Palatine Hill.

Special mentions in Italy also go to the **Amphitheatre of Capua** and the **Amphitheatre of Pompeii**, both near Naples. The Amphitheatre of Capua is famous as the training ground of Spartacus, history's most renowned

gladiator. We'll forgive you for re-enacting that iconic scene from the 1960s film... IYKYK. Join one of our daytrips, led by local experts, to explore its underground tunnels and get the lowdown on its hidden secrets.

The Amphitheatre of Pompeii, on the other hand, is the oldest surviving Roman amphitheatre in the world (bank for a pub quiz or to impress your 'random facts' friend). In its heyday, it seated about 20,000. Walk in the footsteps of the locals who lived there before Mount Vesuvius erupted in 79 AD, and be sure to visit the ancient theatre, frescoed villas and Roman baths, too.





- 02 El Jem Ampitheatre, Tunisia**
This North African marvel, declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site, is famed for its long underground tunnels, where wild animals and gladiators were held, and steep three-tiered seating. Set in flatlands away from town, it's usually quieter than its Italian counterpart, and you can climb to the top level and gaze down over the arena. Hop on a tour with us to tick it off, alongside the Great Mosque of Kairouan (more on [page 34](#)) and an ancient medina.



- 03 Pula Arena, Croatia**
Pula Arena is Croatia's best-preserved Roman structure. In fact, it's the only remaining Roman amphitheatre to have four side towers intact. It's set in a pretty scenic spot, too, by the port. Today, you can explore its stone passageways, and see exhibits on the Istria region's ancient oil and wine production. Plus, you can dress up in Roman attire and have a novelty photo taken – say grapes!



- 04 Arena of Nîmes, France**
Gladiator duels, animal hunts and sieges. This one's seen it all, and the fight for entertainment lives on today – Metallica, Dire Straits and Dua Lipa have all performed here. See the arena in all its glory at the Festival de Nîmes, staged here every summer. We won't gatekeep the other Roman sites in Nîmes either... the city isn't called the 'French Rome' for nothing. We're talking Maison Carrée, one of the best-preserved Roman temples in the world, and the Tour Magne watchtower.

Words: Jessica Houtby



Put your hat
(or helmet) in
the ring at
[tui.co.uk/
things-to-do](https://tui.co.uk/things-to-do)

DESTINATIONS

TUNISIA

On the UNESCO trail



Watch our Tunisia travel
guide at [youtube.com/@
tuiukholidays](https://youtube.com/tuiukholidays)



Think Tunisia's all sun, sea and sand? Think again. It's home to not one, but nine UNESCO World Heritage sites. Jessica Houtby explores three...

A thin scarf drapes over my head and shoulders. The heat presses down as I step into a vast open-air courtyard. A prayer hall beckons ahead, where towering, studded wooden doors stand guard. Non-Muslims, like me, may only glimpse inside - never enter.

Through a gap, I catch sight of a sea of rugs blanketing the floor - each one a labour of love, handwoven by local women and offered as a gift to Allah. The rich colours stand out in the filtered light. Where am I? The **Great Mosque of Kairouan** - one of North Africa's most sacred Islamic monuments, and the first of my triple-header of Tunisia's landmarks protected by UNESCO...

For decades, holidaymakers have been drawn to this North African country for its Mediterranean coastline and toasty temps. But they're just the beginning. Arabic, African and European influences all come together to craft a rich tapestry of culture and history. And nowhere is this more evident than in UNESCO-listed Kairouan, one of the holy cities of Islam.

The **Medina of Tunis**, in the capital city, is next on my UNESCO list. Just a short drive from the popular resort towns of Sousse and Hammamet, this 730-acre labyrinth of mosques, souks and artisan workshops is one of the best-preserved old quarters in the Islamic world. My guide, Wissem - a proud TUI Expert - grins as he declares: "Bartering is a sport in Tunisia." He's not wrong. Sellers call out from their stalls, and the air is

thick with the scent of the jasmine and harissa they're peddling. Piles of spices glow in rich reds, shoemakers carve out leather and rug weavers sit in quiet concentration. I can't help but wonder - are these being made for Kairouan?

A short drive later, I find myself getting wonderfully lost at the UNESCO-rated ruins of **Carthage** - once a mighty trading hub, now a silent testament to a turbulent past. Here, Rome's conquest in 146 BC has left behind fragments of grand baths and crumbling columns. I wander among the arches and pillars - touching the rough edges - and find reprieve from the sun in a stone-hewn tunnel. "Let's climb to the top of Byrsa Hill for the best views over the ruins, the Gulf of Tunis and the Punic Ports next," says Wissem. Circular-shaped, the ports were once used by the Carthaginian navy to see out to sea while remaining hidden from approaching enemy ships. Very clever.

Looking out over the ports, now I understand that Tunisia isn't just a beach destination. It's a place to feel, to breathe in and to lose yourself in history. That scarf still rests on my shoulders, now carrying the first scents and memories of this trip. Three UNESCO sites down, six to go...



Great Mosque of Kairouan



Carthage

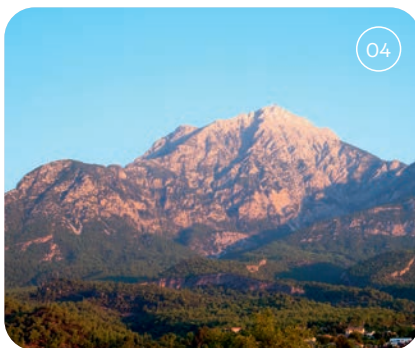


Medina of Tunis

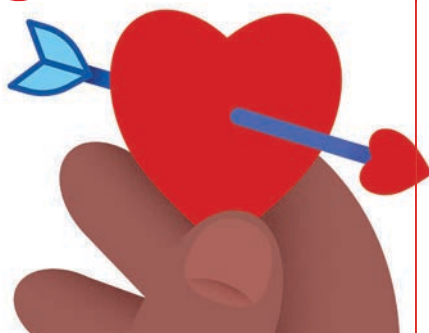
Aphrodite approved

Ready to get down on one knee?

Carla Fabian rounds up the most scenic spots in Greece to pop the question.



Sort your big day at
tui.co.uk/weddings



01

Delphi, mainland Greece

If you want a more intimate proposal, book a private tour for two to Delphi. It's perched on the cliffside at the foot of Mount Parnassus, so you're in for some stunning views.

02

Lighthouse of Chania, Crete

Asking someone to marry you is nerve-wracking enough without the added stress of a difficult-to-find location. Cue the Lighthouse of Chania - it's pretty hard to miss, so head here at sunset for a simple but seriously scenic spot to ask that very important question.

03

Kanali tou Eroti, Corfu

Legend says anyone who swims in this bay will find their true love when they return to the beach - so where better to ask yours to marry you? Pack up a picnic, head down to the shore and get down on one knee after your Daniel Craig moment.

04

Mount Olympus, mainland Greece

For an engagement fit for the gods, take a hike up Greece's highest peak. It's also known as the Mountain of the Gods and is made up of 52 peaks. Top tip - several routes require a scramble to the summit, so choose your trail carefully.

05

Melissani Lake, Kefalonia

Board a boat and sail into the Cave of Melissani - the sunlight shines through a hole in the cave ceiling lighting up the bright blue water, creating the perfect proposal backdrop.

The bees' needs



To Bee Museum, or not to Bee Museum – that is the question. And our answer is always yes...

Imagine you're stood in a flower-studded field on the Greek Island of Rhodes. The sun toasts the top of your head, but it's not too hot – because you're wearing a beekeeper suit. And you're not just in a field. You're in an apiary, where bees are kept. A tour guide – trained by National Geographic – stands beside one of the rainbow-painted hives dotting the grass, demonstrating how bee colonies are organised. And the whole idyllic scene's soundtracked by the gentle, constant buzzing of bees.



Welcome to the **Bee Museum of Rhodes** – the only attraction of its kind in Greece, and a celebration of all things bee-related. More honey is eaten in Greece than any other country in Europe, so it's fitting that you'll find this attraction here.

In the museum, you'll get a full deep-dive into the crucial role bees play in our planet's ecosystem – like how a third of all the food we eat depends on pollination, and how we'd lose lots of earth's plants if bees became extinct.

