

WINTER WARMERS

Make sure the rainy weather doesn't get the better of you by scheduling in an oasis of sunshine in the middle of the post-Christmas winter slog...

CYPRUS

If chic lodgings are what you're looking for then Quinta da Rochinha on the island of Madeira is just the ticket. Perched atop a cliff in the quaint village of Ponta do Sol, this contemporary hotel is a picture of luxury: a fusion of traditional Portuguese architecture and modern minimalist style. Dine beside full-length windows overlooking the sea or unwind in the infinity pool that sits spectacularly on the edge of the cliff. Ponta do Sol, which boasts the hottest climate in Madeira, is nestled in a ravine that opens to the sea on the island's South coast, producing a pleasant pebble beach and vistas to die for. Holidays here can be spent swimming, climbing the steep cliffs, exploring nearby Funchal or just relaxing in Quinta da Rochinha's cliff-top haven.

Seven nights at Thalassa Boutique Hotel & Spa costs from £615 per person, based on two sharing a double room on bed and breakfast basis with complimentary upgrade. Includes return flights from London Gatwick, UK VIP lounge passes and private transfers. To book, visit www.sovereign.com.

DUBAI

The Emirates Palace has to be seen, and experienced, to be believed. No wonder then that it is regarded as one of the wonders of the modern world and the national landmark of Abu Dhabi—praise indeed when you consider the

array of impossibly fantastical creations that populate Dubai's skyline and clouds.

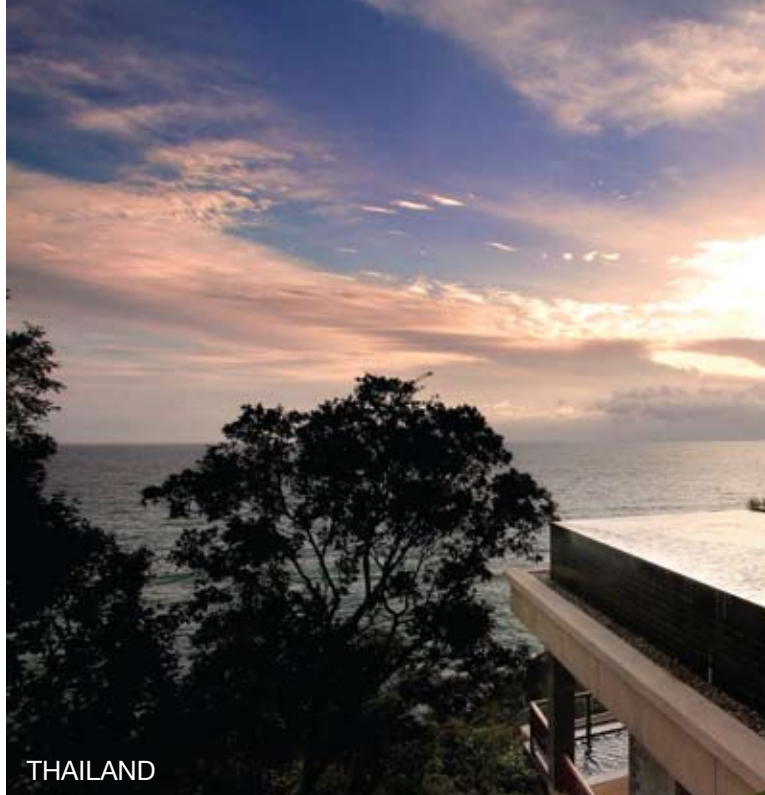
Relishing a sense of feeling like royalty, visitors are free to explore the palace's stretch of private beach surrounded by 85 hectares of beautifully landscaped gardens. The palace boasts 302 grand rooms and 92 magnificent suites each combining the ultimate in luxury with state of the art technology. Get those pulses racing after you've had your fill of relaxation by having a go at sailing, snorkelling, wind surfing and kayaking, all offered courtesy of the palace's private bay.

Five nights at the Emirates Palace costs £1,332 per person for two adults sharing. Includes return flights from London Heathrow, hotel & taxes. To book, visit www.kuoni.co.uk.

