



## Martinis with mother

My wild times as a millennial mum

MAGAZINE



## 40 best family escapes for this summer

WEEKEND

# French holidays in chaos

### Quarantine rules to remain even for fully vaccinated amid fears over virus variant

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Hundreds of thousands of holiday-makers have had their plans thrown into chaos after ministers announced quarantine rules will remain in place for all non-essential travel from France.

Fully vaccinated travellers were due from Monday to be exempt from quarantine when returning to England from countries on the amber list, which includes France.

However, barely 48 hours before the policy was due to take effect, the government said last night that it would not

apply to France owing to concerns over the spread of the Beta variant of the coronavirus, which was first identified in South Africa.

It means France will in effect be put in a new category, between the amber and red list. Existing amber-list rules will continue to apply for arrivals from the country from Monday, with mandatory quarantine for up to ten days and a PCR test on days two and eight after arrival. Travellers can take an extra test on day five and be released if it is negative. Quarantine exemptions for hauliers and other essential workers will continue.

In other developments:  
● 51,870 new cases in the UK were an-

nounced, the first time it has passed more than 50,000 since mid-January. The seven-day average was up 34.9 per cent. There are 3,964 people currently in hospital with coronavirus, the highest since late March but far lower than January when there were about 40,000.

● One in every 95 people in England is infected, according to estimates by the Office for National Statistics.

● Shoppers were warned of supermarket shortages with so many workers in isolation but changes to the Covid-19 app were ruled out for at least another month.

● The head of the government's pandemic fighting body said people should take a lateral flow test before

going to parties and nightclubs when almost all virus curbs end on Monday.

● A coalition of scientists and experts warned that the government's plans for Monday presented a global threat.

● A leading government adviser revealed that Chris Whitty, the chief medical officer for England, was "wary" of overreacting to the threat of a pandemic.

The move to keep quarantine rules for travellers from France will affect an estimated 500,000 Britons who were due to travel in or through the country this weekend after the early break-up of some schools for the summer holidays. It will also hit millions more who have  
**Continued on page 4, col 3**

MAGAZINE

## Eat!

Easy dinner party for 4



WEEKEND

## Matt Chorley

My new normal — it's a dog's life



Plus

How green are your eco products really?



**Fun of the fair** The London Wonderground festival at Earls Court includes circus acts and a city beach, just the thing as temperatures are forecast to hit 31C. News, page 11



# Travel

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**'Necker has a reputation as a party island but its extreme beauty is more unexpected'**

John O'Ceallaigh in the reopened British Virgin Islands

3 Porto Katsiki Beach on Lefkas



## 40 family breaks for summer

Fully vaccinated and itching to take the children on a post-lockdown foreign holiday? **Oliver Berry** knows all the best places

### 1 Lake Geneva digi detox

Even on holiday, it's all but impossible to lure teenagers away from their screens. But this detox break at the swish Evian Resort on the south side of Lake Geneva in France provides a solution. Phones and tablets are locked up on your arrival by the "adventure concierge", who then devises a bespoke programme of activities — rafting on the Dranse River, mountain-biking and hiking in the Alps, paddleboarding on the lake or tennis tuition with a former pro. There's a choice of base: the five-star Hôtel Royal or four-star Hôtel Ermitage. **Details** Seven nights' B&B for four from £4,425, including flights ([azurecollection.com](http://azurecollection.com))

### 2 Go wild on Madeira

The Portuguese island of Madeira, 400 miles off the coast of Morocco, has a spectacularly wild side, with jagged mountain ranges, beautiful coastline and areas of subtropical laurel forest — the last fragments of the great rainforest that once cloaked the island. On a week's holiday you will visit botanical gardens, take an off-road 4x4 tour into the mountains and enjoy a guided walk along the Madeiran *levadas*, the 16th-century aqueducts that were built to transport water around the island. Accommodation is in the



Rafting on the Dranse

Castanheiro Boutique Hotel, in Madeira's main town of Funchal.

**Details** Seven nights' B&B from £845pp ([artisantravel.co.uk](http://artisantravel.co.uk)). Fly to Madeira

### 3 Follow Odysseus

Island-hopping through the Ionians is a dreamy way to leave pandemic troubles behind. Loosely based on the adventures of Odysseus, this seven-day catamaran trip starts in the mainland port of Preveza and sails out to islands including Lefkas, Cephalonia and Ithaca, Odysseus's home. Boats have three, four or five en suite cabins, plus a skipper ▶

\*All prices are for school summer holidays. All had availability at time of going to press

# 42 Travel

## 10 Fiskardo on Cephalonia

► and hostess, so all you have to do is sit back and soak up the scenery — unless you fancy some snorkelling, a spot of archery or cheese and wine tastings. **Details** Seven nights' B&B from £2,355pp (responsibletravel.com). Fly to Preveza

## 4 Peaks to sea in Spain

Northern Spain is the setting for this fun family road trip, during which you will travel from the foothills of the Pyrenees to the Catalan coast. It's a varied adventure packed with activities: guided hikes, canyoning, e-biking, rafting and vulture-spotting in the mountains, followed by swimming, snorkelling and paddleboarding along the Costa Brava and Cap de Creus Natural Park. A private sunset cruise on the last day makes a special end to the trip.