As well as stepping into a beekeeper suit and saying hello to the bees in person, you'll get to examine the life of a hive up close. You'll learn lots of simple ways to protect the bees in your back garden, too. And, you'll channel your own inner bee by joining a hands-on simulation of honey extraction.



Your visit includes a honey-tasting session, too, so you'll get to sample freshly extracted honey, as well as a local delicacy called *melekouni*. It's made from sesame seeds, orange peel and spices – and, of course, locally produced honey.

Sounds like a sweet deal, right? Book your visit by heading to tui.co.uk/things-to-do and searching for **Nat Geo Day Tour: The Fascinating World of Bees**. This experience has been checked against the Criteria of the Global Sustainable Tourism Council and is led by National Geographic guides.

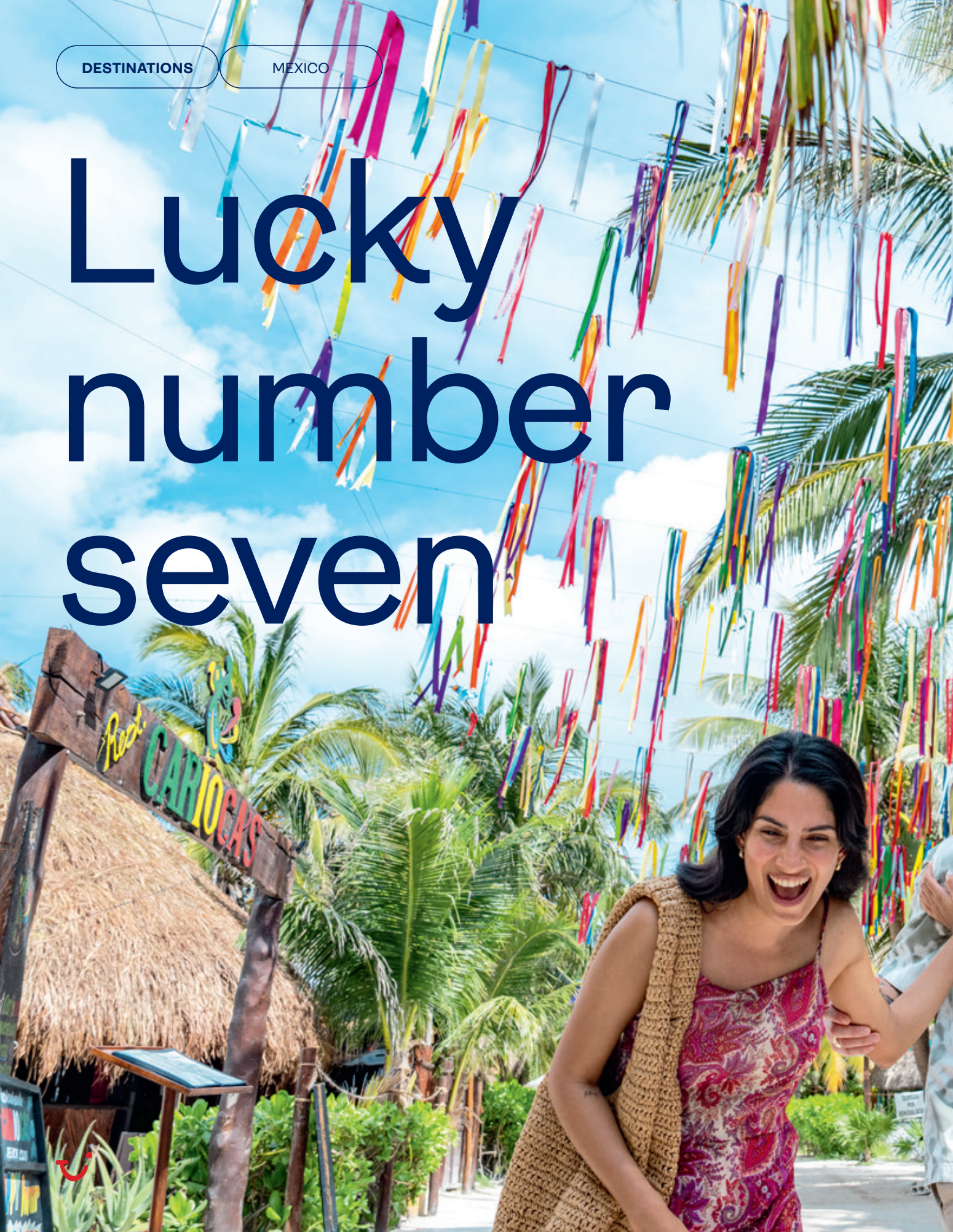


 Words: Rachel Tysoe-Bailey

DESTINATIONS

MEXICO

Lucky number seven





On a strip of land that juts into the Caribbean Sea, in the shape of a number seven, lies the Cancun Hotel Zone. This famous sliver is topped with glitzy hotels and a ribbon of sugary sand, all within touching distance of cultural gems and jungle jaunts. **Sophie Heward** lines up seven of Mexico's top picks that hit the jackpot.

[Read more](#)

In Holbox Town, all the roads are dusted with sand - a constant reminder that you're on a tropical island.

I sit on the deck of a catamaran, skimming over waves so blue it's like they've been Photoshopped, with the shoreline of Isla Mujeres growing closer. I catch a glimpse of a sea turtle at the water's surface, and it's a real pinch-me moment. This island makes my list of Mexico must-sees before I even arrive.

When my toes hit the sand, it feels as soft as sherbet. There's a buzz in the air - music floats from beach bars, and shop owners offer tastes of tequila. I hop on a golf cart and zip around the island, passing quiet coves and colourful bunting (known to the locals as 'papel picado').

At dusk, I head out on trip number two - a Day of the Dead celebration. An iconic symbol of this event is a skeleton named La Catrina, and a dressed-up version of her is waving at me as I arrive. I wander through the trees to a clearing that lights up with a fire show. Acrobats with sugar skull face paint juggle burning hoops, and I feel waves of heat from fire-breathing displays. After, I'm led underground to a cenote for a four-course Mexican feast. The cooler setting's a real contrast - plus, it's not every day you get to eat dinner in a cave.

Speaking of cenotes, they're my third must-do. These natural grottos are sinkholes filled with fresh water, and they were important to the Ancient Maya people - the Yucatan Peninsula doesn't have any typical rivers or lakes, so cenotes were a sacred water source.



Chilled vibes on Isla Holbox

There are no cars on Holbox, adding to the laidback feel of the place. You get around the island by foot, bike or golf buggy.



Catamaran to Isla Mujeres

Eight miles off the coast of Cancun sits Isla Mujeres. It's home to the ruins of the Temple of Ixchel, the Goddess of the Moon.



A choice of adventure parks

You can swim through nature at Xcaret Park, zip-line past treetops at Xplor and zoom down waterslides at Xel-Há.





The stars align when I visit the Tsukán cenote and find it empty, apart from a few bat colonies swooping between stalactites. A dip in the chilly water feels like a lottery win in the midday heat.

Trip number four takes me shopping in Playa del Carmen. As I wander down La Quinta Avenida, I'm spoilt for choice - I've got high-street giants like Zara, and trinket shops overflowing with handmade ornaments and vibrant fabrics. Inviting wafts of tacos drift from beachfront restaurants, and sandwich boards offer happy hour cocktails.

I visit a natural theme park - Xcaret Park - for my fifth rec. As I weave along jungle pathways, I spot monkeys and iguanas, and people swimming through rivers that lead underground. I take a dip in a rocky lagoon and see shiny fish darting past my ankles. Then, I dry off with a swing in a seafront hammock hung between giant palm trees. Total bliss.

If nightlife's your thing, you'll love number six. Xoximilco, AKA the

'floating fiesta', is as lively as it sounds. I walk across wooden bridges and spy lit-up gondolas setting sail one by one. When I board, our host serves local food platters (I politely decline the fried grasshoppers, but I'm told they're a tasty snack) and tequila slammers, before we bob past a mariachi band. There's plenty of dancing - think conga lines and Mexican waves - and the locals seem to love it as much as I do.

