

Ahead of the curve

Bag some early booking deals for your clients, with
Laura French's guide to the best short breaks for 2024

With blue skies and summer vibes finally upon us, you might not be thinking about summer 2024 just yet – but with reports of booking curves lengthening and a whole roster of product available to book for next year, now might just be the time to start thinking ahead.

Jet2holidays recently announced its “biggest-ever” summer programme for the season, launching seven routes, while Tui has added 1.1 million more seats and up to 550,000 additional holidays – meaning there’s no shortage of product to sell to clients wanting to plan ahead and bag some early-bird deals.

It doesn’t have to be a two-week holiday to justify booking in advance, either; clients wanting a short break to look forward to have plenty of options – from coach tours to couples’ retreats and family beach breaks to mountain escapes, we’ve rounded up some of the best.

BUDGET FAMILY BREAK

For a wallet-friendly family beach break, easyJet holidays points to Fuerteventura, where white-sand beaches and year-round sunny climes meet a string of

child-friendly attractions, including Acua Water Park and Oasis Wildlife, the biggest animal rescue centre in the Canary Islands.

Suggest Globales Costa Tropical in Costa de Antigua for a great value all-inclusive; located just 10 minutes from the airport, it’s an easy hop for a short break, and there’s plenty to keep guests entertained, from tennis, football and table tennis to a huge outdoor pool and a separate kids’ pool complete with a slide and water fountains. The local town has various bars and restaurants, and a peaceful coastal walk takes you to the lively resort of Caleta de Fuste.

Book it: EasyJet holidays offers five nights’ all-inclusive at the three-star Globales Costa Tropical in Fuerteventura from £547 per person, including transfers and flights from Luton on July 21, 2024. easyjet.com/en/holidays

ACTIVE ESCAPE

If it’s an active escape that lures, look to the Alps for an adventurous summer getaway. Clients aren’t short on resorts to choose from, but for one of the liveliest in the summer months, Inghams recommends Chamonix. ➤

Lacs des Chéserys, near
Chamonix, France
PICTURE: Shutterstock/
Sandervan der Werf

DESTINATIONS

SHORT BREAKS | EUROPE



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Castello Boutique Resort & Spa, Crete; spa treatments at Castello Boutique Resort & Spa; wine tasting in Porto, Portugal; Hotel Le Morgane, France



"Chamonix is famed for its many summer events and activities," says Robyn Adam, product manager for Italy and France. "For those with a head for heights, there's paragliding, a *via ferrata* climbing rail and rock climbing, as well as mountain biking and guided glacier hikes. For those seeking an adrenaline rush, the white-water rafting is great, or if you're looking for a slower pace, then there are hiking trails in the area."

Recommend Hotel Le Morgane for a central stay, which has a roof terrace overlooking Mont Blanc and balcony views from every room, plus hiking trails on the doorstep.

Book it: Four nights' B&B at Hotel Le Morgane in Chamonix costs from £844 per person, based on two sharing with flights from Gatwick on June 8, 2024. ingham.co.uk

COUPLES' RETREAT

For sun, sea and sand without the crowds, point couples to Sissi in Crete, says Olympic Holidays. This quaint fishing village sits sandwiched between postcard-pretty mountains, with Heraklion and its Minoan-era ruins a 40-minute drive away.

The adult-only Castello Boutique Resort & Spa makes for an elegant, couple-friendly retreat, with an excellent spa, freshwater pool and Greek restaurant on hand to occupy. Agios Nikolaos is half an hour away for buzzy beaches and plenty of nightlife, while a scenic drive across the island will take you to capital Chania for cultural explorations aplenty.



ALAN CROSS head of trade, Jet2holidays

"Having gone on sale earlier than ever before, Jet2holidays is looking forward to its biggest summer programme in 2024. We've increased capacity and will begin services from Liverpool – our 11th UK airport. To demonstrate how strong demand is for summer 2024, we've added 75,000 seats in early summer to destinations such as Montenegro, Turkey, Portugal, the Canaries, the Balearics, mainland Spain and Italy. That demand extends throughout the season, as customers want to book their holidays in advance to lock in the price. Remind customers that now is the best time to secure the best hotels and best rooms at the best prices – that great deal might not still be there in weeks to come."

