

# ASK THE experts

Families after an active break in October half-term?  
Laura French canvasses three experts' opinions



## 1 Coastal stays in Europe

Nicolas joined Club Med in 2014, transferring to the Asia-Pacific team in Shanghai in 2016. He joined the Paris-based Europe and Africa marketing department in 2020, managing commercial decisions during the pandemic, before taking up his current role last September.



**Nicolas Bresch**  
managing director, UK, Ireland & Nordics,  
Club Med

“We’ve seen a boost in bookings for our French resorts for this October half-term, including our resort in the French Riviera, Opio en Provence (pictured), where sales are up 161% compared with the same period last year. Sales for Bodrum Palmiye in Turkey, meanwhile, are up 132% year on year, while our resorts in Mauritius, Punta Cana and Phuket are also seeing strong demand.

“For half-term, the newly renovated La Palmyre Atlantique, just south of La Rochelle on France’s west coast, is a great choice for outdoor family adventures. It sits right in front of the Atlantic, on the edge of La Coubre forest, and offers a range of activities, from windsurfing, kitesurfing and sailing to archery, cycling, tennis and horse riding. There’s also plenty to do outside the resort; families can ride the 19th-century steam train Le Train des Mouettes, or climb to the top of the Unesco-listed Cordouan Lighthouse.

“For something a little different, recommend a yacht cruise on *Club Med 2*. This unique sailing experience will take guests from Marseille to Malaga, with plenty of family activities on board and a different destination to explore every day.”

**Book it:** Seven nights’ all-inclusive at Club Med La Palmyre Atlantique starts at £1,021 per person, based on two adults and two children sharing a Family Room, departing on October 22. [clubmed.co.uk](http://clubmed.co.uk)

## 2 Winter sun in Dubai

Deborah began working in travel in 2006 and joined Gold Medal last year. She looks after Europe, the Indian Ocean, Africa, the Middle East, Asia and Oceania, seeking out new opportunities and ensuring the operator offers the best product for agents to sell to customers.



**Deborah Wadhams**  
head of product, east,  
Gold Medal

Dubai is a great option for families seeking an active, sunny half-term break – October isn’t too hot, and there are some great offers at the hotels. There’s also plenty to do: Dubai Aquarium; Dubai Parks and Resorts, which is home to Legoland and a water park; and dune drives and sand-boarding in the desert.

“Accommodation-wise, Atlantis, The Palm is a top pick for families. As well as Aquaventure Waterpark (pictured) and The Lost Chambers Aquarium, it offers bowling, the Atlantis Explorers Club and The Zone for teens.

“I’d also recommend Lapita, Dubai Parks and Resorts, Autograph Collection, which is the only hotel in the theme park; and Centara Mirage Beach Resort Dubai, which offers a range of watersports, as well as a lazy river and a pool with slides.

“Emphasise the value that can be found in Dubai. Hotels now offer more within their pricing, from park access to all-inclusive, so it can be cheaper than clients might think.”

**Book it:** Gold Medal offers a week’s B&B at Lapita, Dubai Parks and Resorts from £1,449 per person, based on four sharing. The price includes unlimited access to the parks, plus flights from Heathrow on October 22. [goldmedal.co.uk](http://goldmedal.co.uk)

## 3 Walking in the Italian Lakes

Laura has worked in travel for the past 15 years. She started her career as an Italy specialist before moving to Inghams, delivering a new walking programme across seven European countries. She loves the great outdoors and enjoys seeking out the best activities for customers.



**Laura Mason**  
head of walking product,  
Inghams

“For October half-term, I’d recommend Riva on Lake Garda – there are great family-friendly walking and cycling trails, alongside lots of watersports, and clients can easily visit nearby towns by ferry. There are also fewer crowds on the lake in October and the weather is cooler, so it’s an ideal time for exploring.

“The Hotel Du Lac et Du Parc (pictured) caters especially well for families and it’s only a 15-minute walk from the town. It’s home to some of the lake’s best gardens, which lead all the way down to the water. There’s a dedicated children’s pool plus a playground and kids’ club, as well as tennis courts and a watersports centre offering windsurfing, kayaking and sailing. Adults seeking downtime should head to the spa, which has an indoor pool offering stunning views of the gardens.

“For those who want to explore further, I’d recommend visiting the emerald waters of Lake Ledro, half an hour from Riva. This high Alpine lake is another irresistible swimming spot that can be reached by one of the best hiking and cycling paths in Lake Garda – the panoramic Strada del Ponale – and it’s beautiful.”

**Book it:** A week’s half board at the Hotel Du Lac et Du Parc on Lake Garda costs from £1,104 per person, based on two adults and one child sharing, flying from Birmingham on October 21. [ingham.co.uk](http://ingham.co.uk)