

Travel

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'I wanted to see the country by daylight in a long panning shot from my windscreen'
Author Paul Theroux hits the highways in America

BENEDETTO TARANTINO



25 fantastic family adventures

Reconnect on one of these spectacular trips that all ages can enjoy together, from hiking breaks to beach holidays.
By **Gemma Bowes**

1 Beaches and castles in Greece

Parga, on Greece's west coast, offers the best of both worlds: all the exploration you'd expect on the mainland, with beaches as gorgeous as you'd find on the islands. Parga's charming harbour town curves round an emerald bay, has a Venetian castle and is full of tavernas, but it's easy to take day trips to Valtos beach, the Acheron River or an Ottoman castle. The Parga Beach Resort has a pool and two, four or five-person rooms. **Details** Seven nights' half-board for four adults and two children in two rooms in the summer holidays from £7,086, including flights and transfers (olympicholidays.com)

2 Crafts and cooking in Sicily

Watching a private puppet show or learning to make marzipan fruits in your villa's garden are some of the delightful activities available at the Thinking Traveller's new properties in the east of Sicily next year. The company can organise private chefs for family meals or to host cookery lessons, and arrange boat charters to explore hidden spots along the coast. The four-bedroom villa I Lentischi, near the baroque city of Noto, has a 14m pool, walled courtyard and a tranquil garden of carob and olive trees.



Snorkelling in Thailand

Details Seven nights' self-catering for seven in the summer holidays from £6,764 (thethinkingtraveller.com). Fly to Catania

3 Tropical Thailand

Riding a sleeper train from Ayutthaya to Chiang Mai and back will be an adventure within an adventure on a new private tour of Thailand for over-fives. Many of the classic sights and experiences that make the country a winner for families are included, from Hua Hin's beaches to the waterfalls of Erawan National Park and the rescued pachyderms at the Elephant Nature Park near Chiang Mai. But there are ▶

experiences to get under the surface too, such as a jungle home stay and a forest walk with the villagers of Ban Hua Tung. **Details** Eleven nights' B&B at Easter from £2,049pp, including two sleeper trains, transport and activities (tropicals.com). Fly to Bangkok

4 Cycling the Studland peninsula

Exploring the Studland peninsula on two wheels, tots in bike seats, is a family favourite for Cat Jones, the founder of the new no-fly travel company Byway. From Bournemouth station, cycle the seafront to take the chain ferry to Poole Harbour. Over on Studland there are expansive beaches, an open-air tidal pool and steam trains. You'll split the week between two hotels, including Knoll House, where Enid Blyton stayed. A journey plan includes maps and ideas for where to eat, play and swim. Byway experts are on WhatsApp to arrange extras or wet-weather plans. **Details** Six nights' B&B from £596 per adult, £298 per child, including trains; bike hire £50 (bywaytravel)

5 Costa Rica's natural wonders

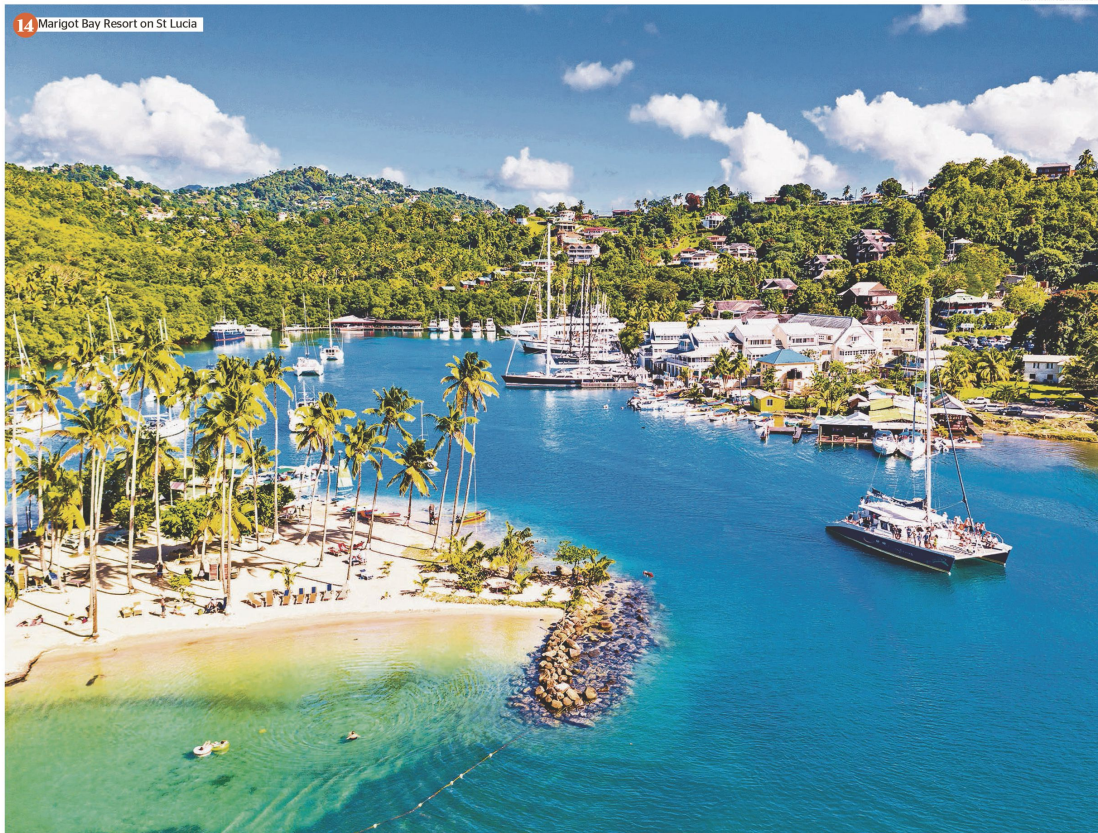
Learn what sloths have for breakfast and about tree frogs' night-time habits on a Costa Rican adventure — a new addition for over-sevens to a collection of guided trips put together with National Geographic that encourage connection with local communities. In a group of up to 20 you'll hike the misty trails of Santa Elena Cloud Forest Reserve, dunk in thermal hot springs, visit a butterfly garden, try surfing from Pacific beaches and spot wildlife during a jungle boat cruise. **Details** Eight nights' B&B from £1,499 per adult, £1,339 per child, including tour and guide, transfers, some activities and meals (gadventures.com). Fly to San José