And, finally, lucky number seven - Isla Holbox. I'm in awe as I sail towards glassy water dotted with pelicans, and sandbanks that look like they could melt away at any moment. It feels almost otherworldly. The centre of town is just as captivating, but in an entirely different way. I roam through colourful streets flecked with candy-striped ice-cream shops, hand-painted murals and stairways leading to Mexican cooking classes. I feel like I've struck gold with this place.



Floating fiesta at Xoximilco

This over-water party is named after a UNESCO site in Mexico City, where there's an ancient lake and floating gardens.



Day of the Dead celebrations at Yax-Muul

This holiday is usually held in November, but you can get a taste of the traditions all year round with TUI Experiences.

Jamaica, Land We Love



Lee Dasilva joins four content creators, as they reconnect with their Caribbean heritage, on a cultural trip to Jamaica.

My grandmother was born in Jamaica in the thirties, before relocating to the UK with the Windrush Generation a couple of decades later. I was already proud of this part of my identity (the country's uniting national motto, *Out of Many, One People*, is literally tattooed on my forearm), but this trip has brought my soul closer to the island than ever before. I've joined social media content creators, Tara and Adrian Thorpe, Alanna Doherty and Demi Colleen. Our goal? To see how meaningful travel experiences can provide us with a deeper connection with our heritage.

[Read more](#)







@meetthethorpes

Hilarious husband and wife, Adrian and Tara, documenting 20-plus years together.



@alannanicolex

Bajan-born queen of colour bringing 'fearless authenticity' to your timeline.



@demicolleen

Dopamine dresser, using colourful fits to feel good and navigate neurodivergence.

"It helped me join the dots in ways I didn't expect," Tara says. We'd been on the **Spirit of the Maroons** TUI experience, where we'd met one of the last populations of maroons – descendants of a warrior-like community who freed themselves from slavery. "My mum always used to tell me that my great-great-grandmother was a maroon," Tara explains, "but I never really knew what that meant." On the daytrip to Charles Town – one of only five maroon communities left in Jamaica – we listened to stories of the maroons' fight for survival, and danced, hip-to-hip, with the village elders. It unearthed a powerful ancestral bond for Tara.

But it was the **Kingston & Blue Mountains** tour that Demi found really special. Dressed in a mood-lifting mix of pastel, stripes and neon that pops strikingly against the jade-green palm leaves and polished red steps in front of the Craighton Estate coffee plantation, Demi reflects. "I recently found out that my great-grandfather was a coffee farmer here in Jamaica, so understanding the history of coffee production on the island has given me a whole new level of respect for him." Experiencing all aspects of her heritage is essential to Demi. "I feel more tied to my culture than ever before. And I've discovered more about my history, too – it's incredible."

Coffee aside, the Blue Mountains also surprised Alanna. "I'm from Barbados, which is a really flat island," she tells me. "Being thousands of feet above sea level is such a mad, magical experience." The fashion influencer goes on to explain how visiting a new island helped her reconnect with her roots. "It's really important I truly immerse myself in all our vast Caribbean cultures. The islands are all similar, but certainly not monolithic, and Jamaica has showed me how bold and beautiful we can be." She stares, lovingly, out the window as our bus emerges from the mist at the foothills of the mountains, "My heart's been singing at every point of this journey."

As we travel back to our hotel, chatting about how cultural experiences can shape a holiday, Adrian sums up our trip perfectly. "It's more than travel. It's rediscovery and connection."

"Going back to Jamaica with my wife, learning about our backgrounds in such a meaningful way is priceless. It's more than travel. It's rediscovery and connection."

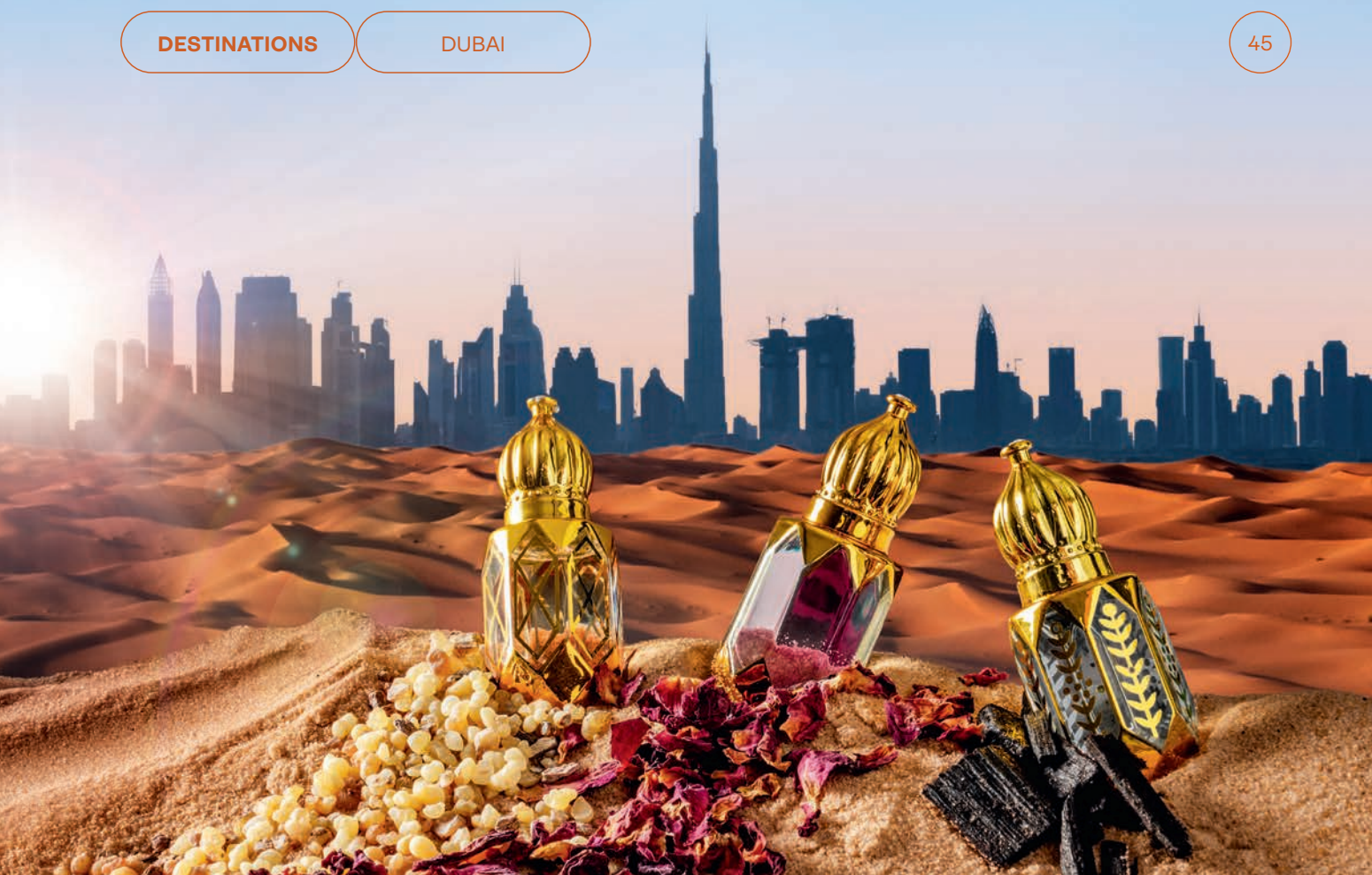
Safe to say, our mission of uncovering the relationship between travel and heritage has been a success. But in Jamaica, heritage doesn't have to be inherited. Thanks to its incredible island experiences, anyone can discover Jamaica's heritage, whether you descend from the land or not. *Out of Many, One People...* remember?



Place to stay?

Close to the airport and with its own private beach, **Secrets Wild Orchid Montego Bay** is a top choice.





Heart notes

Long before Marilyn Monroe claimed to wear nothing but Chanel No. 5 to bed, the Ancient Egyptians perfected the art of perfumery. Fast-forward a few thousand years, and the Arabian Peninsula staked a claim as the fragrance capital of the world. Nowadays, Europe's fashion houses form a conglomerate of colognes, but that hasn't stopped Dubai and the United Arab Emirates from making perfumery a way of life.

