









# **TEEN BREAKS**

Keep the peace with these teen-tastic family breaks, writes Aby Dunsby

@AbraDunsby

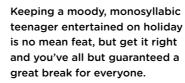












The key lies in catering to each teenager's interests - while some want to relax in the spa or soak up sun in peace, others want round-the-clock activities or a chance to make new friends.

Luckily, plenty of hotels and tour operators have boosted their teen-friendly offering: with everything from beach parties and sports academies, to ranch stays and city shopping, we've rounded up breaks that will elicit enthusiasm from even the hardest-to-please teens.

**THRILLS AND SPILLS** If there's one way to keep boredom at bay, it's getting the adrenaline pumping, and Orlando offers thrilling rides and rollercoasters by the bucket-load. As well as the obvious attractions, there are added extras that not only earn extra commission, but also tailor a park more closely to kids' interests.

If they want hands-on interaction, SeaWorld's animal encounters are a unique experience for families to enjoy together. A Behind-the-Scenes Tour offers the inside scoop on how animals are cared for, plus a chance to get close to a penguin and shark (£34 for adults and £11 for under-nines, from Attraction World).

Walt Disney World's Animal Kingdom has also upped the

animal ante with a new Rivers of Light show, plus Kilimanjaro Safaris at Sunset, extending this safari-style experience into the evening.

At Universal Studios Florida, teens can get their kicks on rides modelled on their favourite films, including 3D coaster The Escape from Gringotts in The Wizarding World of Harry Potter.

**BOOK IT:** Funway Holidays offers seven nights at Celebration Suites at Old Town, in Orlando, from £899, departing August 21. The price is based on two adults and one teen sharing, and includes flights.

#### funway4agents.co.uk

**TEENS ON TOUR** For teenagers with an adventurous streak, an escorted tour saves parents the stress of planning it all themselves. Family tours often have itineraries specially designed to suit younger travellers, such as Trafalgar's California Dreamin' tour, which stops at a fortune cookie maker and jelly bean factory, between family-friendly San Francisco and Yosemite National Park (from £1,948, land-only).

And tailoring activities even more closely to the age group, operators are increasingly offering teen departures - often on more active itineraries - that give youths freedom to socialise with people of their own age, and parents a chance to do the same.

"Our best-selling teen trip is the Family Tuscan Active Adventure," says Karl Bolton, family programme manager for Explore. "It takes families through the picturesque Garfagnana valley with exciting included activities such as canyoning, cycling, kayaking and zip-wiring."

G Adventures' teen trips are equally energetic: Amazon to the Andes involves families trekking to Machu Picchu, with optional horse riding around archaeological sites, white-water rafting and mountain biking, plus two nights in the Amazon jungle. **BOOK IT:** G Adventures' 12-day Amazon to the Andes - Teenage Adventure starts at £1,679. The price includes a guided Inca Trail hike with cooks and porters; hotel, lodge or camping accommodation; internal flights and excursions. Minimum age 12. gadventures.co.uk

**URBAN ESCAPES** A trip to the hip metropolis of New York City would top many a teen's wishlist thanks to its combination of great shopping, iconic sights and hamburgers aplenty, but it's possible to tailor it especially to teens with everything from bike rides through Central Park to a tour of TV and movie locations (£23 with Do Something Different).

care of, the next challenge is finding a family-friendly hotel right in the heart of the action. The New York Marriott Marquis in Times Square ticks both boxes, with pull-out couches in all rooms, plus family connector rooms that set a king room next to a double, so everyone has their own space.

Once the activities are taken

Teens will love the space-age elevators, flat-screen TVs and iPod docks in all rooms, plus easy access to the Marquis Theatre.

FAST FACT

bookings

If crossing the pond feels too far, families looking for heat and history will find plenty of it in Rome, a beautiful family destination ideal for those short on time. While the museums, galleries and ancient ruins bring their schoolbooks gloriously to life, teens can be rewarded for learning on holiday with pit stops for pizza, pasta and lots of gelato. **BOOK IT:** Rooms at the New York Marriott Marquis start at £158. marriott.co.uk

**BEACH BREAKS** A beach holiday lets teens be as adventurous

or as lazy as they like, with resorts offering an impressive array of activities to dip in and out of at their leisure.

At Beaches Turks & Caicos, teens can relax at the lagoonstyle pool or indulge at the spa, while those looking to burn some energy can splash around in the on-site water park, learn to DJ in the Scratch DJ Academy, or party at Club Liquid, where under-21s can sip non-alcoholic cocktails without fear of dad embarrassing them with his moonwalk.

In family favourite Cyprus, Olympic Lagoon Resort in Ayia Napa's Nissi Beach recognises that for teens, being able to upload selfies or chat with mates back home is a crucial part of a holiday. With this in mind, the hotel offers an internet cafe and high-tech games arcade





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alongside its jam-packed programme of pool, table tennis, teen karaoke and talent shows.

