

the **S**aturday

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● "WE'RE jammin'" takes on a whole new meaning this winter at Audley's Wood Hotel near Basingstoke in Hampshire.

The former hunting lodge is offering a weekend break combining the luxury of a country house stay with the chance to make your own jams and chutneys.

Once you've created your perfect

preserves with the experts from the Hampshire Jam & Chutney Company, you can have them served up at breakfast, afternoon tea or elevenses.

Overnight accommodation, breakfast and a jam/jelly course for two people – including a three-hour cooking session – is from £175.

See handpickedhotels.co.uk.



● NEXT year could be a belter for the travel industry if Directline Holidays are right.

The online agent says 60 per cent of its bookings are for summer 2013 and those to some European destinations are up 400 per cent on last year. Boss Maria

Whiteman said: "With the recession, many forfeited their 2012 summer holiday, opting to stay at home and watch the Olympics instead.

"However, the washout summer has led holiday-makers to look towards 2013 more determined than ever to get away."

HOT SPOT

IT'S 30°C in BARBADOS: Seven nights' half board at the 4★ Crane Resort is from £1,099 for travel between January 5 to April 5 (14 nights from £1,599). Book before Dec 21. kenwoodtravel.co.uk or 020 7749 9245.

HOT SPOT

IT'S 28°C in MEXICO: Save £525pp at the 4T Platinum Riu Tequila in Playa del Carmen. Thomson has 14 nights, all inclusive from £1,129pp, leaving Manchester on Dec 13. thomson.co.uk.

Edited by **LISA MINOT**



travel

10 pages of holidays

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● thesun.co.uk/travel

COCONUTS FOR ST LUCIA

conditions. From November to March protected leatherback turtles come ashore to lay eggs and tours are organised to watch the spectacle. That first night it was early to bed after dining under the stars. We were up early the

following morning and ready for breakfast at 7am.

It's served in the main Coconut Walk restaurant and as well as delicious fresh local fruit, cereals and pastries, there's bacon, eggs and pancakes. At the omelette station you can choose your toppings – including the local hot pepper sauce, if you're brave enough. Buffet-style evening meals are served here. The resort is all-inclusive but for something extra special there are other restaurants that you have to book.

Calabash showcases the best of creole and Caribbean cuisine; Capri offers Italian dishes; and modern Asian meals are served at Silk. Finally, the poolside Beach Grill offers hotdogs, burgers and pizza.

There's a kids' club for toddlers and young children but Zach wasn't too enamoured with it. Why be indoors painting coconuts when you can be on the waterslides?

We had to tear ourselves away from the resort for a tour of the island and our first stop was a volcano. Urgh! What a stink. When we were still a mile away the air began to hum with the smell of rotten eggs. Imagine The Biggest Loser contestants on the cabbage soup diet and you're halfway there.

Bubbling

As we walked into the volcano's crater we could see the boiling mud and gases bubbling up from the ground. You can bathe in the hot stream – the waters are supposed to cure skin diseases and (legend has it) provide eternal youth. An elderly local man was trying just that, but given the pong we left him to it.

Also nearby are The Pitons – two volcanic plugs that form the island's most famous landmarks. Formed about 250,000 years ago, the Gros Piton is 2,500ft and the Petit Piton is – you guessed it – slightly smaller. If you're very fit each can be climbed in a couple of hours.



SAY buon giorno to cheaper ski holidays – or pozdravljeni if you're after a real deal. Italy and Slovenia are great value destinations this winter, say the Post Office and Crystal Ski.

SKI NEWS

MOUNTAINS HIGH, SKI PRICES LOW

Livigno in the Italian Alps is ten per cent cheaper for lift passes, equipment hire, ski school and food and drink than last year – making it the cheapest package in the Big Four ski countries – Austria, France, Switzerland and Italy.

Cheapest overall was Eastern Europe, particularly Bansko in Bulgaria and Kranjska Gora in Slovenia. Soldeu in Andorra was rated best value for families given

the quality of skiing and an 18 per cent drop in costs since last year. See postoffice.co.uk/skireport2012 for more details.

● NOT bothered by prices? Or just desperate to impress your ski mates? Consider Kashmir.

Gulmarg in the Himalayas has the world's highest gondola at 13,000ft and while you may not get highly groomed pistes, Ampersand Travel say other benefits include sightings of eagles. And you can enjoy a

novel après-ski curry. Nine-night tours with seven days' skiing are from £1,890, including flights, lift passes and guiding (ampersandtravel.com or 020 7289 6100).

● COSMOS Holidays now offer ski breaks, thanks to new routes with in-house airline Monarch, to Munich, Friedrichshafen and Innsbruck. Six nights' B&B at the 4* AlpenClub Schliersee in Germany is from £369 in January (from Luton). See cosmos.co.uk or call 0844 573 4261.

Our beef is matured for 15 days for extra tenderness.

The Butcher's Selection

£5
per kg