More than just for smelling good, perfume in the Emirates represents spirituality, ritual and nostalgia. Through Islam's teachings of cleanliness, fragrance is often used in pre-prayer washes. It's even incorporated into clothing - traditional

Emirati men's robes have tie-like tassels, which, in the days of the Bedouins, wives would dip in fragrance to remind their nomadic husbands of home.

And while it's impossible not to catch a whiff of something luxurious as you wander through the city's supersized malls, our **Heritage of Emirati Perfumery experience** favours tradition over glamour. The head notes of this experience introduce you to the souks of Old Dubai, where you'll sniff out commonly used ingredients, like frankincense and oud. As the tour's heart notes emerge, you'll visit a perfumier to stock up on oil - the essence of all Arab perfumes, instead of alcohol sprays, which are prohibited in Islam. The base notes round off the

trip with a fragrance workshop, where you'll concoct your own signature scent to take home.

This tour's led by one of the UAE's first female tour guides, and the workshop takes place in the building her family once called home. In the Arab world, perfumery is a science, an art, and a language all at once, and on this day out, you'll uncover the layers of Emirati history and culture, one scent at a time.

 Words: Lee Dasilva



Check out TUI city breaks to Dubai at tui.co.uk



Find more cultural days out at tui.co.uk/things-to-do

Luxepacking

The changing face of Thai travel

The backpacker - a holidaymaker you can clock at a moment's glance, usually thanks to a bursting-at-the-seams rucksack. These intrepid explorers have long been cramming two weeks' worth of belongings into Tardis-like bags, trading out the home comforts so that they can travel light. Their natural habitat? The dot-to-dot tourist trail in Thailand, where hostel stays and a single pair of flip-flops usually set the tone, with beach parties thrown in at regular intervals.

But is the appeal of the backpacking break starting to lack? Experts in the Far East certainly seem to think so, as more and more holiday eggs are being shifted into the luxury basket. The Tourism Authority of Thailand has seen a surge in North and South American visitors seeking luxury getaways, and they're expecting Europe to follow suit. Sure, people still want to chop and change between different parts of Thailand, but they want to do it in a swanky suite instead of a dorm with a shared bathroom.

In fact, the powers that be in Thailand are certain that high-end travel is the future. They've even collaborated with fashion heavyweights Louis Vuitton to create a glam city guide for **Bangkok**, tapping into the city's gourmet foodie scene, designer shopping appeal and swish hotel offering. And the roster of glitzy beachside properties further south is on the rise, so you can sample the classic backpacker bits without scrimping on where you stay.

That's where the age of the multi-centre holiday is starting to dawn. At their core, these getaways do exactly the same thing that a backpacking holiday does - you see a bunch of different spots in a single trip. The difference is that you get all the trimmings of a package break, rather than the stress of organising every last detail yourself.

➤ [Read more](#)





All of the Thai big hitters are on the cards, too - you won't be waiting in the wings while the backpackers hog centre stage. The limestone cliffs of **Krabi** have long been the backdrop for gap year photo albums, but the digs in this part of Thailand have had a glow-up. Rooftop infinity pools and candlelit beach restaurants have ushered in a new type of traveller, and the traditional longtail boats and marshmallow-white beaches are still right under your nose.

Ever-lively **Phuket** has plenty in the way of basic bases, as visitors flock to the likes of Patong Beach to bar-hop along Bangla Road. But hotels have cottoned on, with pool parties and beach clubs starting to make a mark on the party map, almost on a par with the most renowned spots. In fact, names like Kata Beach, Karon Beach and Mai Khao are really starting to make waves on the luxury living front. Even the famous **Phi Phi Islands** - usually a bumpy boat trip away from Phuket Town - are starting to step out from the tourism shadows. The jungle-draped mountainous islands are now home to a handful of handsome hotels, well away from the madding crowd - eat your heart out, hostel dorm.

Even if you're out in the sticks, finding something with a decent star rating is starting to become much easier. **Khao Lak**'s known for being a little off grid - people come here to visit elephant sanctuaries, national parks and wildlife-crammed mangroves. And the boutique hotels that have started to crop up follow a tasteful blueprint - they're designed to blend in to the backdrop seamlessly. It's the same story over in **Koh Samui** - backpackers once considered this their best-kept exotic secret. It's a bit like a big Malteser - just replace the bubbly centre with a blob of dense jungle, and the chocolatey exterior with a wraparound of blonde beaches. The only difference from Khao Lak? The hotels are even more swanky, and cuddle up to the shoreline as close as possible.

Words: Shaun Ringwood

Destination faves you can combine on a TUI Multi-Centre...

01 Phi Phi Islands and Phuket



02 Bangkok and Koh Samui



03 Khao Lak and Krabi



Tap **TUI Multi-Centres** into your search for a look at all our Multi-Centre breaks around the world.



Blue Grotto, Malta

Look. At. That. View.

Malta's coastline will have
you stopping for snaps every
couple of seconds.



VisitMalta

Magical milestones

From your first visit as a baby to returning as a parent, **Chloe Brightwell** takes you on a trip of a lifetime (quite literally) to **Walt Disney World Resort in Florida**.

However old you are, *Walt Disney World Resort* is always a good idea. It's hard to find somewhere that'll keep everyone from the little ones to the grandparents busy, but with four theme parks, waterpark fun and a huge shopping, dining and entertainment district, *Walt Disney World Resort* ticks all the boxes. And that's before mentioning the Disney Resort hotels, which make getting to and from the parks quick, easy and magical.

Baby's first holiday

You might not remember this holiday, as you're a baby after all. But think of it from your parents' perspective.

They'd probably take you to *Magic Kingdom Park*, and your first ride would be something slow-moving like "*it's a small world*" or *Dumbo the Flying Elephant* - their face lighting up as a smile beams on yours. They still get to go on their favourite rides, too, thanks to Rider Switch, and there are Baby Care Centers around every park for changing and feeding.

★ Pack ear defenders for little ones, so you can all enjoy the night-time spectaculars.



Toddler to child

You're a bit older now and you're finally tall enough to go on more rides. You've been getting ready for this trip by watching all the Disney movies, and now's the time to see them come to life.

Most of your time will likely be spent at *Disney's Animal Kingdom Theme Park*, where some of your fave films come to life. You'll meet *Timone*, *Moana* and others, as well as the 2,000 animals that call the park home. *Kilimanjaro Safaris*, an open-air 4x4 ride through an African savanna, is a must.

★ *Disney Magic Tickets* come with the *Memory Maker* photo package, so remember to smile for the photographers and download your photos.





Teenage trips

As your world opens up, you can go on some rides on your own and you start eyeing up big hitters at Disney's Hollywood Studios. On *The Twilight Zone Tower of Terror™*, you'll drop down a haunted lift, while *Star Wars: Rise of the Resistance* puts you in a battle against the First Order.

Disney's Blizzard Beach Water Park and Disney's Typhoon Lagoon Water Park will also be on your hit list. Whichever one's open, you can whizz down flumes or race your family on side-by-side slides.



It's a good idea to book a Lightning Lane pass to skip the standby line on popular rides. You can book them on the *My Disney Experience* app.



For help booking your next visit, search for the **TUI Disney Holiday Hub**.



Couples' retreat

You're a fully-fledged adult now, you have all the freedom in the world, and you want to share the magical memories with your partner. Sure, you want to go on all the rides and watch the shows still - who wouldn't? But now food and drink play a bigger part in your plans.

Enter: *EPCOT*. You can take your tastebuds on a trip around the globe in World Showcase, which is made up of 11 location-themed pavilions selling food and drink. Question is - do you start in Mexico or Canada?



If you're looking for a date night spot, *The BOATHOUSE* waterfront restaurant is a great spot at entertainment complex, *Disney Springs*.

Family fun begins

And the cycle starts again... Your first holiday was Disney, so why not recreate the magic for your baby's first holiday - and this time, bring the grandparents so they can relive the trip, too?

You're planning it this time, so you book a Disney Resort hotel to extend the magic and make sure you're near the parks. A dining plan allows you to book and budget meals for the whole family, too. And when the grandparents want a rest from the parks, they can go for a shopping spree around *Disney Springs*.