**Details** Fourteen nights' B&B from £2,200pp, including car hire and activities (pura-aventura.com). Fly to Barcelona

## 5 Chill out on Cyprus

On the southwest coast of Cyprus the Annabelle hotel sits in six acres of lush island gardens, and is steps from the beach and a short walk from the lively town of Paphos, with its archaeological site, medieval baths and seaside bars. The hotel is a good launchpad for exploring the island, but you probably won't feel much like leaving it — a lagoon-like pool snakes through the resort, its glass-fronted restaurant offers a knockout ocean view and the Ouranos spa provides pampering aplenty.

**Details** Seven nights' B&B from £418pp, including flights (cooptravel.co.uk)

## 6 Active in the Algarve

Perched above the four-mile stretch of Falesia Beach, Pine Cliffs Resort is among the Algarve's top family hotels. It offers dedicated activity programmes for younger children as well as teenagers, encompassing beach volleyball, paddleboarding, high ropes and surfing (all supervised), and cooking lessons for all ages in the Mimo culinary school. Rooms, suites and garden villas are spread around the delightful pine-filled grounds, so the place doesn't feel crowded. Many rooms feature hand-painted tiles and murals created by local craftspeople. **Details** Seven nights' B&B in a garden residence from £2,500pp, including flights and transfers (scottdunn.com)

## 7 E-biking on Mallorca

Cycling on Mallorca is hot work, but e-bikes have opened up a different way to see the island — especially the rural corners that many never visit. From the salt flats and sand dunes of the Migjorn, the undeveloped part of southern Mallorca, this self-guided itinerary carries you inland to the agricultural area of Es Pla, with its working farms, quiet villages and vegetable gardens. You'll be staying with local families in agroturismos. **Details** Six nights' half-board from £1,045 per adult and £850 per child, including bike hire and luggage transfers; £70pp extra for e-bikes (intravel.com). Fly to Palma

## 8 On the beach in Crete

Backdropped by trees and the peaks of the Lefka Ori (White Mountains), the GK Beach Hotel feels really private; nothing stands between it and the sea



save for the hotel's lawns, pool and beachfront taverna. All 23 suites and the two-bedroom penthouse are spacious, with kitchenettes and sea views. There's also a great spa. It's a 20-minute walk to the town of Kalyves, while the hotel's private minibus service offers guided excursions to inland villages, local wineries, historic Chania and beauty spots including the Samaria Gorge. **Details** Seven nights' B&B for four from £920pp, including flights and transfers (simpsontravel.com)

## 9 Sojourn in the Somme

Northern France lacks the guaranteed sunshine of the south, but it's more practical for a quick break. The Baie de Somme is known for its moving First World War cemeteries and battlegrounds (an essential visit), but it has other attractions — especially its huge, flat beaches, which are ideal for land-yachting, kite-bugging and sea-kayaking. Children will enjoy the steam train that runs between St Valery-sur-Somme and Le Crotoy, and there's bird-spotting around the ornithological reserve of Le Parc du Marquenterre. Places to stay are plentiful, from campsites to gypsy caravans. For maximum fun, how about a treehouse for four where breakfast is hoisted up every morning?

**Details** Seven nights' B&B for four in the treehouse from £1,183 (french-weekendbreaks.co.uk). Take the Eurotunnel to Nord Pas de Calais

## 10 Peace in Cephalonia

James Villas has decent late availability on Cephalonia throughout July and August. Villa Vasilikades is situated in its namesake village, a quiet place a short drive away from the town of Fiskardo — the island's prettiest port, with ranks of Venetian houses and fancy yachts lined up along the waterfront, and a bevy of lively restaurants and bars. The two-storey house offers super views of hills, coast and sea, and the outside space includes a patio barbecue, a small garden and a cracking hillside pool. **Details** Seven nights' self-catering for six from £1,999 (jamesvillas.co.uk). Fly to Cephalonia

## 11 Coastal Corfu

On the horseshoe-shaped bay of Kalami — one of Corfu's loveliest — these apartments make an attractive base on the island's northeast coast. They are a small complex of studios and one-bedroom apartments, all open-plan with compact kitchens, private balconies and a freshwater swimming pool (our pick are the ones with views over the pool and bay). A path leads down the hill to Kalami, with its clutch of tavernas and beachside bars.

