

ON TRAVEL

2020 ISSUE



INTRODUCING HOTEL PANZANO • INDULGE YOUR SENSES • HUGH BONNEVILLE ON MEGANISSI
KAS IS KING • CORSICAN BLUE • SIMPSON KIDS • SHARING CRETE WITH A MASTERCHEF



Welcome

This year, my wife Yianna and I attended the marriage of our eldest son Mathew to his partner Simi in Crete. Gathering together with friends and family was a joyful and poignant reminder of our own wedding, held on the island in 1972, and a suitable chance to reflect on the early days of Simply Travel, which also began there in 1978. More than forty years later, the ever-changing face of the travel industry has shown me that it is our adherence to those original founding principles that sets us apart. Expert knowledge and exceptional service delivered with a genuine passion for our properties and destinations has always been at the heart of everything we do.

I was saddened to witness the collapse of Thomas Cook in 2019 and though insecurities over Brexit meant it was an extraordinary year for all of us in travel, our core values have continued to serve us well. We have not stood still, investing in technology and refining our portfolio under the expert guidance of new Managing Director Graham Horner. I am delighted with the results, which allow us to tailor our holidays to reflect the increasing demand for regional flights, flexible hotel stays, local experiences and online booking. However, the reduced number of flights in 2020 will undoubtedly have a knock-on effect and early booking will be key this year to avoid disappointment in a competitive market.

In 2020, we continue to broaden our unique Simpson Hotels collection, introducing the incomparably lovely Hotel Panzano in Tuscany and the charming Bademli Bahçe on the beautiful Bozburun Peninsula in Turkey. We also welcome Ile de Ré to our portfolio – a wonderful new destination combining the subtle finesse of French living with the joy of wide, open beaches and a perfectly untouched landscape.

With so much to look forward to, including a Beach Life activity programme for family travellers, a host of outstanding new villas and a return to our roots with the introduction of the Simply Simpson collection, I hope you will take inspiration from the pages that follow and join us in 2020 for another exciting year in travel.

Best wishes,

Graham Simpson

Founder, Simpson Travel.

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WIN A SIMPSON HOLIDAY

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Tag your Simpson Travel images #SimpsonTraveller; we'll feature our favourites and share the ❤️

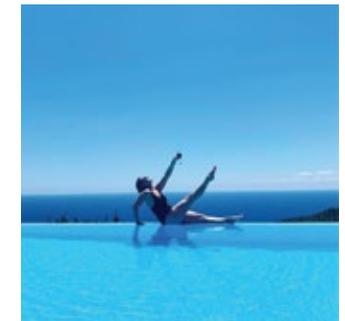
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Like us on Instagram and Facebook – use #SimpsonTraveller to join the conversation.

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Another chance to win...

Our quarterly newsletter offers another chance to win a Simpson holiday. But you've got to be in it to win it! Sign up to our emails at:

simpsontravel.com/keep-in-touch

REPORTAGE

New Simpson Hotels

This year we are delighted to introduce two sensational new Simpson Hotels to our portfolio; Hotel Panzano set in one of Chianti's most treasured hilltop towns, and Bademli Bahçe Hotel in Söğüt on the beautiful Bozburun Peninsula.



An award-winning year

A huge thank you to all who voted for us in the 2019 Baby Awards. We were delighted to be awarded Best Family Travel Company and are looking forward to plenty of exciting new developments for our Simpson families in 2020.

Ile de Ré

The French have known about it for years but at last the secret's out. Discover why everyone's talking about the latest addition to our French portfolio and why this exquisite little island is 2020's go-to destination. Timeless, charming and elegantly understated, we are truly delighted to welcome Ile de Ré to our collection.



Two new collections

Our collections make it easy to find your perfect home-from-home. New for 2020, families with children under 11 will find everything they need in our Simpson Kids collection, while anyone searching for a modest retreat in an idyllic location need look no further than Simply Simpson.

Beach Life

In response to your request for more flexible childcare, we bring you Beach Life, a complimentary programme of supervised activities available during July and August at GK Beach Hotel, Crete and Bella Mare Hotel, Corfu.