Stay in a Disney Resort hotel for Early Theme Park Entry, getting you into select parks 30 minutes before anyone else.



FAMILIES

BEST FOR TEENS & TWEENS

Let me enterteen you

Calling all teens
and tweens – this
one's for you...

Hey, I'm Rachel, I'm 34, and I want to talk to you about teenager-friendly holidays. Why, you ask? Because I'm going to myth-bust the common misconception that teenagers can expect either regimented fun or no fun on a family holiday. Maybe you're thinking, this Rachel, she knows nothing of being forced on holiday by parents who "just want you to have a nice time." Well, I've got experience...

My parents loved taking my sister and me on holiday. These getaways weren't flashy, usually involved a tent, sausage rolls and wellies,



and weren't what I would have preferred to be doing - like sleeping over at my friend's house and spending hours comparing BFOS (Boys From Other Schools) on MySpace (a millennial social network site).

As a family, we also went abroad - although never All Inclusive. We stayed in self-catering apartments where we lived on cheese and bread and crisps, played cards every night on the balcony, and split our daytimes between sunbathing and trying to befriend all the stray cats.

On one holiday to Lindos, I read the entire *Game of Thrones* series.

That's 5,000-plus pages of fantasy IN A WEEK. There was literally nothing else to do. We never stayed somewhere with back-to-back activities, splash parks, watersports on the beach, evening parties, etc. Oh, I'm not complaining about my childhood - it was top-tier. But it certainly didn't feature stays at the sparkly jam-packed hotels I now spend my working days writing about.

What I'm trying to say is, teenage-me would have LOVED to jump on a holiday where activities like cocktail-making and cookery classes are the norm. Cue: hotels like TUI BLUE and Holiday Villages. Like, you rock up, check out the activity agenda, and casually pick and choose to join in with stuff that didn't even exist

on holiday when I was growing up. I was busy playing with stray kittens, whereas you could be shaking up a watermelon no-jito alongside someone who might end up being a friend for life. There are social media classes in some of our hotels, too, and zorbing sessions, foam parties and fitness classes.



You can also battle it out for stardom at a karaoke session, or release your inner Katniss Everdeen in an archery competition.



And throw tomato and mozzarella at fresh pizza dough during a cookery session, get yourself a glow-up in the spa, or floss your way across the dance floor during a silent disco. Just a joke, I'm fully aware flossing's so 2016.

I guess the point I'm making is, there are tonnes for you to do on our family holidays, so don't miss out. Live your best young person life with Zumba, aquafit, VR championships, movie showings and garden parties. In short: more fun activities, less stray cats and sausage rolls.

 Words: Rachel Tysoe-Bailey

Ready for something epic?

Three Four parks. Eight Eleven hotels. Universal Orlando Resort gets a whole lot BIGGER in 2025. **Conor Braniff** is here with the lowdown...



When Universal Studios Florida first opened its doors in 1990, we were introduced to the unforgettable smell of the forest on E.T. Adventure. Then, in 1999, we screamed our very first “Ahhh!” as the raft on Jurassic Park River Adventure dropped over at Universal Islands of Adventure. Later, in 2010, we took our first forbidden journey through Hogwarts™ castle at The Wizarding World of Harry Potter™ - Hogsmeade™ in Islands of Adventure, before stepping foot in the iconic Diagon Alley™ over at Universal Studios in 2014.

And in 2017, thrillseekers were put to the test on the Ko’okiri Body Plunge at Universal Volcano Bay Water Theme Park. Cue the trap door...

Now, in 2025, Universal Orlando Resort unveils its latest creation, Universal Epic Universe. And like you, we’re ready to take our first step through its glowing portals. Here are the attractions we’re eyeing up first.



01

How to Train Your Dragon - Isle of Berk

Our competitive side leads us to Fyre Drill, a watery boat battle. Our opponents? Flame-like targets. And the other Viking ships.

02

The Wizarding World of Harry Potter™ - Ministry of Magic™

Find us waiting for a magical lift on the Harry Potter and the Battle at the Ministry™ attraction, ready to witness Dolores Umbridge™ be brought to justice!

03

SUPER NINTENDO WORLD™

We’re making a beeline for Mine-Cart Madness™ - a thrilling family coaster through Donkey Kong Country™ that takes you on a mission to protect the Golden Banana.





04

Celestial Park

Stardust Racers is our top pick – this dual-launch coaster will send us rocketing across the cosmos hitting speeds of up to 62 miles per hour.

05

Dark Universe

We're zeroing in on Monsters Unchained: The Frankenstein Experiment, prepared to face Dracula, The Wolf Man and other classic creatures – not that we're scared, of course.



Perks of staying at a Universal Orlando Resort hotel

Up to one-hour Early Park Admission at no extra cost.

Hop to and from the parks easily with complimentary transport.

Shopping in the parks made simple with free delivery to your room.



Universal Stella Nova Resort and Universal Terra Luna Resort

New rides and attractions aren't the only thing we're eyeing up in 2025. Inspired by the infinite wonders of the universe, Universal Stella Nova Resort and Universal Terra Luna Resort entered our orbit this year, too. Each one's got the perfect setup for the whole family. A quick-service restaurant covers all meals, no matter what time you

start your daily adventure. There's also an outdoor pool and hot tub for afternoon dips, and a games room for the kids. The coolest part? They're both wrapped in stainless-steel tiles that create different patterns and colours. Imagine it: you're heading back to your room after an incredible day. The kids are talking about their favourite attractions. And you look up to a galaxy of stars. Dreamy.



Universal Helios Grand Hotel, a Loews Hotel

Imagine staying *inside* a Universal theme park. Well, imagine no more. Universal Helios Grand Hotel, a Loews Hotel sits right by the waters of Celestial Park. And if that wasn't enough, an exclusive entrance to Universal Epic Universe is just steps away. Looking to level up

the thrills for your little ones? You can bag yourself a How to Train Your Dragon kids' suite or a room with a view overlooking the park. Speaking of park views, you'll also score these from the Mediterranean restaurant, Flora Taverna, and Bar Helios – a rooftop eatery and bar with 360-degree views.

Grand Palladium Kantenah Resort & Spa, Riviera Maya

Make a splash

Pick from five pools and a kids' waterpark at Mexico's Grand Palladium Kantenah Resort & Spa.



GRAND PALLADIUM
KANTENAH RESORT & SPA

Best. Holiday. Ever.

When my brother's family described Lake Garda, Italy, as their "best family trip yet," I had to find out more...

You stayed at the Gasparina Village Apartments in Castelnovo with Arthur, 6, and Florence, 2. Why there?

Jenny: We wanted a self-catering hotel with a pool and space to hang out as a family. But ultimately it was Gardaland theme park that attracted us.

What was Gardaland like? And what else did you get up to?

J: It was so much fun for the kids - and quieter than other theme parks we've visited. It's also near the hotel, so we could nip back easily. The pool there was brilliant. It was shallow, warm and perfect for the kids to play in safely while we relaxed. We also did some road tripping around the lake.

Rich: The buses are good, but we hired a car because of the extra flexibility.

J: First, we headed up the side of the lake to Limone. It was hot, so we went swimming. Then afterwards we had lunch by the harbour.

R: We also loved wandering around the winding streets in Sirmione and going to other beaches. And we even did a day trip to the Dolomite mountains.

What was the food like?

J: Food was one reason we chose Italy - pasta and pizza are staples for us. And Rich also enjoyed trying the local fish. Then there were the ice-creams in Sirmione that were the size of the kids' heads. They were a BIG highlight.

R: Some of the best food was at the Gasparina's on-site restaurant. Plus, we could take it back to our apartment, which worked well for the kids.

Sounds delicious! How would you sum up the trip?

R: Even better than expected. We really got to balance relaxing with exploring and having adventures together.

J: It felt like three holidays in one, what with going to the theme park, exploring Lake Garda and visiting the Dolomites.

Million-dollar question - would you go back?

R: There's so much to see, so we'll definitely go back.

J: Yeah, to one of the thermal spas. Some looked good for kids, too.

 Words: Matt Robinson



“We really got to balance relaxing with exploring and having adventures together.”



