



Having trouble persuading families to take the plunge with a long-haul flight east? Europe is lovely, but outside high summer, they'll struggle for sunshine. Once they see the variety of child-friendly accommodation on offer in Asia – from resort hotels with all the frills to smaller, authentic properties offering experiential stays – they'll realise it's worth the journey.

**1 AT HOME IN VIETNAM** Escape the bustle of Hanoi for the countryside and get involved in Vietnamese village life at Moon Garden Homestay in Ky Son. Guests stay in a handsome historic house with traditional circular windows and dragon-scale roof tiles that was formerly the home of an architect. Multi-bedded, en suite rooms are available, and kids can have fun spotting the carvings of dragons and phoenix on the furniture. Activities include cycling through rice paddies, taking a cookery class, taking part in a traditional yi jin jing exercise class, watching Buddhist ceremonies, and getting involved with ploughing, planting or harvesting in the fields. **Book it:** InsideAsia Tours offers two-day, one-night stays from about £300 for a family of four, as part of full tailor-made itineraries in the region. [insideasiatours.com](http://insideasiatours.com)

**2 SLICK SINGAPORE STAY** Families visiting Singapore don't have to stick to Sentosa Island – though the beach resorts and theme parks make it a good bet for a visit. If clients want to enjoy the city, recommend the downtown Shangri-La Hotel Singapore. Parents will love its Orchard Road location, and kids will be placated with the vast Buds play space, with a ball pit, slides, sand pits, space station, cooking classroom, painting room, music studio, pirate ship and water play area – plus a handy cafe. Upstairs, a dedicated family floor is home to Deluxe Family Rooms with every childcare amenity and thrilling two-bed, two-bath Family Suites, with themes including castle, space, underwater, safari and treetop. **Book it:** Abercrombie & Kent offers five nights in a Tower Wing One Bedroom Suite from £6,000 for a family of four, including flights. [abercrombiekent.co.uk](http://abercrombiekent.co.uk)

**3 FILIPINO FUN** Perfect powder-white sand and cyan seas made Boracay the jewel in the crown of the Philippines' islands, but popularity took its toll on the environment, so the government took the unprecedented step of closing the island to tourists

for six months from April for a clean-up. Families will be able to experience the best of the newly spring-cleaned island at Discovery Shores Boracay, a luxury resort on the widest, quietest part of White Beach – an aptly descriptive name. The sand is pearly and soft, and the warm sea stays shallow for about 50 metres, so kids can play safely. The hotel hosts free daily activities for under-12s at The Sandbox kids' room, supplies beach toys and pool inflatables, and has a babysitting service. **Book it:** Kuoni offers seven nights' bed and breakfast for a family of four in a Junior Suite from £8,163 in August 2019, including flights and transfers. [kuoni.co.uk](http://kuoni.co.uk)

**4 PHUKET SPLASH** Water babies will be in their element at Centara Grand Beach Resort Phuket. Set on Karon Beach, the Andaman Sea is at their feet, but the hotel also has its own landscaped water park with a lazy river, cliff-jumping platform, water slides and a kids' pool. Older children will love the range of water sports available, and with babysitting on offer, plus kids' and teens' clubs with daily activity programmes, the hotel works for families of all ages. Phuket is one of Thailand's most

family-friendly islands, with theme parks, aquariums and even a dinosaur-themed mini-golf course. **Book it:** Emirates Holidays offers five nights' bed and breakfast in an Ocean Facing Deluxe Room from £3,759 for a family of four. The price includes flights from Gatwick and is based on an April 9, 2019, departure. [emiratesholidays.com](http://emiratesholidays.com)

**5 HONG KONG FOR KIDS** Kids will feel like VIPs from the minute they check into Dorsett Wanchai, with snack boxes and teddy bear welcome gifts, child-sized bathrobes and slippers, and a mobile library. Parents will love the newly renovated Deluxe Family Triple and Quad rooms, a rarity in a city in which space is at a premium, and the complimentary two-hour babysitting service. Wanchai is one of Hong Kong's oldest areas, with Hong Kong Island's largest temple complex and an authentic wet market. The hotel's complimentary shuttle bus places 14 of the city's must-see destinations within easy reach. **Book it:** Premier Holidays offers four nights in a Deluxe Family Quad Room from £3,496 for a family of four. The price includes Virgin Atlantic flights from Heathrow and transfers, and is valid for certain February dates. [premierholidays.co.uk](http://premierholidays.co.uk)



5  
family  
travel tips

1. Recommend clients pack sunscreen rather than buying it in destination, where it may be more expensive and lower factor.

