

Sunny savings

From extended stays to extended families, here's how to book a winter-sun break on a shoestring, writes **India-Jayne Trainor**

Escaping the UK winter is a tempting prospect, but school holiday restrictions, long flights or wanting to travel with the whole family can deter clients by bumping up the price.

Operators are responding to demand for budget-friendlier breaks: Tui and Jet2holidays regularly offer free child places, while many more offer last-minute winter deals, long-stay discounts or feature up-and-coming winter destinations that offer travellers more for their money.

So whether clients want a romantic escape, long weekend away or super-sized family holiday in the sun, a winter trip may be the best Christmas present they could give themselves.

BEST FOR...ALL-INCLUSIVE ACTIVITIES

For clients who want an action-packed break on a budget, suggest an all-inclusive resort

where sports and activities come as standard so they won't face unexpected charges for lessons, court hire or sports equipment. Nicolas Bresch, Club Med's managing director for the UK, Ireland and Nordics, says: "We offer flights and transfers as part of our all-inclusive package. Activities include tennis, archery, yoga, paddleboarding and sailing, as well as kitesurfing, snorkelling and kayaking. Families also benefit from included childcare and kids' clubs."

Book it: Seven nights' all-inclusive at Club Med Punta Cana starts at £1,936 per person based on two people sharing, including flights from Gatwick and transfers, departing December 6. clubmed.co.uk

BEST FOR...COUPLES

The Maldives is often seen as the opposite of budget-friendly, but clients seeking a trip to paradise may be surprised to learn there ➤

Santana Beach
Resort, Goa

travelweekly.co.uk

DESTINATIONS

WINTER SUN | VALUE

BEST OF THE *rest*

Returning favourite: Tunisia is a good-value spot only three hours away, offering beach resorts such as Hammamet, Monastir and Djerba island. A seven-night all-inclusive trip with Cyplon Holidays starts from £475 at Les Orangers Beach Resort in Hammamet, with flights from Southend and private transfers, departing January 10, 2026. cyplon.co.uk

Long stay: Deals aimed at those with time on their hands include Mercury Holidays' second or third week free offers, with options such as 21 nights at Paphos Gardens Holiday Resort in Cyprus from £648, including two weeks on half-board and one week B&B, with flights from Gatwick (add luggage for £71 extra). Departing January 13, 2026. mercuryholidays.co.uk

From sail to sand: For culture and beach, Red Sea Holidays' 14-night cruise-and-stay package, Red Sea & the Nile, is from £1,699 all-inclusive. It combines seven nights in Hurghada with a Nile cruise plus flights from Gatwick, departing January 16, 2026. redseaholidays.co.uk

Western wonder: Mid-haul spots can pair relaxation and adventure. In Cape Verde, easyJet holidays offers five nights' self-catering from £757 at Hilton Cabo Verde Sal Resort, including transfers and flights from Manchester departing December 4. easyjet.com



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Resort town of Carvoeiro, the Algarve; Paphos in Cyprus; the historical city of Monastir, Tunisia

PICTURES: Shutterstock/jimmonkphotography, Kadagan, Oleksandr Savchuk



are some great-value options. Sun Siyam Resorts has six Indian Ocean properties, each with a choice of dining, watersports, activities and even spa treatments, many covered by all-inclusive packages and dining plans.

Sun Siyam's chief executive Deepak Booneady says: "Many people think the Christmas period is unaffordable, but mid-December until December 27 is often better priced than over the New Year. Our key trade partners often have special deals with us, such as free seaplane and speedboat transfers for stays over seven nights in some resorts, and complimentary room upgrades."

Book it: Gold Medal offers seven nights' all-inclusive at Sun Siyam Olhuveli from £2,565 per person, based on two sharing, including a dining plan, Emirates flights from Stansted and speedboat transfers, for a departure on November 5. goldmedal.co.uk

BEST FOR...MULTIGEN HOLIDAYS

Finding a spot for grandparents, adults and kids to unwind is a challenge, and separate hotel rooms can send costs skyrocketing. Villas are a good solution, with communal cooking and living areas but also privacy, quiet spaces for children with early bedtimes, plus the chance to spend quality time together or explore at leisure.

Anne Clays, trade and partnership manager at SPL Villas, says: "The quieter locations and relaxed sightseeing of a winter villa holiday are fantastic selling points, plus splitting the cost between grandparents and parents can make a trip surprisingly affordable."

Book it: SPL Villas offers seven nights at Villa Elise in the Carvoeiro region of the Algarve from £726 per person, based on six sharing, including return flights from Luton with easyJet, departing December 23. splvillas.com

BEST FOR...SHORT-HAUL

Short-haul favourites such as Spain, Greece and Portugal will never go out of style, providing year-round sunshine, great food and cultural attractions. For clients who don't want to break the bank, Leanne Edwards, head of sales at Olympic Holidays, says: "A bit of flexibility, whether that's booking early or snapping up a last-minute deal, can make all the difference in giving clients a sunny escape they'll love without stretching their budget."

Consider B&B or self-catered options in areas with a variety of affordable restaurants, so they can explore their destination and try local cuisine along the way.

Book it: Olympic Holidays offers seven nights' self-catering at Elba Lucia Sport & Suite Hotel, Fuerteventura, from £621, based on two adults and one child with return flights from Gatwick departing December 20. olympicholidays.com

BEST FOR...LONG-HAUL

Venturing farther afield can open clients' eyes to a new destination while staying wallet-friendly. Karen Durham, product manager at Serenity Holidays, says: "The Gambia, Cape Verde and Goa all offer welcome high temperatures, while being interesting alternatives for winter sun. The Gambia is just six hours from the UK; we have new Saturday departures and always include resort transfers to save clients time and money."

Goa, meanwhile, combines golden-sand beaches and bustling markets with historic forts and a seafood-rich cuisine influenced by Indian and Portuguese flavours.

Book it: The Goa Experiences offers 14 nights from £1,359 per person B&B, based on two sharing, staying at Santana Beach Resort in Goa with direct flights from Gatwick and private transfers. Departing November 27. goaexperience.co.uk 