**Details** Seven nights' self-catering for two from £712pp, including flights (sunvil.co.uk)

## 12 Luxury in Halkidiki

Ikos Olivia spans 22 acres of landscaped gardens and has its own white sandy beach on the Halkidiki peninsula, southeast of Thessaloniki. It's stylish (the swim-up pool bar is a fancy touch), and like other hotels in the Ikos group has a unique take on the all-inclusive concept: instead of dining in, you can borrow the hotel's Mini for the day and eat out at a recommended local restaurant. There's an academy for football-mad youngsters, and a beachside childcare service so parents really can switch off. **Details** Seven nights' all-inclusive from £1,281pp (ikosresorts.com). Fly to Thessaloniki

## 13 Fun in Marbella

Yoga, archery, cookery, pottery, painting, paddleboarding — even flamenco dancing and perfumery. You name it, chances are the children's entertainment team at the Marbella Club will have it somewhere on their activity list. While the kids are being entertained (activities from £51 per half-day), parents can get thoroughly pampered; this is, after all, one of the Med's longest-standing luxury hotels, once favoured by film stars including Brigitte Bardot and Cary Grant. **Details** Seven nights' B&B from £2,330pp (marbellaclub.com). Fly to Malaga



Gardening at Marbella Club



## 14 Save big on Rhodes

Many hotels on Rhodes are tempting holidaymakers with big discounts this year. The Kiotari Beach Mitsis Rodos Maris Resort on the island's southeast coast is offering up to 30 per cent off bookings made by the end of this month. The five-star resort is family-focused, with loads of activities — water polo and windsurfing among them — as well as a separate children's pool and playground. It's huge, with 432 rooms and bungalows, which makes it feel a little impersonal, but it serves families well and is perfectly placed for jaunts along the coast.

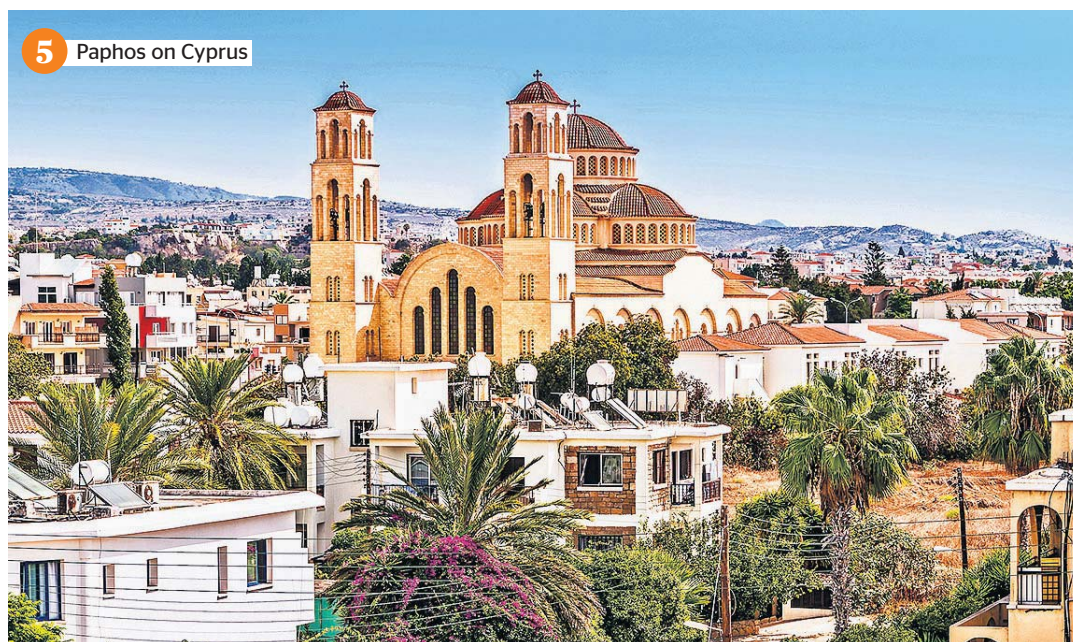
**Details** Seven nights' all-inclusive from £739pp, including flights (travelrepublic.co.uk)

## 15 Low-key Andalusia

The Subbetica is an under-the-radar corner of Andalusia that's superb for family adventures. Set deep in the countryside, on the edge of the Subbetica National Park, Casa Olea is a former olive farm that's run by an English couple, along with their dog, Ruby — the chief hiking guide. The whitewashed farmhouse has been beautifully restored, with rustic rooms offering views of the groves and rust-red hills. There's loads to do: visiting *pueblos blancos* (whitewashed villages), cycling along old drovers' trails and hiking in the hills — perhaps with Ruby in tow.