6 Scandi ski trip

Late-season skiing in Scandinavia can still be epic because the snow lasts far longer than in the Alps. Furthest north is the Swedish resort of Riksgården, where dihard ski bums traditionally head from the Alps — it's connected to the more family-friendly Björkliden by a free shuttle bus. This is a magical area, the gateway to Lapland. Plus, because many come for the piste-skiing, the slopes themselves are uncrowded, helping little ones to gain confidence. Stay in the cute Kappas Cabin Village by Björkliden's slopes; black timber cabins sleep four to six people. **Details** Seven nights' self-catering for six at Easter from £965pp, including flights and rail transfers (skisafari.com)

7 Lambing on a Scottish farm

Scottish farm stays come into their own with lamb cuddles in the spring — by which time let's hope protection levels are no longer necessary. One lovely option is Arnprior Farm in Stirlingshire, surrounded by hill country, but within reach of Stirling city. Help to feed the newborns in April, staying in one of four smart, glamping huts — each has a private hot tub and sleeps five. In summer you're all set for walks and loch dips. Guests can book a private heated indoor pool and a "party pod" with music speakers and fairy lights for up to 20 people to picnic in afterwards.



14 Marigot Bay Resort on St Lucia

Details Two nights' self-catering from £190 (arnpriorfarm.com)

8 Going green in Ibiza

Build on the Attenborough effect at Ibiza's 7Pines Kempinski hotel, where the new kids' club activities cover sustainability, beach cleaning and upcycling sessions. Set on a cliff-top in the west of the island, with the fine beaches of Cala Conta and Cala Codolar a stroll away, the chic hotel has lots of big ticks for the grown-ups: a spa, infinity pool, wine tasting and cooking classes. And perhaps Granny would like to try a cliff-diving session? **Details** Seven nights' B&B for four sharing a room in the summer holidays from £5,095, including flights and transfers (inspringtravelcompany.co.uk)

9 Walking and glamping safari in Norway

On a hiking safari in Norway suitable for over-eights you can let the children ramble in the wild without worrying too much about them getting eaten. Yes, there are exciting predators here in the

Fulufjellet National Park — brown bears, wolves, lynx and wolverines — but the polar bears are far away to the north in Svalbard. Elk and golden eagles might put in an appearance too, during easy walks of about six hours a day led by the expert guide Diane, who chats about folklore and wildlife as you go. Accommodation is in a large tepee. **Details** Six nights' full board from £720 per adult, from £400 per under-18, including transfers (responsibletavel.com). Fly to Oslo



La Rosière in France

10 Big American road trip

With all eyes on Washington in January, 2021 is a fascinating year for a road trip through the "capital region", and on this new self-drive holiday for multigenerational groups your clan will travel hotel to hotel in a people carrier through Washington DC, Virginia and Maryland. Get schooled at the Smithsonian and National Air and Space museums, and at Colonial Williamsburg, the country's largest outdoor living history museum, which recreates 18th-century city streets. There's time to relax on Virginia Beach

before horse riding, rafting or hiking in the Appalachians.