Search for **TUI Lakes & Mountains** and plan your next family hol to the lakes.

Feast mode

Foodie travellers, assemble! The All Inclusive package has had a glow up. **Conor Braniff** explains...

What started as a growing trend on social media – see the thousands of ‘What I eat in a day: the All Inclusive edition’ vlogs – is now a new era of All Inclusive. More and more travellers are choosing these getaways for their convenience, luxurious touch and wallet-friendly appeal.

As a result, the traditional All Inclusive package is going beyond the all-you-can-eat buffet to include gourmet dinners, tailor-made experiences and around-the-clock dining. It’s no wonder travel trends say this holiday type has shot up by nearly 70% since 2019.

So, if this is what you’re craving on your next getaway, we’ve picked out some hotels that’ll really hit the spot. Your taste buds will thank you later.



Family fave

With ice-cream on tap AND a grab ‘n’ go bar open around-the-clock, **TUI BLUE Palm Garden** in Turkey is a treat for the whole family. This beachfront spot has earned the Foodie highlight too, so you just know the dining options here are next level. The buffet’s just the beginning – you can also tuck in to a four-course feast of Mediterranean and Turkish plates at the Levante à la carte restaurant, or head to the beach for a sizzling barbecue.



The **Foodie highlight** is added to hotels from our TUI BLUE collection where dining goes beyond the usual high standards. If you’re hungry for more, look out for it at tui.co.uk/tui-blue





Luxury levelled up

Make a break for **TUI BLUE Sensatori Akra Fethiye** and, on top of the premium buffet, you'll bag access to three à la carte restaurants (plus a further two that you can pay to dine in). What's on offer? Well, Amber covers your local Turkish dishes, while Tao ticks off Chinese specialities. But make sure to leave room for Basilico - this Italian spot is the cherry on top of your culinary cake.

Gourmet for grown-ups

Looking for a foodie paradise in the Med? Say hello to **TUI BLUE Pioneer Beach Hotel** in Cyprus. And don't just take our word for it - this adults-only pad has snagged itself the Foodie highlight, thanks to guests raving about its gourmet grub. Afternoon snacks by the pool await...



A taste of local life

The Bodega restaurant at **TUI MAGIC LIFE Fuerteventura** is one of three speciality eateries included in the price tag. You can dine here for free once a week, tucking in to a rotating menu of Spanish and Canarian tapas, from patatas bravas - crispy potatoes tossed in a spicy sauce - to battered and deep-fried calamari. Homegrown herbs from the hotel's gardens add an extra layer of authenticity to every bite.



FOOD & DRINK

SORRENTO LEMON FARM



When life gives you lemons...

...you make lemonade. In Sorrento, though, lemons make so much more than this zesty drink, as **Sophie Heward** discovers.



For more than a thousand years, the Italian town of Sorrento has grown lemons that're in a league of their own. They're bigger than most, they smell extra strong and they're seriously juicy. It's no wonder why this sunshiny fruit springs to mind when you think of south-west Italy.

In the middle of the town, just a short stroll from those iconic pastel-painted cliffside houses, sits **Relais Correale** and **La Limonaia**. This citrus-themed hotel and restaurant is plotted among 8,000 square-metres of fragrant lemon groves - for reference, that's a similar size to Wembley Stadium. It used to be a farmhouse, but today this place is a celebration of all things lemon. You can tour the orchard, join cooking classes, stay overnight and sample fresh marmalade and limoncello. Ade Botta, the manager at Relais

Correale and La Limonaia, has bags of enthusiasm for what she does. "I love my job, firstly because of the people I meet. It's wonderful to see such passion for the land and for our business. When people visit us and learn about the lemon groves, they tend to leave a little part of their heart here in Sorrento," she says.

Quick warning - if your cabin crew haven't brought the food and drink trolley through yet, this might make you hungry. The restaurant, La Limonaia ('lemon house' in English), crafts everything from grilled mozzarella wrapped in fresh lemon leaves to prawns flambéed with limoncello. One of the most popular dishes is the ravioli. Ade's a big fan, saying, "The pasta's all handmade. It's stuffed with local ricotta and, of course, we finish it off with a helping of lemon cream."



Those with a sweet tooth have plenty of choice, too. You can cool things down with a bowl of zingy lemon sorbet, or treat yourself to some bubbles in a limoncello spritz on the tree-dotted terrace. "Our gardens are like an oasis in the centre of a busy seaside town," says Ade. "We've got so much to show our guests, and a beautiful space where they can relax in the sun afterwards."

If you're ready for an afternoon on the lemon farm, you can book your visit through TUI experiences. Tours run throughout the summer, and some come with lunch included. The best time to visit is between April and June, when the trees are in full bloom and the fruit's bursting with colour. What better way to get to know Sorrento?



Make your own limoncello

Snap a photo of this recipe and take a little slice of Sorrento home with you

- 01 Peel 1kg of lemons, add the skins to a large jar and cover them with 1l of 90% pure alcohol.
- 02 Let the lemon peel and the alcohol infuse in a dark place for 10 days before straining your mixture.
- 03 Combine 500g of sugar with 1l of water to make sugar syrup, and then mix it with your lemony alcohol.
- 04 Pop your freshly made limoncello in a fridge to cool, et voila - enjoy it on ice or in a spritz.

What I ate in a [sea] day

I'd just started my cruise on Marella Discovery 2, ready to tick off Greek Islands on the Grecian Discovery itinerary. I had a day at sea before we dropped anchor in Piraeus - a gateway to Athens - which I started with a lie in. Then, I filled the rest of my time (and my belly) with chilling by the pool and eating my way around the ship - Marella Cruises are All Inclusive as standard, after all. Here's everything I ate on my day at sea.

Words: Chloe Brightwell



Breakfast: 9am

I'm not a breakfast girl, but when there's a spread like the one in the Islands buffet, I can't resist a plate (or two) of fruit and pastries.



Morning coffee: 10am

I went to The Coffee Port to make use of my Premium All Inclusive package, bagged a window seat and treated myself to a flat white. I don't think I've felt so sophisticated, and you can bet I took a photo to show it off.

Elevenes: 11.30am

I was after a sweet treat to fuel a hard day of... relaxing! I headed to the Snack Shack, eyed up the cookies and brownies, before being lured in by the mini doughnuts.



Cocktail o'clock: 12.30pm

Time for a drink, so I scanned the pool bar menu and toyed between a pina colada and a strawberry daiquiri. Spoiler: the strawberry daiquiri won.





Lunch: 1pm

One o'clock struck and I had just about made room for lunch. My plan was to go for something light, but when I saw a big rotisserie chicken on the menu at The Glasshouse, I quickly changed my mind.



Tea at sea: 3pm

To make the most of my day at sea, I paid extra for The Great Musical Afternoon Tea at 47° - all the dishes were inspired by West End musicals. The tables were all full, so I'm glad I reserved my spot.



Dinner: 7.30pm

Dinner was a tough choice, but I was craving Italian, so I headed to Gallery 47° for a big bowl of spaghetti bolognese. Then, to top it off I ordered a tiramisu - yes, my eyes lit up when I saw that on the menu.



Nightcap: 9pm

There was a quiz on at the ships' 'British pub at sea,' Squid & Anchor, so - fully fed - I ordered a Raspberry Collins, tackled the questions, then headed to bed.



MARELLA
CRUISES

Feast your way
around Marella
Cruises at
tui.co.uk/cruise

CRUISE

TUI RIVER CRUISES

Taking flight

Darren Notley discovers why Luxor is dubbed 'the world's greatest open-air museum' from above.





I'm not usually a morning (or a heights) person, but when I started my TUI River Cruise along the Nile a few days ago, I knew a hot air balloon ride in Luxor was at the top of my to-do list, regardless of the 4am start time...

When my alarm went off, I practically leapt out of bed. First up, a short boat ride across the Nile to the city's West Bank, where a minibus was waiting to whisk us to the take-off point. Being driven to the outskirts of the city in pitch black should've felt scary, but this was different. In fact, the darkness only added to the excitable atmosphere among my group, and when we reached the take-off zone, the 40-plus balloons that were laid out on the ground were like nothing I'd seen before. And then they began to inflate...

