

Action villas

With multigenerational holidays on the rise, Alice Barnes-Brown asks specialists how to sell a villa stay to families with all ages to consider

Spending time with loved ones is priceless, but it's made even more precious if multiple generations can be together. A sunny location is the perfect place to make new, shared memories – and easyJet's Great British Holiday Audit, published earlier this year and based on a survey of 2,000 holidaymakers, found that 30% of families travelling were planning to bring grandparents along with them.

Villa holidays offer flexibility and value for this demographic, whether there are four or 24 family members in the group – though meeting the diverse needs of teenagers, tots and mature travellers in one fell swoop can present a challenge for travel agents.

FAMILY VALUES

To secure the best fit for your clients, get a thorough understanding of who they are travelling with. How many children will be in the group and what ages are they? Do the children need separate bedrooms? Are there extended family members – such as grandparents or child-free aunts and uncles – who may want time to themselves?

Katie Holmes, product and sales manager at The Villa Collection, says: "If certain members of the group would like their own space, some villas come with additional cottages or annexes on site."

It's also possible to book adjoining villas, just as you can book interconnecting hotel rooms. ➤

PICTURE: Shutterstock/Halfpoint



ABOVE: Oliver's Travels sells stays for up to 24 guests at The Secret Hamlet in the Loire Valley PICTURE: Dalvik Photography

Donna Such, senior villa sales expert at Villa Select, says: "Single villas that accommodate larger parties always book quickly, but we have neighbouring villas that can accommodate 30 guests or more."

LOCATION, LOCATION

The next thing to consider is where to go to keep everyone happy. Sharon Bradbury, sales and marketing director at Solmar Villas, explains: "Rural properties offer more space, but do factor in how many cars clients will need to hire – and who wants to be a designated driver. It can often be more cost-effective to be within walking distance of a resort."

Kalkan in Turkey is the ideal all-rounder for Hannah Naylor-Vane, head of trade sales at Simpson Travel. She says: "It's particularly appealing for independence-hungry teenagers, who can have the freedom of walking into the town and exploring its narrow streets on their own, as well as visiting the beach clubs and trying out watersports with their parents."

If clients are booking a special get-together, explore long-haul options too. From utilising

central Florida's vast stock of holiday homes as a base for theme park adventures to a *White Lotus*-inspired getaway in Thailand, there's a whole world of villas out there.

FACILITIES FOR ALL

One advantage of multigenerational holidays is parents can lean on grandparents and other relatives for help with childcare – but kids will still need plenty of entertainment. Fern Higgins, partnership lead at Oliver's Travels, says: "Ensure the villa suits the kids' age group; think games rooms, play areas or even pizza ovens."

For those with infants and toddlers, safety is an additional aspect, so check if the villa has been childproofed and whether the pool is gated. "Ask guests whether they need cots, highchairs or booster seats, as these can be added during the booking process," says Solmar Villas' Bradbury.

Meanwhile, older generations with mobility concerns may require more-accessible accommodation – ask exactly what your clients need. Villa Select's Such says: "Accessible villas can feature wider doors, ➤



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VILLA RESORTS



FLORIDA

For fun-loving families, Kissimmee in Florida offers a wealth of gated holiday homes on the doorstep of Orlando's theme parks. The Holiday Inn Club Vacations at Orange Lake Resort has seven pools, a lazy river, nine restaurants and even a watersports lake – while the villas are equipped with kitchenettes, sofa beds and whirlpool baths.

Book it: Tui sells a seven-night self-catered holiday in a two-bedroom villa with balcony or terrace and whirlpool bath from £996 per person, based on three adults and three children sharing. Includes luggage, transfers and flights departing Edinburgh on July 31.

tui.co.uk



CRETE

The simple-yet-elegant Ele Villas in Crete have access to nearby Giannoulis Cavo Spada Luxury Sports & Leisure Resort – think two tennis courts, fitness classes and spa treatments.