MICHAEL VINALES managing director, Olympic Holidays

"Now is a great time to book for summer 2024, as some of the most popular properties are already close to full capacity. Booking now ensures the best chance for travellers to get the resort, hotel and room they would like. We also have some great early booking deals for summer 2024 that mean agents can get great prices for their customers."

Book it: Olympic Holidays has five nights' B&B at Castello Boutique Resort & Spa in Crete from £508 per person, based on two sharing and including flights from Gatwick on May 4, 2024. olympicholidays.com

WALKING HOLIDAY

A hop over to the Douro Valley offers quaint rural villages, emerald vineyards and port tasting aplenty. Inntravel has a three-day, self-guided walking tour combining hikes in the region with two nights in Porto, including a scenic train ride and wine tasting at a local *quinta* (wine-growing ➤

DESTINATIONS

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Best OF THE REST

Self-catering escape: Direct couples with younger kids to Majorca, where Jet2holidays recommends the four-star Club Mediterranean Resort. Set among landscaped gardens and designed like its own village with self-catering apartments, you'll find a plethora of activities here – from a kids' club and splash park to six pools and cycling facilities. Five nights starts at £879 per person, based on two adults and a child sharing, with flights and transfers on August 8, 2024.

jet2holidays.com

All-inclusive value: For families looking for a fun-filled, all-in getaway, Olympic Holidays points to Kipriotis Village Resort in Psalidi, Kos. Clients will find waterslides, mini golf, a kids' club, kitesurfing and more, with the Kipriotis Aqualand water park a 10-minute walk away and Kos Town close by too. Five nights starts at £482 per person, based on two adults and one child sharing, including flights, on May 1, 2024.

olympicholidays.com

Touring solo: Selling to solo travellers? Newmarket Holidays has launched a tour in the Scottish Highlands for single travellers, taking in the Cairngorms, the Moray Coast, Aviemore, Loch Ness and more, with several departures next year. The five-night trip, departing on June 26 from Gatwick, starts at £1,260, including flights, guide, coach travel and half-board accommodation.

newmarketholidays.co.uk



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Bathing in the Blue Lagoon, Reykjavik; wine tasting in the Douro Valley; Derwentwater Lake, the Lake District **PICTURE:** Shutterstock/Valerie2000



country estate). Guests will stay in a restored nobleman's house with fertile hills and olive groves for company, and if they book ahead they can add a tasting at Graham's Wine Lodge in Porto.

Book it: Inntravel's Porto & The Douro Valley trip costs from £835 per person based on two sharing, including four nights' B&B accommodation, two dinners, maps, transfers and a guided visit to Quinta de la Rosa, with departures from April 1 to October 31, 2024.

inntravel.co.uk

CITY BREAK

Clients keen to enjoy a little culture? For a summer city break with extra adventure, Reykjavik beckons. They'll find galleries, museums and Michelin-starred restaurants plus a host of activities from bathing in the Blue Lagoon to whale watching, as well as attractions further afield, such as Thingvellir National Park and the Gullfoss Waterfall.

For a stylish stay in the city, Osprey Holidays recommends the four-star Fosshotel Reykjavik. It's a stone's throw from the waterfront and boasts its own beer garden – the perfect spot in which to while away those long Scandinavian summer evenings.

Book it: Three nights' B&B at the Fosshotel Reykjavik costs from £989 per person, based on two sharing a Double Room and including flights from Gatwick and shared transfers on June 20, 2024.

ospreyholidays.com

“Clients will find galleries and Michelin-starred restaurants plus activities from bathing in the Blue Lagoon to whale watching

COACH TOUR

Closer to home, there's plenty to charm travellers seeking a short, easy break – not least the Lake District. Shearings offers a trip from a base in the quaint market town of Kendal, with visits to Keswick, Grasmere, Windermere and the Yorkshire Dales among the highlights. “This is a very popular tour due to the beauty of the destination and excellent value,” says Ashley Dellow, head of retail sales at Shearings. “All Shearings tours can be secured by paying a low deposit with the price invoiced at the time of booking, so booking in advance is a great way of insuring against price increases,” he adds.

Book it: Shearings' five-day Highlights of the Lake District tour in 2024 costs from £399 per person, including half-board accommodation, excursions and coach transport from local joining points.

shearings.com **TW**