All the colours of the rainbow started soaring skywards, with huge flames illuminating them, as they headed up one-by-one.

It was time for my group to take off. As we started to climb, some of the city's best-known sights came into focus, including **Hatshepsut Temple** and the **Valley of the Kings**. I'd visited the latter the previous day, and seeing the tombs up close was impressive, but looking down over the whole area was on another level - quite literally. It got me thinking, how many more of them lay undiscovered in the distance?

The views across the mountains and back towards the city were incredible, too, and I didn't think they could get any better. Then the sun came up, and... wow! As it started to rise above the Nile, I couldn't quite believe my eyes - this was one of those pinch-myself moments.

After continuing to float around for a while - the flight was around 45 minutes in total - it was back down to earth, well in time for breakfast. Here, I had chance to flick through my photos and look back on a morning I won't be forgetting in a hurry.

I've still got loads of Luxor to see, as well. Next stop, the **Old Winter Palace**. This luxury hotel has stood on the

banks of the Nile since 1886, and its sprawling, perfectly kept gardens are home to trees that are older than some countries. And then, the souk to haggle over some spices...



Visit Luxor on a TUI River Cruise. Find out more at tui.co.uk/river-cruises



Meet the Cheethams

The Cheethams - AKA sister influencers, Becky and Hannah - catch up with **Karl Taylor** to chat about assisted travel and their trip with us to Turkey.



So, let's get into it: why did you start your online platform, Cheethams with Dreams?

Becky: To spread positivity and awareness, particularly on Hannah's cerebral palsy. We also love chatting about topics important to the LGBTQ+ community and we're big on mental health.

Can you tell us a bit more about Hannah's disability, and what you need to think about when booking a holiday together?

B: Hannah can't walk or talk unaided, but she fully understands the world and communicates in her own way and with a communication device.

Hannah: I LOVE to travel, especially if it means flying to a hot country! But travelling isn't as easy for us as we would like - it involves a lot of planning and research beforehand to make sure everything's accessible

and safe when we get there. We look for things like lifts and ramps, and a walk-in shower. Extra points if there are beach wheelchairs.

Talking of hot countries, how was the journey to Turkey?

H: The airport and the flight out were amazing. Manchester Airport has always been great for us, and the attention from the cabin crew was great. The plane toilet opened into a double toilet - it was the best thing ever!
B: We can't get Hannah on a coach unless it's accessible, so the fact you helped us arrange a wheelchair-accessible transfer to the hotel was a game-changer for us.

We hear you stayed at TUI MAGIC LIFE Masmavi. What was that like?

H: The staff were fantastic. The hotel had pool chairs, and the lifeguard

moved them to any pool I wanted to swim in.

B: There were six beach chairs, too. And yes, the staff couldn't do enough for us - Hannah almost came home with a Turkish boyfriend!



Love that! Any other funny holiday moments you'd like to share?

B: How about the time Hannah got taken away in an ambulance because she faked a foot injury?

H: Next question!

We'll leave that one there then and finish with your best moment since you've become influencers...

H: Seeing the world and inspiring others makes my heart happy.

B: I can't pick a specific moment, but the people we've met and the fact we're doing things we could only dream of. I was so grateful to see Hannah hanging out with Giovanna Fletcher, with a massive smile on her face, when only a few years ago she was bored in daycentres.



Search **@cheethamswithdreams** to follow the sisters on your socials.



For more on assisted travel and accessible holidays, including detailed access guides for hundreds of hotels, search for **TUI accessible holidays**.



Ölüdeniz, Fethiye

And, relaaaaax...

Beyond the bustling bays, calm corners call. Slow the pace on a Turkish getaway.



goturkiye.com



ADVERTORIAL

FIRST CHOICE



Travelled & tested by our Insiders

GET YOUR TRAVEL INSPO FROM SOMEONE THAT'S BEEN THERE...

First Choice holidays aren't just your average package. Travel by plane or train, add a Weather Guarantee, experiences, bags and transfers – you pick. You can even book with Flex to cancel for free* and shop the look with our Insiders.

If you haven't heard about our First Choice Insiders programme yet, it's

about time you did. We've partnered with an amazing group of travel creators who pick the trips they really want to go on and bring all the details back to you – videos, pics and loads of local recs – on social and on our website.

Pick an Insider that loves what you love and give us and them a follow for their latest whereabouts, top tips and itinerary inspo. If a hotel, an experience they did, or their entire trip looks like a bit of you, you can book it with us. So, let's meet some of them...



Stay tuned on social for whenever they're away and check back on our Insiders Hub for all the details on their trips.



@lian_ireri

My name's Lian, I'm 26 and was born in Kenya but I've been living in London for the past few years. I work in marketing and social media but I love all things fashion, travel and photography.

♥ FAVE INSIDER TRIP: Marmaris, Turkey

We did a 4x4 sunset safari trip, through pine forests and traditional villages, and got to stop at hidden beaches and coves in Bördübet and Hisarönü for a swim.

LIAN'S PERFECT TRIP:



@baileyturvey

I'm Bailey, originally from Brighton, but now I work remotely from all over the world. I've travelled to 6 continents and over 60 countries, and I love nature and adventure travel.

♥ FAVE INSIDER TRIP: Ljubljana, Slovenia

I'd recommend visiting Ljubljana Castle, Dragon Bridge and Tivoli Park. We went for a lovely evening run around Tivoli Park before heading for a wood-fired pizza at Pizzeria Foculus.

BAILEY'S PERFECT TRIP:



@usntheworld

We're Charlotte and Ellie – two wives from Scotland who love to travel together. We're very spontaneous... We find planning a last-minute break so exciting and we love to go with the flow.

♥ FAVE INSIDER TRIP: Crete, Greece

We did the cutest cooking class here. Maria showed us all of the homemade jams and honey they produce on the farm, and we got to taste them before making four local dishes.

CHARLOTTE & ELLIE'S PERFECT TRIP:



INSIDER PICK



@gracegrangetravel

I'm Grace, I'm 30, a proud Welshie and obviously all things travel obsessed! I'm definitely the type that likes to visit new places and I always like to have everything planned well in advance.

**GRACE'S
PERFECT TRIP:**



Grace's Copenhagen picks

Check out Grace's fave picks from her trip to Copenhagen and read her full itinerary on our Insiders Hub...



HOTEL PICK:

Hotel Tivoli

You can walk to the iconic Tivoli Gardens and loads of attractions from here. Plus, there's a huge indoor pool and spa, and the city views are amazing.

EXPERIENCE PICK:

One-hour boat rental

Book an electric-powered picnic boat to explore Islands Brygge with First Choice Experiences. You can take your own food and drink, and they fit up to eight people! Don't worry, it's super easy – there's no sailing experience needed...

LOCAL PICK:

Curfew

This 1920s-style speakeasy bar is hidden behind a wall in an old book shop in Vesterbro and the cocktails are legendary. Check out their Insta – @curfewcph.



@hadleyogarro

My name is Hadley and I'm probably mostly known for my brutal honesty haha – I say it how it is. I always look for places with good food and I'm a huge geek for culture.

FAVE INSIDER TRIP: **Amsterdam, the Netherlands**

Start with some famous Dutch fries. Head to Pont Neuf for a classic serving with peanut sauce and mayo or Fabel Friet for a gourmet twist with garlic mayo, truffle and parmesan.

**HADLEY'S
PERFECT TRIP:**



@aleena_rzq

I'm Aleena, part-time optometrist, part-time content creator and full-time wife and mummy. When planning a family trip, the hotel is always the first thing I look for – hotel first, food second.

FAVE INSIDER TRIP: **Brussels, Belgium**

You might think a one-hour walking tour through Brussels doesn't sound very toddler-friendly, but this one was amazing and our guide was super helpful with our pram.

**ALEENA'S
PERFECT TRIP:**



WHY PICK FIRST CHOICE



FEE-FREE LOW DEPOSITS

Spread the cost with low-deposit payment plans and absolutely no admin fees.*



CANCEL FOR FREE WITH FLEX

Book with Flex to cancel for free* for whatever reason up to 48 hours before you fly.



WE GOT YOU

For 30 years + 4.3 on Trustpilot + ABTA & ATOL protection + 24/7 on-trip chat.

