

Bargain hunt

Clients short on time and money? Look to Greece and Cyprus, writes Laura French

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If Greece and Cyprus were students in school, they'd be getting all A's. Beaches, landscapes, adventure, culture, history – between them they've got pretty much every base covered, and they're good at adapting too. Whether it's a weekend break (growing in popularity, according to Jet2holidays) or a week-long stay, they'll pull something out of the hat.

That means you can shape a holiday here to almost every client you come across and, thanks to excellent flight availability and a plethora of good-value hotels, you can get it within their budget too. To help you out, we've rounded up some of the best-

value holidays to suit three, five and seven-night stays, so that even the most time-strapped – and cash-conscious – of travellers will have a chance to enjoy some southern rays and mezzes.

▶ THREE NIGHTS FOR £300

Athens, Greece: For culture enthusiasts seeking a quick weekend getaway, nothing quite beats Athens. Iconic landmarks are everywhere you look – not least the ancient, hilltop citadel of the Acropolis and its Parthenon – but it's not only history fans you can target. "While the ancient wonders of Athens continue to draw visitors from around the world, there is plenty to experience in this city beyond

antiquity," says Osprey Holidays excursions specialist Lisa Brown. Art galleries, museums and street markets meet heritage-filled attractions such as the 1920s Cine Paris open-air cinema, while clients looking to go farther afield can find day trips to nearby islands.

For clients keen to stay in the heart of it all, suggest the Plaka Hotel. The major sites are on the doorstep and the hotel offers an idyllic roof terrace from where guests can admire them on high, glass of vino in hand.

Book it: Osprey Holidays offers three nights' bed and breakfast at the Plaka Hotel from £265 per person, based on two sharing a Superior Room with a balcony.

The price includes easyJet flights from Gatwick and is based on a November 3 departure. ospreyholidays.com

Paphos, Cyprus: Cyprus isn't lacking in historical offerings either, and that's especially true of Paphos. Home to ancient tombs, fortresses, amphitheatres and millennia-old mosaics, it's a worthy choice for cultural types, but nearby beaches, water sports, wine routes and hiking trails also make it a safe bet for sunbathers, foodies and active clients.

The best part is it's easily accessible and perfectly doable as a long weekend. "Paphos is a great choice for a short break – it's only a four-hour flight →

away,” says Graham Balmforth, national sales manager at Super Break. “The weather is a key factor, as it’s far enough south that you get sunshine almost all year round.”

A string of good-value hotels mean it can be done relatively cheaply too. Recommend the three-star Roman Hotel for a boutique option inspired by Greek mythology and designed like a palace. Set close to the harbour, archaeological sites and beach, it’s handily located, and there’s a varied entertainment programme, while a kids’ menu, outdoor pool and table tennis make it popular with families.

Book it: Three nights’ bed and breakfast at the Roman Hotel starts at £263 per person with Super Break in late September, including flights from Stansted. superbreak.com/agents

► FIVE NIGHTS FOR £500

Crete, Greece: A five-night stay gives clients a little more time to play with and it’s an ideal



Guaranteed sunshine, an abundance of culture and superb beaches make Greece and Cyprus perfect for a five-night break

duration for exploring either country, according to Clare Tobin, chief operating officer at Olympic Holidays. “With guaranteed sunshine, an abundance of culture and superb beaches, Greece and Cyprus are perfect choices for a five-night break,” she says. “It’s the ideal trip to



break up the working year and it’s easy on the wallet too.”

Suggest an island break to Crete for those looking to combine beach with culture. Hiking in the White Mountains, browsing the medieval architecture of Chania or lounging around on the gold-sand beaches of the north coast are all equally worthy, while night owls will find something to please in Hersonissos.

For those wanting to get in on the action without being at its heart, suggest the quieter resort of Anissaras. Its hotels include the five-star, recently renovated Aldemar Knossos Royal, complete with verdant gardens, pools, tennis courts, a kids’ club, water sports centre, and seven restaurants and bars. It’s available for an affordable price tag, especially when you sell out of season – which is all dandy thanks to the island’s southerly, sun-soaked position.

Book it: Planet Holidays offers five nights’ bed and breakfast at the Aldemar Knossos Royal from £499 per person, flying from Gatwick on October 12. planet-holidays.co.uk

Ayia Napa, Cyprus: For nightlife in Cyprus, Ayia Napa has it covered, with internationally renowned clubs and bars filling traditional streets. It’s not all

about the post-sunset life, though, with white-sand beaches, cobbled lanes and al fresco tavernas offering something for families and couples, while Nissi Beach draws in the younger crowd with water sports and iconic day parties.

Fortunately, there are plenty of budget accommodation options available. Suggest the three-star Anthea Hotel Apartments for younger groups after a centrally located, self-catering complex a stone’s throw from the beach and nightlife – complete with lively poolside bar – and they’ll be coming back to you for repeat bookings faster than you can say ‘world-class DJ’.

Book it: Five nights’ self-catering at the Anthea Hotel Apartments starts at £339 per person with Jet2holidays, based on two sharing. The price includes return flights from Manchester and transfers, based on an October 6 departure.

trade.jet2holidays.com

► SEVEN NIGHTS FOR £700

Kos, Greece: For those with a week to spare, Travel 2 recommends Kos. “There’s so much on offer on the island, from sandy beaches to ancient Greek and Roman sites,” says Lauren Ross, Europe product and commercial manager for Simply Luxury. “Kos Town is



PICTURE: SUPER BREAK

TOP: Plaka Hotel, Athens

LEFT: Paphos

PICTURES: DIMITRIS POUPALOS; JET2.COM/CHRISTOPHER WILLAN



LEFT:
Aldemar
Knossos
Royal, Crete

RIGHT:
Ayia Napa
harbour

BELOW:
Tsokkos
Gardens
Hotel,
Cyprus



→ a must-see with plenty of shops and great cafes, especially in Eleftherias Square.”

Recommend the five-star Helona Resort, located a 30-minute drive away on the south coast, for a luxury option that won't stretch the purse strings too far. Nearby Kardamena might have a



There's so much on offer in Kos, from sandy beaches to ancient Greek and Roman sites

reputation as a partygoers' paradise, but here it's all peace and quiet, thanks to the comprehensive Helona Wellness and Longevity Center, alongside three bars, two restaurants and expansive views over the Aegean sea lapping on to Helona Beach. **Book it:** A week's half-board at the Helona Resort in a Double Superior room starts at £689 per person, departing September 21. The price includes return flights from London, private transfers and UK airport lounge passes. **travel2.com**

Protaras, Cyprus: For families seeking a week-long beach holiday in Cyprus, look to Protaras, a purpose-built resort set on the east coast with a generous smattering of lively bars, shops and restaurants. Jetskiing, windsurfing and

snorkelling are among the activities available, while the Cape Greco National Forest Park offers hiking through protected pine forest and diving.

The four-star, 83-room Tsokkos Gardens Hotel, located a short walk away from the main resort area, is set among lush surroundings. It has a pool, gaming area, sauna, gym, kids' club and babysitting services, while guests get free access to the water park right on its doorstep – so kids with itchy feet can go off and play while adults kick back with a cocktail.

Book it: Monarch Holidays offers seven nights' all-inclusive at the Tsokkos Gardens Hotel from £575 per person, based on two sharing a twin room. The price includes flights from Gatwick for departures on September 24. **monarch.co.uk TW**

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