2. Book inflight kids' meals in advance, but suggest parents also pack plenty of snacks. A long-haul flight is no time for hunger pangs.

3. Flying with a baby? Book the bulkhead seat with a cot. But for older kids, avoid the bulkheads – armrests are usually fixed, making it harder for children to stretch out on a parent's lap.

4. Remind clients to stick to bottled water and avoid ice cubes. Suggest parents pack medication in case of upset tummies.

5. Print 'hello' and 'thank you' in the language of the destination on cards for youngsters.



PICTURE: CONS & BAE S

**LEFT:**  
Discovery  
Shores  
Boracay

**RIGHT:**  
Dorsett  
Wanchai

**BELOW:**  
Holiday  
Inn Resort  
Penang



**6 MAGIC MALAY MOMENTS**  
Parents staying at the Holiday Inn Resort Penang will never hear the dreaded words "I'm bored". With two kids' clubs featuring a glow-in-the-dark room, Lego room, ball pit with slides, movie wall and arcade games, parents can slink off for some relaxation, and then bring the family back together for a host of fun activities including kite flying, beach volleyball, cooking demos and table tennis. If that's not enough, hire a bike and explore the island's family-friendly sights, including water and theme parks, and a butterfly farm. The kids are sure to be tired at the end of each day, and the hotel conveniently offers triple rooms, family studios sleeping four, and special kids' suites,



**With kids' clubs featuring a glow-in-the-dark room, ball pit with slides and movie wall, parents can slink off for relaxation**

also sleeping four, with jungle, pirate or space themes.

**Book it:** Travel 2 offers seven nights' bed and breakfast in a Ferringhi Tower Family Studio or Kid Suite from £2,672 for a family of four, including transfers and flights from Gatwick on February 18. [travel2.com](http://travel2.com)

**7 JUMP INTO JAPAN**  
Stay in traditional Japanese style at Fuji Hakone Guesthouse, a family-

friendly ryokan. In the rooms – triples and family rooms are available – comfortable futon beds are laid out on tatami mats, and each guest is given a cotton yukata kimono to wear. Staff speak English, and western breakfasts are available.

Parents who want to try out the quintessentially Japanese experience of onsen but feel uncomfortable about their children's presence in traditional public baths (where users are naked), can soak in the hotel's private indoor and outdoor tubs. The geothermally warmed water flows from the Owakudani volcano.



➔ **Book it:** Intrepid Travel includes a stay at the Fuji Hakone Guesthouse on its 12-day Japan Family Holiday, which starts at £2,945 for adults and £2,651 for children, departing April. The price includes accommodation, transport, selected meals and activities, but excludes flights. [intrepidtravel.com](http://intrepidtravel.com)

**8 GO, GO, GO TO GOA**  
In balmy southern India, the Alila Diwa Goa creates a perfect balance between classic children's fun – think a kids' club, beach picnics, face painting and movie screenings with popcorn – and activities to introduce young travellers to the destination.

They can visit temples, spice plantations and villages, where they'll see a baker at work and take age-appropriate cooking classes to learn how to make Goan specialities. Back at the hotel,



**The hotel balances classic children's fun, and activities introducing them to the destination**

there are kids' spa treatments, and behind-the-scenes tours, during which children can visit the kitchens, and housekeeping and engineering departments.

Accommodation-wise, a Family Terrace Room sleeps three and a Family Suite, four.

**Book it:** Goa Experience offers seven nights' bed and breakfast for four in a Family Suite from £6,800, including transfers and flights from Manchester on February 16.

[goaexperience.co.uk](http://goaexperience.co.uk)



ABOVE: Alila Diwa Goa

Enjoy your stay in Flower City,  
Guangzhou China

**GUANGZHOU**

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