Keeping it in the family

Alice Preece chats to three family duos about what it's like to work together at TUI.

Nancy was 12 when she was stood with her mum in Lanzarote Airport, checking in for their flight home. Her mum happened to catch the eye of a man in the queue. His name was Guy, and he was also heading home from a TUI holiday with his kids. A conversation between the mum and dad began, and the seeds of a romance were planted.

Five years of marriage later, and Guy's in the cockpit of a TUI Airways Boeing 737. It should've been a normal day of training new pilots, but instead, his stepdaughter Nancy is sitting behind him, waiting to learn how to fly a plane. Nancy always thought she'd wanted to be a teacher, but mornings spent chatting about aviation with her stepdad had piqued her interest. "He'd send pictures of him enjoying a morning coffee at 32,000 feet to our family group chat," Nancy says.

I'm catching up with the pair now, about 15 months into Nancy's pilot training with TUI Airways. She tells me that, from flying small two-seater planes to spending days in simulators, the highlight of her training was when she got to fly with her stepdad.



"When I met Nancy and her mum, I never thought in a million years that this little girl would be sat with me in the cockpit one day,"

Guy says. "It was a great flight," Nancy remembers, "and we finally got to have our morning coffee in the sky together. I think mum's a bit jealous, though. She



Pilot cadet Nancy Beddall with her stepdad Guy Hallam.

always asks Guy to pretend he's doing a PA announcement at home, and he never does. But I got to hear him do it for real! She might have to apply for the next intake of pilots..."

Guy and Nancy aren't the only parent and child duo at TUI. In fact, there are loads - from pilots and cabin crew to in-store Travel Experts and head office staff. Like Miranda. Across her 15 years with the company, she's had several roles and now works in our HR department as Wellbeing & Inclusion Lead. "TUI is such a massive organisation," she explains, "you can start in one area, learn, develop, and then spread your wings and move around. It's what I love about it." But six months ago, something happened



that Miranda never expected. Her daughter, Shanaya, joined TUI as a Customer Experience Executive. “The best times are when we’re in the office and can grab a coffee or have lunch together,” Shanaya tells me. “It’s not that common to get to work with your parent, and we really enjoy those little moments together.”

Speaking about why else they love working at the same company, the pair discuss early morning commutes, office-kitchen chats and, of course, the travel opportunities. But after a few moments, Miranda becomes a bit more thoughtful. “I think the real highlights are rare moments like this – getting involved in things together.” “It really is special,” Shanaya concludes.



Miranda Simms and her daughter Shanaya Williams.



Brother and sister Baz French and Molly Roberts.

Baz and Molly, on the other hand, get to spend quite a bit of time working together. Both cabin crew, the brother and sister duo have flown together several times. “I started flying for TUI in 2011,” Baz tells me, “and I’d always be raving to Molly about flying, saying how every day was different, and how

many places you could visit. We’re quite similar so I wasn’t that surprised when Molly applied for cabin crew in 2016.”

“And now here I am eight years later!” Molly laughs. When I ask the pair what other antics they get up to when they fly together, Molly’s quick to answer. “Oh, he likes to look at me and say ‘Milk, two sugars, please.’” Chuckling, Barry responds, “That’s true! We always find a way to have a laugh, even when one of us is in charge. It’s funny – most passengers don’t believe us when we say we’re siblings.”

Despite their light-hearted antics, the pair say it’s always a lovely surprise when they bump into each other in the crew room, or even better, are scheduled on a flight together. Their best trip yet was when they spent four days together in Orlando. “It was Molly’s first time at Universal Orlando Resort and we had so much fun going round the parks,” Baz explains. “Well, I was having the best time,” Molly adds, “until he put me on the front row of Jurassic World VelociCoaster. It was terrifying! Baz found it very amusing, of course.”

Our families’ fave destinations

Guy: I taught Nancy to ski when she was younger, so I would love for us all to get back out on the slopes somewhere.

Nancy: I don’t know, Guy, I think me and mum would prefer somewhere with a sunlounger... Greece sounds good to me!

Miranda: A Caribbean cruise is next on my list...

Shanaya: Jamaica? We went there for mum’s wedding and there were over 100 of us! It was amazing.

Molly: Even though some of the rides really scared me, I would say Orlando is the best destination for siblings. We had such a great time there together.

Baz: I agree. Rollercoasters, beaches, shopping, amazing food – it ticks all the boxes.

Celebrating connection is at the heart of what we do at TUI. Whether it’s family duos, work-besties or teammates supporting each other, we always pull together and make it happen. If you fancy joining us, visit careers.tuigroup.com

La Pineda, Costa Dorada



Spain's golden ticket

Hit the holiday jackpot with a beachfront stay in Costa Dorada.


COSTA DAURADA



Pack Your Bags unpacked

As we gear up for *Pack Your Bags* series two, **Conor Braniff** looks back at some of the best moments from series one...



Onboard a Dreamliner?

All episodes of series one are available on our inflight entertainment.

Back in 2023, we launched our very own travel podcast, *Pack Your Bags*, hosted by comedian **Russell Kane**. This series had a line-up of 12 episodes, featuring guests from the worlds of sport, food, science and entertainment. Each episode, our guests shared their three must-pack travel items, while giving us a peek into some of their best holiday adventures – and misadventures...

From her own coffee to an app to check on her cats, food critic and Celebrity MasterChef judge, **Grace Dent**, brought along some interesting items, with even more interesting stories. Case in point: while sitting down to a Michelin-starred dinner in the south of France, instead of enjoying the food, Grace checks her phone and laughs when she finds one of her cats “asleep beside the shower.” Iconic. Then, before wrapping up with Russell, Grace shares her top tip for finding the best hidden culinary gems on holiday.

In a later episode, TV presenter and comedian, **Sue Perkins**, echoed this. “Ask local people what’s good,” she says, “and go from there.” It’s safe to say Sue’s our new go-to for advice on stepping out of our comfort zone while travelling, after sharing stories from Colombia and Vietnam of tasting everything from “microwaved toad” to “fried tarantula.” Her tip? “Pick an unfamiliar continent” and find “a place within it that feels like there are enough points of familiarity.” It’s a great starting point, although we might skip the fried spider. Sue’s third item – rehydration tablets – sparked even more convo. “They’re really good for hangovers,” she says – sounds like a lifesaver for those unexpected holiday nights out.



Ready for more packing?

Russell Kane’s back for series two with a whole host of new faces, and a brand-new segment where our guests help solve your travel dilemmas. Streaming now – wherever you listen to your podcasts.

“Ask someone at reception where they go on a Friday night, and that’s when they’ll come out with the most beautiful, family-run bistro.”

Where's next?



I bet after flicking through this magazine you're dreaming of your next trip away. Did Mexico take your fancy? Or will it be somewhere closer to home like Majorca?

Well, wherever you go next, you can get there with our award-winning TUI Airways. Look at the map above to see the 65-plus destinations you can go to. Plus, we take off from over 20 local UK airports, so you can reach your next destination from your doorstep. And if that's not enough, we've teamed up with other leading airlines to offer you even more choice. Pick from iconic cities like New York to honeymoon hotspots like the Maldives.

We've got every trip type covered, too. A ski holiday? A retreat by a lake? A jam-packed city break? You name it, we have it. Or if you'd rather take to the seas, you can sail to more than 100 destinations with Marella Cruises. And with TUI River Cruises, there are 55 ports to explore.

See our full range of holidays at tui.co.uk

 Words: Chloe Brightwell





The best experiences at home or abroad

provided by TUI Musement



Can't decide on your
next destination?

Search for **TUI**
bespoke brochures,
tell us what you're
looking for, and
we'll build you your
own personalised
brochure. Or, pop
into your local TUI
Store to speak to
your Travel Expert.

Book now
on the **TUI app**
or at **tui.co.uk**



**1000s OF TOURS
& ACTIVITIES**



**BEST VALUE
GUARANTEE**



**FREE
CANCELLATION**

Atlantica Imperial Resort, Rhodes



Poolside perfection

...at five-star Atlantica
Hotels & Resorts in Greece
and Cyprus.

Atlantica

HOTELS & RESORTS