## 6 Pine Cliffs Resort in the Algarve



## 5 Paphos on Cyprus

**Details** Seven nights' B&B from £980pp, including flights and car hire (sunvil.co.uk)

## 16 Corfu luxury

Angsana Corfu, perched on a hillside above the east coast, is celebrated for its Ionian panorama, with blue horizons unfurling from every window. The hotel, with its private beach, infinity pool and kids' clubs, is brilliant for families. It's elegant, with wood floors, temple-like courtyards and a rooftop bar. Hillview rooms are cheaper, but it's worth paying extra for the sea.

**Details** Seven nights' B&B in a sea-view suite from £2,196 per adult and £1,837 per child, including flights (kenwoodtravel.co.uk)

## 17 Corsican retreat

One for the escape artists: a restored watermill high in the mountains of western Corsica, with a hillside terrace and, yards from the front door, a waterfall with its own rock pool for swimming. It feels remote, but it's actually only two miles to the village of Piana, and a 15-minute drive to the nearest sandy beaches in Porto. There is fantastic hiking near the mill, with many old shepherds' paths winding around the hillsides: a classic route runs between nearby Ota and Evisa.

**Details** Seven nights' self-catering for two from £2,200 (simpsontravel.com). Fly to Ajaccio

International travel restrictions are in place. Check gov.uk for details

## 18 Cretan adventures

Lounging on Cretan beaches is lovely, but this activity-packed small-group holiday, based at a beach hotel in Kissamos, in the west of the island, is great if you want to do more besides. You'll get to go snorkelling to a shipwreck, kayaking and paddleboarding on the west coast, cycling in the mountains, hiking in a gorge with griffon vultures flying overhead, swimming in a sea cave — there's even the chance to learn to dance like a Cretan.

**Details** Seven nights' B&B from £1,699pp, including flights and activities (familiesworldwide.co.uk)

## 19 Villa on Paxos

The Ionian island of Paxos isn't as well known as neighbouring Corfu, but attracts a loyal band of regulars looking for a relatively quiet Greek experience. It's just seven miles long and three miles wide, with three main coastal villages: Gaios, Loggos and Lakka. Unspoilt pebbly beaches are the main draw, and there are more than 30 to choose from — for white sands hop on a boat to sister island Antipaxos. Villas with pools abound, but Villa Perseus — a stone house near Fontana village — is a particular charmer with its wooden shutters, pool and lovely walled courtyard perfect for sundowners.

**Details** Seven nights' self-catering

for four from £950pp, including flights, car hire and transfers (gicthevillacollection.com)

## 20 Canoe the Dordogne

Paddling along the Dordogne, with its châteaux and cave art, makes for a great family adventure. After a skills session in the medieval village of Rocamadour, you'll set off downriver, stopping at hotels along the way — one is a castle. Children will be enraptured by the Gouffre de Padirac, a vast underground cave that's partly explored by boat. The minimum age for use of the canoes is eight: boats seat two or three people; over-12s can paddle their own.

**Details** Eight nights' B&B from £1,885pp, including flights and some extra meals (responsibletravel.com)

## 21 Serenity in Croatia

This retreat takes seclusion to another level. A monastery built in the 15th century on the Dalmatian island of Lopud, it's been restored under the stylish eye of the Croatian architect Rujana Markovic. With minimalist stone rooms (13 cells have become five suites), tranquil gardens and a rooftop terrace that's ideal for sunbathing and stargazing, it feels a world away.

Naturally, you get your own chef to serve meals in the former refectory. The monks might have raised their eyebrows at the expense; you may start praying for a lottery win.

**Details** One night's full board for ten from £9,000 (abercrombiekent.co.uk). Fly to Dubrovnik

## 22 Stylish Med cruising

They may not be quite up to Roman Abramovich's standards, but the private motor yachts offered by Sam Boats offer a taste of the super-rich lifestyle without the sky-high costs. With an experienced skipper, and the option of a host on board to cook meals (from £130 a day), these small boats allow you to skim around the Med in search of quiet beaches and snorkelling spots — a couple of hours from Athens are the Saronic islands of Hydra and Aegina or traffic-free Spetses, for example.

**Details** Seven nights' self-catering from £1,510pp, including flights and skipper (samboat.com)

## 23 Quinta do Lago chill

Quinta do Lago, the sprawling Algarve beach estate, has been a favourite haunt of footballers and celebs for decades. Check in at the Magnolia Hotel, which is within striking distance of the resort's golf courses, shops and restaurants, as well as the Campus — a state-of-the-art sports centre. The hotel's seven new detached cottages are the choice for those with children; each has two bedrooms, a small self-catering kitchen and living room, and they're a little more removed from the busier parts of the resort.

**Details** Seven nights' room only from £1,994pp, including flights and transfers (jet2holidays.com)

## 24 Active Halkidiki

The family-favourite Sani Resort in Halkidiki consists of five hotels clustered around a marina. You want Porto Sani at the centre of the resort, with 98 suites and a private nanny service. There's also a children's club, football academy and cookery courses,

More trips on next page