

Take a dip in Europe's most inviting lagoons P.14

TRAVEL

And the winners are...

Thousands of you voted in this year's Telegraph Travel Awards – and the results are in. We reveal the very best of the industry, according to you



BEST SKI OPERATOR Peak Retreats

Runners-up
*Club Med,
Neilson*

According to the latest research from the Mountain Trade Network (MTN), 42 per cent of British skiers state that price significantly impacted their plans last winter – a three-year high. It has never been more important, then, for operators to offer not only competitive prices, but also value to their customers. The podium this year demonstrates the lengths to which businesses are going to encourage Britons to hit the slopes.

For the third time running – having been named best ski operator in 2019 and 2023 – French specialist Peak Retreats took the top spot, proving the enduring popularity of self-catered ski holidays. The operator now offers packages to more than 70 French resorts, ranging from traditional off-the-beaten-track villages to high-altitude favourites. It continues to expand its portfolio too, with new accommodation options in Serre Chevalier featuring a wellness centre, snow-sure rooms in Tignes and ski-in/ski-out access in La Rosière for winter 2025/26.

Second place went to all-inclusive specialist Club Med, now 75 years old. It's easy to comprehend the appeal of an operator that includes meals, drinks, accommodation and travel in its headline price, but also ski essentials too, such as lift passes and lessons. Neilson completes the line-up this year, an operator that has been taking Britons to the slopes for more than four decades.

We're an opinionated lot, here at *Telegraph Travel*. Over the past year we have published authoritative lists on the world's 50 best hotels and England's 500 best pubs. Our writers have travelled to every corner of the world, scribbling notes along the way. But we know that you, our readers, are an equally discerning bunch.

Since launching the Telegraph Travel Awards in 1998, we have sought after and shouted about your views on the best travel companies and destinations. This year, two years on from the last awards,

around 20,000 of you (that's enough to fill 110 Airbus A320s) completed a survey to let us know the countries, cities and holiday firms that impressed – and the ones that disappointed – on your most recent trips.

There was a lot to analyse when we received the final results. Across our four destination categories we had three new winners. When we consider where tourist taxes have been introduced and the places suffering from overcrowding, some patterns begin to emerge: oversubscribed places such



▲ Back on top: New Zealand, this year's Best Country winner

as Florence and Venice are down, lesser-trammelled Stockholm and Copenhagen are up.

When it comes to the firms you travel with, we were reassured to learn that the best in class continue to deliver. I'm looking at you, Emirates and Audley. Across 20 categories, six were repeat winners from our previous awards, and another nine winners ranked in the top three last time around. But this leaves a group of five disruptors that have leapfrogged into top spot. To these companies, we say bravo. Whatever they have

changed in recent years, it is working, according to you, our judges.

And what judges you are. You, our esteemed panel of experts, have been on expeditions to sub-Saharan Africa, joined coach tours to the Continent and sunbathed on every European beach worth its salt. You have flown solo, joined established operators and taken a punt on specialist firms. Now, it's time to reveal your verdict.

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