Tailormade for you

We're flexible. Are you? Take advantage of our greatest ever choice of regional flights and set your own agenda with a tailormade stay in one of our boutique hotels. We'll organise your twice-as-nice twin-centre break or help you stay longer by adding a flexible hotel break onto your villa holiday.

Bobo CHIC

It's a term only the French could have coined. Bobo, short for bourgeois-bohemian, perfectly captures the quiet sophistication and effortless chic of Ile de Ré, the bewitching new addition to our French portfolio.



Island life

Just off the west coast of France near La Rochelle, life on Ile de Ré is a civilised affair. The picturesque towns and villages blend culture with good living, bistros and bars enjoy the elegant *laissez-faire* atmosphere that only the French can muster, and the locally harvested oysters are regarded as the best in the world. Throw in the ease of access from the mainland, the natural beauty of the landscape and the impeccable taste of the locals and it's easy to see why this irresistible little island attracts such a loyal following.



Les Portes



Saint Martin



Les Gollandières



Beaches and bicycles

Cycling is a huge part of life here, offering potential for a car-free holiday and an opportunity to reconnect with nature and enjoy a simpler way of life. With 100 kilometres of gloriously unspoilt coastline, accessed by an extensive network of cycle trails criss-crossing the island through fields and vineyards, woodland and salt marshes, cycling is as much a part of life on Ile de Ré as the ebb and flow of the tide. Wide stretches of immaculate golden sand backed by dunes and pine forests give parts of the island a wild and remote feel, while other beaches offering watersports, children's activities and play areas evoke a classic summer holiday atmosphere.



Ars-en-Ré



Villa Saint Martin

Stay in town

The island's ten harbour towns and villages are connected by the many cycling trails that cross the island and are all within walking distance of a local beach. For those who like to be amongst the action, **Maison des Songeurs** in Le Bois Plage is the perfect *pied-à-terre* for two whilst pretty **Maison Merindot** in Saint Martin is ideal for a small family. And if you're looking to host a sophisticated house party, look no further than **Villa Saint Martin**, our wonderfully elegant 6-bedroom retreat, tucked away behind one of the capital's historic streets.

Stay amongst the vines

Luxury hotels in the island capital Saint Martin come at a price and attract significant crowds. For a quieter alternative with an altogether more laid-back appeal, our delightful hotel in Sainte-Marie-de-Ré, the island's oldest village, retains an abundance of quiet charm and classic island chic, within easy striking distance of the popular north coast harbour towns. **Les Vignes de la Chapelle** sits at the edge of a vineyard, a short stroll through the vines from the coastal path. Stay for a week, enjoy a short break or combine a few nights here with a week in a villa on the Aquitaine Coast; the choice is yours.



Abbey Châteliers, La Flotte

Markets and monuments

From the impressive UNESCO-listed fortifications in the capital Saint Martin to Phare des Baleines, the famous lighthouse at its northern tip, Ile de Ré has its fair share of historic monuments. In 2012 it became France's first island to join the country's celebrated regions of art and history, and the creativity of its inhabitants is evident as you wander the pedestrianised streets of the village centres. Artisan shops exhibit distinctive homewares, local artists showcase their latest works and stylish boutiques lure you in with an eclectic array of high-end, bohemian fashion. The colourful markets are also a big part of life on the island; each village hosting its own in the height of summer.



Maison Merindot



Les Vignes de la Chapelle



"Freddie's never fails to deliver a beautiful bouquet that lasts, worth every penny."

Krys

**Freddie's
Flowers**



Each week Freddie chooses the best flowers of the season and puts together a beautiful selection for you to arrange at home. They're all cut to order, with no middleman, so you get more flowers and they're all super fresh. He'll even send instructions on how to arrange them!

EXCLUSIVE READER OFFER

Receive your first two boxes for £12 each. Use code **SIMPSON50** at the checkout for **50% off**.