Details Twelve nights (room only) for four adults, two children at Easter from £1,655pp, including flights and vehicle hire (bon-voyage.co.uk)

11 Sleep next to leopards in Kent

For big cat encounters you need go no further than Kent, which ought to be free of present restrictions by April, when the Port Lympne Hotel & Reserve safari park adds to its collection of luxury glamping and suites. Leopard Creek will feature smart glass and wood wigwams and cabins above the enclosure of rare Amur leopards. During your stay you can explore on foot, take a safari truck tour, or feed the lions. You can eat in a new restaurant in the restored stableyard of the mansion at the heart of the park. **Details** From £439 (room only) for two at Leopard Creek, including park entry and safari truck tour experience (aspinafoundation.org)

12 Big cat adventure in Namibia

Freedom and the open skies of an African road trip are the promise on this

new self-drive trip for over-sixes from Windhoek, which takes in the Namib Desert dunes, wrecks on the Skeleton Coast, safari drives in Etosha National Park and big cats at the Africat Foundation on the Okonjima Private Reserve. You'll stay at glampsites and in rustic lodges, watch the sunset from Sesreim Canyon and pause for a photo as you cross the Tropic of Capricorn. A whopper of an adventure. **Details** Thirteen nights' B&B from £2,895 per adult, from £2,295 per child, including flights, car hire, activities and some extra meals (familiesworldwide.co.uk)

13 Luxury resort in Montenegro

Fifteen years ago tourism in Montenegro was all carp soup and terrifying roads. Now superchests and luxury resorts have taken over. The latest, One&Only Portonovi, is due to open in Herceg Novi on the Adriatic coast's mountain-backed Bay of Kotor in March. There are 11 pools and an excellent kids' club offering raft-building, water-sports tournaments and stargazing. For parents and grandparents there's Giorgio Locatelli's organic restaurant Sabia and pioneering skin treatments in the spa. You can stay



19 Canoeing in Canada



together in a two-bedroom family suite, and have a private butler. **Details** Seven nights' B&B for four adults and two children in a two-bedroom suite at Easter from £10,063, including kids' club (oneandonlyresorts.com). Fly to Dubrovnik

14 Fit in all the fun in St Lucia

Having your own 'Moment Maestro' sounds a bit cringy, but you'll be glad when they have arranged all your experiences and excursions, as they do at high-end Marigot Bay Resort on lush St Lucia. The kids' club lays on pirate days and behind-the-scenes tours of the marina with the dock master, while parents try the spa rituals and rum tasting. Free children's activities include nature walks, crafts and storytelling, while extra bookable activities could lead the family into the jungly interior for zip-lining, or kayaking around the coast. **Details** Seven nights' B&B from £2,299 per adult, from £499 per under-12, including flights, transfers and kids' club (caribbours.com)

15 Gentle skiing in France

When skiing in the French Alps restarts, head for the new all-inclusive Club Med La Rosière, due to open in the Savoyard resort of La Rosière in mid-January. Gentle blue runs and woodland walks mean that the resort works well for children and older, and the snow should be reliable even at Easter — the ski-in, ski-out hotel perches up at 1,900m. Rooms are smart and simple, with lights made from giant cowbells, and can interconnect, plus there's a pool. **Details** Seven nights' full board from £1,140 per adult at Easter, from £1140 per under-11 (under-fours free), including flights, ski pass, open bar, snacks and childcare (skisolutions.com)

16 Pirates and tennis in the Algarve

Lessons at Annabel Croft's tennis academy, water sports, eight pools and a pirate-themed "children's village" bring the fun to Portugal's Moorish-inspired Pine Cliffs resort between Vilamoura and Albufeira in the Algarve. Older children can tackle a high ropes course,

mini golf and paddleboarding, while the whole family might head out on an SUV tour of charming villages and beaches. Pretty tiled rooms come in a range of sizes, including duplexes with sofa bed and two twins, or two and three-bedroom residences with kitchenettes. Restaurants include the Piri Piri Steakhouse. **Details** Seven nights' self-catering for four in a two-bedroom residence in the summer holidays from £2,419, including flights (jet2holidays.com)

17 Coastal heaven in Vietnam

The gorgeous new Zannier Hotels Bai San Ho is a dreamy barefoot-luxury retreat on the Vietnamese coast north of Nha Trang — all emerald pools and exposed wood — yet it also has an excellent kids' club, which subtly teaches about sustainability through treasure hunts in paddy fields, yoga classes and lessons on rice cultivation with local farmers. Together the family can explore ancient Champa Kingdom ruins, the Da Dia reef, white beaches and mountains. **Details** Seven nights' B&B from £1,616 per adult, from £1,156 per child, including flights and transfers (redsavannah.com)