BOOK IT: Olympic Holidays offers seven nights' all-inclusive at Olympic Lagoon Resort in Ayia Napa, Cyprus, for two adults and two teenagers, for £4,661 in late July, including flights.

olympicholidays.com

READY, SET, GO

No teen wants to be lumped into a kids' club with children half their age, so choosing an active holiday where youngsters are catered to by age group gives teens the independence they need.

At Club Med, they can get stuck into heaps of activities, while parents relax knowing they're safe and supervised by a rep. In the Punta Cana resort, the teen roster includes a flying trapeze, sailing, windsurfing and archery, while in the evenings they can be kept busy with movie nights and beach parties.

At Mark Warner, Indy Clubs are open to those aged 14 to 17, and supervised by an activity leader who will base activities on suggestions from the group.

"For older kids, our most popular resort is Lakitira Beach," says sales manager Chloe Rumfitt. "It's a lively resort with a great tennis centre and a huge waterfront. The local town of Kardamena is only a short



An active holiday where youngsters are catered for by age gives teens more independence

distance if they want to explore a little further afield."

Neilson Beachclubs are similarly activity focused, separating children based on school year, so there's no danger of younger siblings cramping the older kids' style. Wave Riders is open to those in school years nine and 10 (13 to 15-year-olds), and offers sporty options such as kayak safaris and water rounders, while years 11 and 12 (16 to 17-year-olds) can choose from dinghy sailing, gladiators or going for a meal in town. **BOOK IT:** Mark Warner offers seven nights' half-board at Lakitira Beach Resort in Kos, departing July 6, from £899 for adults and £758 for children, including flights, transfers and activities.

markwarner.co.uk

NON-STOP
ENTERTAINMENT
Alongside glistening
hotels and year-round
sunshine, Dubai has an extensive
family offering for kids of all



**LEFT:** Atlantis The Palm

RIGHT: La Manga Club

BELOW: Beaches



ages. Mega-resort Atlantis the Palm has daring rides at Aquaventure water park, plus teens get an exclusive area in Club Rush, an entertainment lounge and gaming zone by day and nightclub after dark.

Joanne Lowery, Middle East product manager at Gold Medal, suggests sending teens to Dubai Mall. She says: "With more than 1,200 shops, it is one of the world's largest malls. Teens will love indoor theme park Sega Republic, where they can spend the day playing more than 170 games and enjoying 14 attractions including motion stimulators."

Super-sized Mall of the Emirates is just as actionpacked, with indoor skiing at the enormous Ski Dubai if they still have energy to burn. Dubai Parks & Resorts will feature three theme parks - Motiongate, Legoland and Bollywood Dubai - when it opens in October.

BOOK IT: Gold Medal offers a week's half-board at Atlantis the Palm in Dubai from £1,135, based on four sharing, including a kids go free offer for under-16s. The price, which includes Virgin Atlantic flights from Heathrow and transfers, is valid for travel from August 24-31.

goldmedal.co.uk

SPORTY STAYS

If teens show a spark of sporting talent, summer is the time to work on it, so they can head back to school in September with new tricks

to show off and a leg up on the competition.

If they're a budding Wayne
Rooney, Sardinia's Chia Laguna is
the ideal place to hone ball skills:
its Football Academy is back
for a second summer, hosted by
former England strikers Bobby
Zamora and Andrew Johnson.
The academy is open to children
aged from six to 16, from
May 28-June 4 and July 2-30.

Chelsea fans might find the blue jerseys at nearby Forte
Village in Cagliari a better fit. The resort's football academy offers courses of one to five days from May 9 until September 20. Prices range from €160 to €420 for the five-day course, and are open to footie fans aged four to 14.

La Manga Club in Spain is

another haven for sports-mad teens, with sprawling facilities playing host to junior academies in golf, tennis, football, rugby and cricket. Barcelona FC's official coaches will be on-site from July 25-29, offering five hours' daily training for girls and boys aged six to 17, with a chance to win shirts signed by the team.

BOOK IT: The Barcelona junior football camp at La Manga Club starts at €475 for a week's tuition, or €950 including full-

board accommodation at Las

Lomas Village.

lamangaclub.com

GIDDY UP, COWBOY
Wannabe cowboys and
girls can live their dreams
with an authentic





#### FAMILY HOLIDAYS TEEN BREAKS DESTINATIONS



ABOVE: Siwash Lake Ranch

slice of Americana on a ranch stay. Younger kids generally have a dedicated programme of activities, while teens are welcome to join the adults, offering a chance for parent-teen bonding. Typical activities include trail rides, cattle drives, whitewater rafting, shooting, hiking and canoeing.

