

Japan's crowd-free 'Little Kyotos' p.12

TRAVEL



Marvellous May destinations for a great-value escape

Next month's half-term break offers fantastic options for affordable family fun. Sophie Butler shares her picks



There are plenty of reasons to plan a family break over the Whitsun half-term week. But perhaps the most alluring, especially in these cash-strapped times, is the chance for your money to travel that bit further too.

Accommodation is typically 30 per cent cheaper than in the peak season months of July and August, and although travel costs can push up the bill,

especially for departures over May 23 and 24, the first weekend of the half term break, there are still some affordable fares to be had if you pick the right destination, or travel mid-week.

When it comes to sunshine, there's no reason why you won't strike lucky by remaining in the UK, but if you head to the southern Med, or further afield to the Canaries, you can find long days

▲ Jump into summer: get a head start on the seas with a late-May getaway

of warm sunshine. On the other hand, by travelling at this pleasant time of year, you stand a good chance of dodging the heatwaves that have settled over the Continent in recent summers, and find weather that is perfect for relaxed walking or cycling itineraries, unimpeded by the stifling temperatures.

We've picked 20 stand-out family holidays at

home and abroad that offer maximum affordability without scrimping on the fun factor. Whether it's a cosy cottage in Devon, a cycling holiday in Italy, a beach club break in Greece or a cultural adventure in Morocco, all that's left to do is choose the right fit for you.

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Culture in Prague

Introduce the children to the parks, architecture and history of the Czech capital from an affordable, self-catering base in the city centre. Climb the Old Town Hall tower, take in the Astronomical Clock, Charles Bridge and Prague Castle, browse the shops of Parizska and take a walk through Kampa Park.

What to book: EasyJet offers a four-night stay at the Anyday Apartments in Wenceslas Square, from £285, self-catering, based on an apartment for four people. Excludes transfers. From May 25. (easyjet.com)



Alpine activities in Chamonix

Take the car across the Channel for a stay in this buzzy Alpine town where family excursions include Merlot Wildlife Park, Europe's highest cable car and Chamonix leisure park with mini-karting, slides and trampolines.

What to book: Peak Retreats offers a seven-night stay at four-star Le Cristal de Jade, sleeping five, with indoor pool and children's area, from £241pp based on a two-bedroom apartment, including Channel crossing for a car and passengers. Departs May 23. (peakretreats.co.uk)

Sun and fun in Sicily

New for 2026 is Neilson x Mangia's Torre del Barone resort in Sciacca on the southwest coast of Sicily. In May, temperatures will be around 21C, ideal for a sunny week of tennis, padel, fitness classes, mountain biking, catamaran sailing and volleyball.

What to book: Neilson offers a seven-night stay at Neilson x Torre Del Barone from £1,889pp half board, based on a deluxe room with sea view. From May 23. (neilson.co.uk)

Walking in France

Hike the 64 mile trail along the Le Puy Way, part of the Camino de Santiago,

