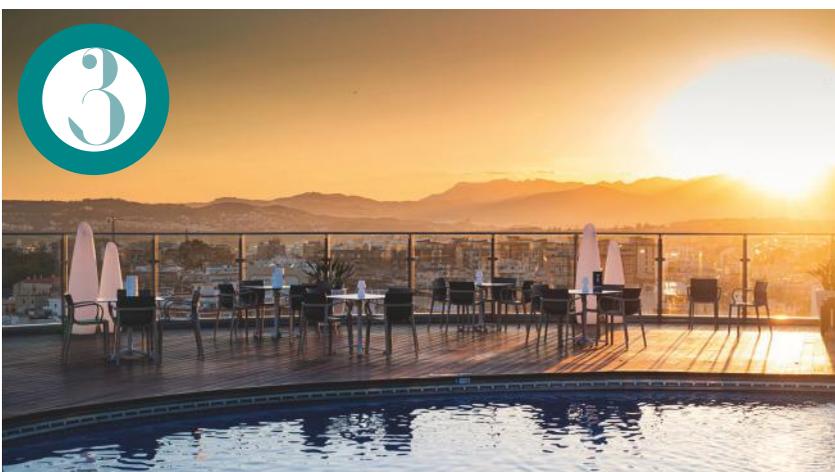


ASK THE operator

With a rise in demand this winter for longer stays in sunny destinations, **Alice Barnes-Brown** asks three experts where to direct clients



PICTURES: Joaquín Alarcón Pérez; James Robinson; Shutterstock/DedMityay

1 CYPRUS

A solo traveller is looking to base themselves in the Mediterranean for a month. They'd like plenty of sun and pool time, but also the opportunity to explore nearby towns, meet new people and learn about local culture.



Chris Yianni
head of product (touring),
JG Travel Group

For a solo traveller I'd opt for Paphos in Cyprus as we have several no-single-supplement rooms available. We use the Paphos Gardens Holiday Resort on an all-inclusive basis, so it's great value for money. It is close to downtown Paphos, has a spa, two outdoor pools and one indoor pool, and is just a short walk to the beach. Nobody can guarantee the weather these days, but the average winter temperature is around 17-18C.

Each long-stay package includes either three or four excursions. On our four-week holidays, guests can enjoy a guided city tour of Paphos (pictured), including the Tombs of the Kings and Paphos Castle; a trip to Tala Village; an outing to the Baths of Aphrodite; plus a visit to the Ancient Greek city of Kourion and Limassol.

Spending almost a month in the Mediterranean is a real draw for many customers. Escaping the costs of heating their homes, plus avoiding cooking and washing up for 29 days – what's not to love? The resorts are less busy, and this type of holiday is about relaxing.

Book it: Just Go Holidays is running a 'four weeks for the price of three' offer on its 29-day Paphos long-stay winter-sun holiday, with prices from £1,499 for departures on January 7 and February 4. Includes return flights, transfers, excursions, portage and the services of a resort representative on selected days.
justgoholidays.com/agents

2 THE CARIBBEAN

A retired couple are looking for a no-fly cruise, hoping to escape their heating bills during the coldest parts of winter. They want to pay upfront so they don't have to worry about many extra costs.



Ruth Venn
sales director,
P&O Cruises

We offer quite a few longer-duration holidays in the winter months because we know people crave some sunshine. At this time of year, it's prime time for Caribbean weather, and we think our 35-night Caribbean and USA cruise offers incredible value in terms of the number of ports you visit [10 in total]. You've got Hamilton, Bermuda and Cozumel in Mexico, where you can have some fantastic beach days, mixed with cities like New Orleans for great tours and cultural experiences.

Ventura (pictured) is a mid-sized ship, perfect for all ages. As well as included meals and entertainment – from bingo to sailaway parties – extras are charged in sterling, which helps with budgeting on board. And, when you sail from and to Southampton there are no additional costs for air travel.

These longer-duration cruises are very reasonable. We've done comparisons of this kind of cruise versus a land-based holiday or even a trip to London – this itinerary works out at £76 per day, with everything included.

Book it: P&O Cruises' 35-night Caribbean and USA cruise on *Ventura* costs from £2,649 per person for an inside cabin, full board and entertainment, departing Southampton on February 11, 2024, returning on March 17.
pocruises.com

3 SPAIN

A pair of remote workers want a simple month in a warmer climate, where they can work on their laptops in the day, but soak up the sun by the hotel pool at lunchtime and enjoy cocktails in the evening.



Cathy Rankin
UK and Ireland sales & marketing director,
Groupe Pierre & Vacances

The Costa del Sol is perfect, offering a mix of sunny weather, Spanish culture and great food. Fuengirola suits digital natives, as it combines city living with the beach. The temperatures are better for exploring, plus this time of year is full of festivals, with Spain's Procession of the Kings in January and the Carnival and Andalusia Day in February.

The Pierre & Vacances Hotel El Puerto is ideal for remote working as it offers a new co-working space through local business SmartWorkPlaza. Regular events and parties are organised, offering the chance to meet like-minded people. El Puerto also has a rooftop sky bar and pool (pictured), which is a great place to chill out after work. Plus, manager José-Luis is justifiably proud of his excellent full English breakfasts!

Fuengirola's coastal area of Los Boliches showcases its roots as a fishing village in its tapas restaurants and vibrant markets, while the cosmopolitan shopping centre with art galleries and museums is also worth a wander. The nearby Andalusian mountains are renowned for great hiking, and visitors can even enjoy a day's skiing in the Sierra Nevada – only two hours away.

Book it: A 28-night stay at Hotel El Puerto, arriving December 2, is priced from £984 per person, based on two sharing a double room with breakfast. Flights and transfers excluded.
pierreetvacances.com/gb-en