Book it: Jet2Villas sells a seven-night self-catered stay at Ele Mare from £1,239 per person, based on four sharing. Includes luggage, car hire and flights departing August 31.

jet2holidays.com/villas



BARBADOS

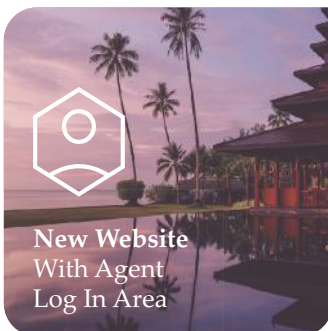
Apes Hill Barbados Golf Resort has added 14 four-bedroom Hilltop Villas, which overlook the Caribbean and the greens of the nine-hole Little Apes, sister to the resort's 18-hole course and aimed at golfers of all levels. The modern bungalows feature a fabulous open-plan layout, so parents can slide open the folding doors and watch the kids as they splash about in the infinity pool.

Book it: Elegant Resorts can arrange a seven-night stay on a room-only basis from £2,720 per person, based on eight sharing. Includes villa arrival package, daily housekeeping, transfers, four rounds of golf and flights departing August 2.

elegantresorts.co.uk

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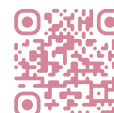
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"Always quote per person – a £12,000 villa that sleeps 10, with daily maid service and a private chef, quickly becomes more attractive when priced at £1,200 per person."

Chris Etheridge, senior business development manager, CV Villas



"Being a little flexible on dates can really make a difference. A villa that is slightly inland will also be a bit cheaper."

Donna Such, senior villa sales expert, Villa Select



"Consider villas with ground-floor bedrooms and bathrooms for added accessibility."

Fern Higgins, partnership lead, Oliver's Travels



"Suggest alternative destinations. For example, Croatia has a similar climate to Greece, but weekly villa rates can be almost half the price."

Anne Clays, trade and business partnerships manager, SPL Villas



"For those wanting all the benefits of a hotel, but their own space, villa resorts offer a range of facilities including restaurants, shops, pools, kids' clubs, golf and tennis."

Katie Holmes, product and sales manager, The Villa Collection



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Kalamaki Bay House, Corfu; Villa Zaffre, Kalkan; Villa Sou, Alcudia **PICTURE:** Stephen Hughes



walk-in shower ramps as well as pool steps instead of ladders. We can also hire specialist equipment, such as a shower chair or bed rail, at an additional charge."

OPTIONAL EXTRAS

Agents can highlight the convenience of a villa holiday by offering a few handy extras. Chris Etheridge, senior business development manager at CV Villas, says: "Our pre-arrival shopping service can include a barbecue pack, inflatables for the children or a bottle of wine for the adults. We're finding that secluded villas are also becoming increasingly popular, especially with the launch of our meal delivery service in Corfu."

Although cooking meals together can be a bonding experience for some clients, others may want to escape domestic tasks altogether. Chefs can be hired for one night or multiple days, catering for varying dietary requirements (and fussy eaters). The Villa Collection's Holmes explains: "In certain countries, particularly in the Caribbean, some villas come with staff such as chefs and butlers, but we can arrange cooks or additional housekeeping in most villas for a surcharge."

Adding extras can help close the sale too. Offers such as free car hire, complimentary attraction tickets or discounted spa treatments can help the budget go further. Build a package that combines all the space of a villa break with the quality time of a trip together and each generation is sure to come back with happy holiday memories. **TW**

BOOK IT

Solmar Villas sells a seven-night stay in the 12-person Villa Sou, Alcudia, from £888 per person, including flights from Stansted in August. solmarvillas.com

SPL Villas can book a seven-night stay for eight at Villa Duce Beach in Omis, on Croatia's Dalmatian coast, from £945 per person, including luggage and flights departing October 25. splvillas.com

CV Villas offers a seven-night stay at Corfu's Kalamaki Bay House from £835 per person, based on 10 sharing. Includes breakfast, daily housekeeping and flights departing September 29. cvvillas.com

Simpson Travel sells a seven-night stay at Villa Zaffre in Kalkan from £1,400 per person, based on eight people sharing. Includes car hire and flights departing August 24. simpsontravel.com

Oliver's Travels sells a seven-night, villa-only stay at Secret Hamlet in the Loire Valley, with space for 24, from £9,665 in total (£403 per person at full capacity), based on departures on September 9. oliverstravels.com