Western & Oriental's USA product manager, David Pointer,

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Wannabe cowboys and girls can live their dreams with a slice of Americana on a ranch stay

says: "Families have the chance to learn new skills, whether it's improving their riding or trying something new. This can be a great leveller on a family trip, as it gives teens the upper hand on their parents from time to time! Ranch stays are built around communal experiences, so as well as helping a family bond, there's the opportunity to mix with other guests and the ranch hosts."

Pointer recommends Siwash Lake Ranch in Canada which - although tough on the bank

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balance thanks to its remote location, accessible only via seaplane from Vancouver - offers daily rides, fly-fishing, wildlifespotting and wilderness survival training, as well as a massage for each adult.

BOOK IT: Seven nights at Siwash Lake Ranch in Canada with meals, drinks and activities starts from £23,759 for four in August, including flights and car hire. westernoriental.com.

DOMESTIC BLISS
Clients needn't bother with the stress of airport security to enjoy a great holiday: the UK has plenty to offer, whether it's a caravan holiday in Cornwall, camping in Dorset or cycling in the Brecon Beacons.

Accommodation at Hoseasons' Finlake Holiday Resort in Devon includes Scandinavian-style open-plan lodges, some with hot tubs. Set in 50 hectares of countryside, teens have plenty of opportunities to escape their folks, with indoor and outdoor pools and an activity programme including body zorbing, fencing and archery. Thrill-seekers will love the tree-top seesaws, trapezes and 11 zip-lines that make up the park's high-ropes adventure course. And if they start to get itchy feet again, the sea is just half-an-hour's drive away.

BOOK IT: A three-night break for four at Finlake Holiday Resort during the May half-term holiday starts at £480, while a week costs £1.099.

hoseasons.co.uk

WILD ABOUT WILDLIFE
As the kids grow, so does the opportunity to send families somewhere far flung and exotic, especially as parents are more willing to splash out on an epic, once-in-a-lifetime trip knowing their days of holidaying as a family are numbered.

Costa Rica has become a firm favourite – underlined by British Airways' launch of twice-weekly flights to the destination from Gatwick this week – offering an abundance of flora and fauna to discover. On Grand American Adventures' Costa Rica Family Discovery trip, on average half the kids are 14 or older, and the reservations team can advise agents about the ages of others in a group.

The Family Adventure
Company has also expanded its
teen product, with 46% more
departures this year. "Our South
Africa trip is tailored specifically
for teens," says product and
brand manager Tim Winkworth.
"They'll love the wild camping in
Kruger National Park and active
elements such as hiking through
Blyde River Canyon and kayaking
at Kosi Bay."

BOOK IT: The Family Adventure Company offers a 12-day South Africa Teenage Safari for £2,010 for children and £2,233 for adults including flights, transfers, accommodation and some meals. familyadventurecompany.co.uk



LEFT: Hoseasons' Finlake Holiday Resort



**Bourne Leisure** 

# SUPER EXPERT 2016

# BEN LOVETT

Branch Manager, The Midcounties Co-operative, ABTA: D8545

## Tell us about being a Bourne Super Expert - what does it mean and how

I was delighted when I found out the store had achieved Bourne Super Expert status. The team have worked hard over the past couple of years to increase UK business, particularly with Haven, Butlin's and Warner Leisure Hotels so to be recognised for this is very rewarding. The demographics of the branch give us a very mixed client's base with different budgets and requirements so we always try to make sure we can offer expert advice for every product we sell including UK. We have an in store tablet provided by Bourne Leisure for being a Bourne Expert where customers are able to browse the new Butlin's digital trade guide and this really helps to bring the concept of the brand to life. We have regular calls, visits and updates from the trade sales team updating us on our performance and we discuss ways we can grow the business further.

### How important do you feel it is to continually support the UK travel market by promoting holidays at home?

In today's climate it is essential that we continue to support the UK market. Many less resilient customers are choosing to holiday at home this year due to what they are reading in the media. Being able to offer value for money products to these customers within the UK ensure that we are still able to hold on to these customers and provide them with a holiday booked through us.

## As a Bourne Super Expert, what would you say are your three top selling tips to help you sell more Bourne Leisure holidays?

- 1 We have a dedicated window which always has a selection of Bourne Leisure offers in. We regularly change these deals and keep a tally of which offers have created the most interest so we know what to focus on. We also have a UK special offer folder where we have a printed copy of the Butlin's digital guide so customers are able to browse this in the waiting area.
- 2 All of the team are proactive in mentioning UK to every customer as many customers take additional UK breaks to their overseas holiday. This works well with cruise customers who are typically the same profile as a Warner Leisure Hotels customer.
- 3 We regularly have UK promotional weekends where the branch is decorated in a UK theme. This is working well at the moment as there is a lot of hype around the Queen's 90th birthday so people are feeling very patriotic.

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