GAMBIA

With flights running direct from Bristol airport, the Gambia is experiencing significant interest as a sun seekers paradise at the moment. And rightly so; just a six hour flight away, The Gambia handily sits in the same time zone as the UK which means there will be no jet-lag setting your jam-packed itinerary of exciting activities back. Top of your list to see whilst here will be the breathtaking menagerie of exciting wildlife. Get up with the lark (or rather bird of paradise), to take part in a visit to one of the nearby nature reserves, spotting all kinds of exotic wildlife from monkeys to chameleons, crocodiles to turtles. Such excitement will require a relaxing resort to retreat to; Hibiscus House offers massages, pilates classes and a holistic garden area, and is a short step from two of the finest sandy beaches.

Hibiscus House has 8 individually designed rooms, prices start from £32 per person per night. The whole hotel can be booked for £3,500 for 18 people for a week. Return flights from Bristol cost £449 per person based on a 7 night holiday (www.gambia.co.uk).



THAILAND

CYPRUS





MAURITIUS

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Often credited as being the finest hotel in Mauritius, the Royal Palm delivers everything that its name might promise. With staff outnumbering guests three to one, even your smallest whims will be catered for (just don't get too used to this unless you want your popularity at home to plummet somewhat!). The Royal Palm has been a member of the Leading Hotels of the World since 1990 and is surrounded by beautiful tropical gardens, a glorious sandy beach and the turquoise Grande Baie lagoon beyond. As if this weren't enough indulgence, the dining at the Royal Palm is something to write, or send a postcard, home about. Its three restaurants are overseen by Michel de Matteis who, previously employed at several Michelin-starred restaurants across France, injects his award-winning culinary flair into every dish.

Seven nights at the Royal Palm cost from £2,503 per person including Economy class return flights from London Heathrow and hotel transfers.

Visit www.beachcombortours.co.uk.

PARESA, THAILAND

The envy of all of the other impressive properties on a stretch often referred to as 'Millionaire's Mile', Paresa on the western coast of Thailand is a new arrival



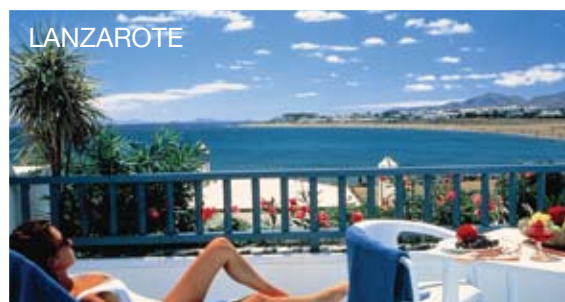
GAMBIA



DUBAI

on this lavish scene set to rival even this paradisiacal setting. Perched high on the cliff top, residents at Paresa can enjoy spectacular views of tropical forests and the blue waters of the Andaman Ocean from the privacy and luxury of their very own infinity pool. Also a feast for the eyes is the resort's beautiful architecture, inspired by traditional Southern Thai homes both in the design and the use of natural materials which complement their surroundings. Paresa offers a range of dining options, including Thai and modern international cuisine as well as a comprehensive spa and a top-of-the range gym and salon facilities.

W&O Travel offers seven nights at Paresa from £1,935 per person based on two sharing a Talay Suite on a bed and breakfast basis. Includes return flights from Heathrow to Bangkok with EVA Air and onward flights to Phuket with Bangkok Airways, taxes and private airport transfers. To book visit www.wandotravel.com



LANZAROTE

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Treat yourself to something extraordinary by journeying to the most Easterly of the Canary Islands Lanzarote, a destination whose other worldly characteristics seduce all who visit into forgetting the cares and responsibilities left safely in the UK. Explore the island's dramatic volcanic landscapes and enjoy Lanzarote's year-round sunshine on one of its stunning white beaches. As for your accommodation, you need look no further than the Seaside Hotel's Los Jameos Playa situated in the south of Lanzarote on the Playa de los Pocillos beach. The hotel boasts an extensive array of leisure and sports facilities with the best tennis facilities on the Canary Islands. If this sounds far too energetic, you can enjoy The Spa and Wellness Centre couples' therapy room instead.

Seven nights at the Los Jameos Playa costs from £406 per person. The price includes return flights from London Gatwick with Monarch Airlines. For more information or to book visit www.holidays.monarch.co.uk.