

Child's play

Find out about the fun on offer at family resort kids' clubs with Laura French's guide

[@laurafrench121](#)



Family holidays might have parent-child bonding at their heart, but everyone needs some alone time now and again - which is where creches and kids' clubs come in.

But with so many resorts to choose from, it's hard to know which really offer the best programmes for your clients. We've waded through the paperwork and whittled it down to the best offerings at key family brands in Europe and beyond.

▶ FIRST CHOICE

Everyone from newborn baby to Kevin the teenager is catered for at First Choice's Holiday Villages.

The HV Creche is suitable for infants aged up to 35 months and open every day, with twice-weekly evening sessions for parents wanting a bit more quiet time (extra cost).

For those in the three-to-eight age bracket, there's the HV Club, offering daily activities that range from teddy bear picnics

and pirate-themed play for the little 'uns, to raft building and high-ropes courses for older children.

Nine to 15-year-olds can try the likes of archery and beach games at the HV Crew, with daily sessions plus evening options throughout the week. All are free of charge.

Chocolate parties and other themed events are also available at extra cost, with party games, dancing and plenty more on the agenda to keep those with itchy feet entertained.

Book it: A week's all-inclusive at Holiday Village Montenegro costs from £723 per person based on a family of four sharing, including flights from Manchester on July 31.

firstchoice.co.uk

▶ TUI

Tui's Family Life resorts have activities for under-11s, with a BabyClub creche offering two-hour sessions for those aged up to three (extra cost). [➔](#)

→ Three to five-year-olds are kept busy with the Bamse Club, whose mascot is a big, cuddly bear, while for older kids there's @611, offering outdoor games and water-based activities.

There are also combined sessions offering everyone from three to 11 the chance to play together, and all sessions are two hours long, six days a week (free of charge).

Higher-end brand Tui Sensatori, meanwhile, has a Play House at every resort, and a Sensory Nursery in short and mid-haul destinations, where morning and afternoon activities take place throughout the day, seven days a week.

The Sensory Nurseries offer full-day care for parents wanting a whole day off, and there are also evening sessions two to three times a week in summer, and once a week in winter.

Book it: Seven nights' all-inclusive at the 4T-rated Tui Family Life Atlantica Marmari Beach in Kos, Greece, costs from £799 per person, based on a family of four sharing, with flights from Stansted on July 31.
tui.co.uk

BELOW:
First Choice
Holiday Village

BOTTOM:
Tui Sensatori

RIGHT:
Lollo the Giraffe,
Sunwing Family
Resorts

▶ THOMAS COOK

Lollo the Giraffe and Bernie the Bear are the stars of the kids' clubs at Thomas Cook's SunConnect and Sunwing Family Resorts, with five and six-day programmes (depending on the season) for those aged three and up.

At Sunwing they comprise a Mini Land for kids between three and seven, offering mini Olympics, aqua discos, evening shows and more with parents getting involved.

Eight to 11-year-olds (and 12-15s in high season) will find plenty to do with the likes of movie nights, water games, a Beach Boot Camp and Teen Idol talent competition, plus a teen lounge complete with consoles and other games. Most activities are free, and split into morning, afternoon and evening sessions.

It's a similar deal at SunConnect, with a Lollo & Bernie Kids' Club for three to 11-year-olds and a Teen Chill-out Area for 12-17s (some activities are payable). There are also open-house family sessions twice a week, where parents can take newborns.

Book it: Seven nights' all-inclusive at

Sunwing Resort Fanabe in Tenerife costs from £2,414, based on two adults and two children sharing, with flights from Manchester in July.
thomascook.com

▶ CLUB MED

For a full-on, action-packed schedule, look to Club Med. You'll find everything from windsurfing to trampolining at the brand's various resorts, while kids' clubs cater to everyone from four months to 17 years.

They include Baby Club Med (suitable for those up to two years), Petit Club Med (two to three), Mini Club Med (four to 10) and Junior Club Med (11 to 17), with activities running from 9am to 5.30pm every day, and select activities in the evenings too. They're all free apart from the Baby and Petit programmes, and babysitting services are available 24 hours a day.

Book it: Seven nights' all-inclusive at Club Med Punta Cana costs from £1,198 per adult and £967 per child, including flights from Gatwick on May 26. Under-fours stay free.
clubmed.co.uk



➔ MARK WARNER

Just as bountiful on the activity scene is Mark Warner, where kids' clubs cover children from four months to 17 years, and operate from 9am to 12.30pm and 2.30pm to 5.30pm.

All clubs are free apart from those for the under-twos (which cost £180 for six days), with arts and crafts, singing, face-painting, swimming and sandcastle-building on the agenda for the youngest ones, and sailing, windsurfing, water polo, beach volleyball and tennis for the older crew.

Evenings see the arrival of the 'snuggle club' – a giant sleepover from 7.30pm to 10.30pm – and babysitters can also be booked for parents wishing to get out and explore the local area.

Book it: Seven nights at San Lucianu Beach Resort in Corsica costs from £4,072 in total, based on a family of four in a Superior Interconnecting Room with transfers, meals, wine and flights from Gatwick on July 21.

markwarner.co.uk

➔ NEILSON

At Neilson, kids' clubs are split into eight groups, catering for ages two to 17. Activities range from kayaking and sailing to pool games, beach Olympics,



nature walks and baking classes, plus evenings out for the older ones.

There are morning and afternoon sessions four days a week, later sessions two days a week (2.30pm-11pm), and thrice-weekly evening 'socials' for those aged six and up – all at no extra charge.

Babysitting and sleep clubs for tots are available for a supplement, and there's also the Starfish creche for babies aged four months and over.

Those serious about water sports can try the Hot Shots club, suitable for eight to 13-year-olds wanting to master windsurfing and dinghy sailing, with an intensive six-day programme taught by Royal Yachting Association instructors and priced from £195 per week.

Book it: A week at Neilson Retreat

Beachclub in Sivota, Greece, starts at £3,834 for two adults and two children aged two to 14, departing on May 26. The price includes flights from Stansted, transfers, club-board accommodation, access to the kids' club, plus water sports, activities and group tuition. neilson.co.uk

➔ BEACHES

For families looking to go long-haul suggest Beaches, whose free Kids Camps in the Caribbean cover all ages from newborns to teens, with certified nannies as well as specialised services for children with autism and other needs.

Most operate from 9am to 9pm, with an infant programme offering climate-controlled nurseries, plus programmes for toddlers, pre-teens and teenagers.

Activities range from treasure hunts and magic shows to glass-bottom boat rides, reggae jam sessions and karaoke nights. Private childcare services are also available for an extra cost.

Book it: Seven nights at Beaches Turks & Caicos starts at £7,675 for a family of four travelling on October 25, 2020. The price includes BA flights from Gatwick, resort transfers and all-inclusive accommodation.

sellingsandals.co.uk

BELOW:
Dinghy sailing at Neilson's Beachclubs

Best of the rest



Hard Rock Hotels, Caribbean
Hard Rock's Roxity Kids Club offers children aged four to 12 a host of music-themed experiences, from live concerts to dance lessons, plus the likes of kids' yoga, glow parties and gardening sessions. Every resort also has a Cavern Club space for teens, a Music Lab and more.



Eftalia Village, Turkey
Jet2holidays recommends this lively beach resort, complete with on-site water park and a kids' club for four to 12s with arts and crafts, film nights, water-based games and mini discos on the agenda.



Atlantis the Palm, Dubai
A kids' club for three to 12s, Club Rush for teens aged 13 to 18, and free access to Aquaventure Waterpark make this spot Gold Medal's top family recommendation in the region.



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