18 Art and action in Menorca

If any Balearic island is geared up to please all the generations, it's Menorca. Crown-ups might be especially interested in the new Hauser & Wirth arts centre opening in 2021 on Isla del Rey in the port of Mahon, but they won't mind the amazing beaches either, with their calm, toddler-friendly warm waters. For older children, swimming in mountain river pools is a memorable thrill. Choose a multigeneration-sized villa such as Garbo in the quiet northwest near pretty Cala Morell Cove; it has five bedrooms, pool and terrace. **Details** Seven nights' self-catering for nine in the summer holidays from £3,098 (vintagetravel.co.uk). Fly to Mahon

19 Canadian lakes and wilderness

Revild your family by immersing them in the beautiful nature of Algonquin Provincial Park. This enormous, peaceful wilderness of lakes and forests is one of the world's best spots for canoe safaris, spotting moose, lake swimming and sleeping in island camps and cosy log cabins. You'll get five days as part of a tour of Ontario that also takes in Toronto, Ottawa, Niagara Falls and Blue Mountains, a purpose-built resort with millions of fun activities, including water slides and high ropes. **Details** Seventeen days room only in the summer holidays from £2,00pp, including flights, car hire, some activities and a five-day all-inclusive Algonquin wilderness experience (stubbnummeltravel.com)

20 Your own village in Provence

An evening watching your little ones' show in the children's theatre, a few games with grandad on the pétanque court, lilo racing in the pool and big family meals cooked by the in-house chefs will be on the agenda at Le Grand Banc. This place is more village than a villa, sleeping 24 in its stone buildings around their own little paved street. Spend days out exploring dramatic ▶



7Pines Kempinski in Ibiza

gorges by kayak, shopping at local markets and walking through lavender fields before settling the children in their special five-bed bunk room while you crack open the rosé.

Details Seven nights' full board from £14,400 for 24 (scottwilliams.co.uk). Take the train or fly to Avignon

21 Castle stay in Devon

Crenellated walls, castellations and mullioned windows give this new holiday home near Exmoor the look of a castle, but inside it's sleek and modern. A large dining room is good for games and family meals, there's a sunken terrace with a fire pit, and a wildlife pond. An acre of pretty gardens is surrounded by rolling fields of sheep. Nearby South Molton is home to the Quince Honey Farm, which hosts beekeeping demonstrations and candle workshops. Release the young ones to the indoor and outdoor play areas while grandparents stock up on treats.

Details Seven nights' self-catering for six from £1,795; from £3,995 in school summer holidays (uniquehomestays.com)

22 Highlands skiing made easy

Will 2021 be the year to try skiing in Scotland? Booking a package makes it less daunting; on this trip you'll stay in a hotel in the eastern Highlands and a second in the western, so you get easy access to the region's five main resorts.



21 Castle on the Well in Devon

A personal ski host helps families to find the spot with the best conditions each day — perhaps Glenshee, Scotland's largest resort, or some off-piste in the Cairngorms — and arrange ski hire. Non-skiers can go hiking, biking or whisky tasting.

Details Four nights' B&B from £885pp, including transfers and ski passes or guided activities (wildernessscotland.com)

23 Hiking around Lake Como

Even young children can be introduced to point-to-point hiking holidays, as long

as you pick an easy, adaptable route. On this one you'll ride the funicular from lakeside Como city to a high start point, then walk down through mountain scenery to a different charming rifugio or agriturismo each night, with some fabulous dinners. Easy trails of two to four hours run through beech forests and meadows, circling around the area's majestic peaks rather than hiking up and over them, and there are summits for tougher legs.

Details Seven nights' B&B from £630pp, including ferry, luggage transport and some meals (responsibletravel.com). Take the train or fly to Milan

24 Winter or summer in the Dolomites

The show-stopping crags of the Dolomites and lunches at Michelin-starred mountain huts make the Alta Badia region of northern Italy a fabulously indulgent ski destination for adults. But it's a wonderful spot for children to learn too. Several sets of posh apartments and hotels open this winter, including Residence Villa Trieste, with six slick pads in Corvara. In summer there's the vast network of hiking trails, and fun parks featuring zip lines, giant trampolines and caves.

Details Seven nights' self-catering for six at Easter from £3,400 (villatrieste.it). Fly to Venice

25 Drums and films in Japan

There's loads for children to get stuck into on this self-guided Japan trip. In Tokyo and Kyoto you could practise taiko drumming and tatedo sword fighting, and learn about anime films, including *Spirited Away* and *My Neighbour Totoro*, at the Studio Ghibli Museum. You'll also visit one of the world's largest aquariums, in Osaka. Time in the Japanese Alps near Matsumoto delivers a trip to a samurai castle and a lesson in soba noodle-making. Stays in traditional ryokan inns and trips on bullet trains are included.

Details Fourteen days' B&B for four at Easter from £8,210, including transfers (insidejapan.com). Fly to Tokyo

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