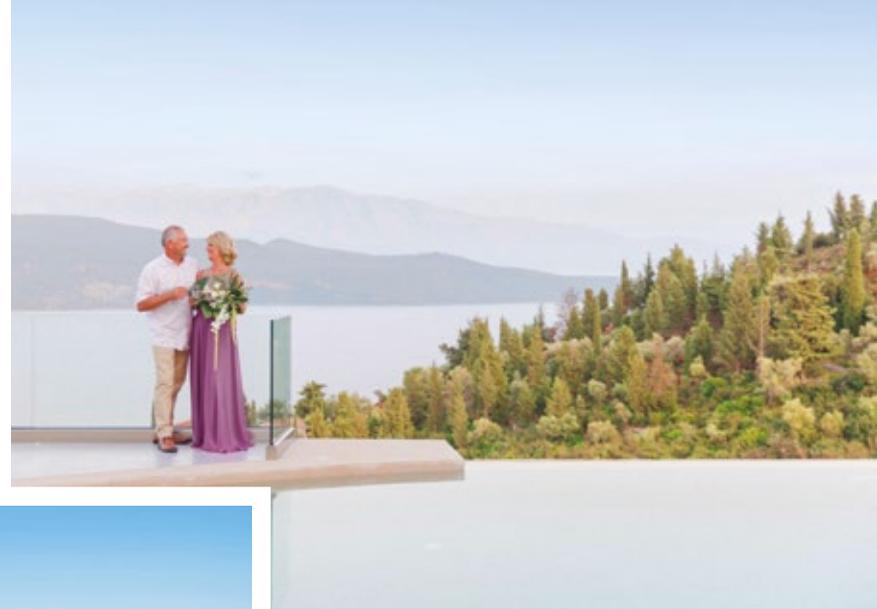


Polignano a Mare

Experience more
IN LEFKADA...

Celebrate love

Whether you're looking to pop the question, renew your marriage vows or simply mark a special occasion with a little extra pomp and ceremony, we'll arrange it all. From photography to flowers, table settings to cakes, we'll help you celebrate in style.



Lefkada boat hire

Hire your own boat (with or without a skipper) and take to the sea to enjoy the shimmering waters of the Ionian. Visit hidden coves, drop anchor and swim off the back, or visit the idyllic island of Meganissi and stop for lunch at one of Vathy's lovely waterfront tavernas.

Experience more
IN CRETE...

Traditional Cretan cooking

Learn how to cook the Cretan way with an informative four-hour lesson in Vamos. Prepare five or six different dishes using traditional recipes and delicious local ingredients and sit down to enjoy the fruits of your labour when you're finished.



Visit Dourakis Winery

Take a tour of this excellent family-run winery in western Crete servicing all aspects of the wine-making process, from vine to bottle. You'll enjoy some of the outstanding results with a complimentary tasting and a bite to eat at the end of your tour.

Experience more

Designed to enhance your holiday and help you make the most of your chosen destination, our range of pre-bookable activities and experiences ensure a magical, memorable escape. Whether you're after a private chef or a tour of the local vineyard, cookery lessons or a day out at sea, we'll take care of the details so you can experience more. Here's a little taster...





Experience more
IN AQUITAINE...

On your bike

Enjoy the convenience of bicycles and accessories delivered directly to your villa. Whether you prefer to take it slowly or zip along at speed, cycling is the ideal way to explore the Aquitaine Coast. With trails aplenty, it's the perfect place to get on your bike.

Private chef

Our private chefs will create a gourmet experience in the privacy of your villa, tailoring their expertly crafted menus to suit your party's tastes. Ideal for larger groups, enjoy first-class cuisine in the relaxed comfort of your holiday home-from-home.

Masseria experiences
IN PUGLIA

You don't have to spend long in Puglia to spot a *masseria*. These proud buildings are as much a part of the landscape as the olive groves that surround them. Originally built as fortified farmhouses, sustaining the needs of both animals and farmworkers, many have been sympathetically restored to offer high-end accommodation and a luxurious taste of 21st century living. Grand in scale, yet remarkably intimate in character, they offer an elegant contrast to the quaint *trulli* of the Valle d'Itria. Why not enjoy the best of both worlds and add a 3-night masseria experience to your villa holiday or combine a stay at two of our luxury hotels, for a quintessentially Puglian adventure...

Masseria Le Torri

Perfectly placed between Conversano and Polignano a Mare, our stunning adult-only hotel enchants all who visit. For an authentically Italian experience, join their chef for a lesson in the art of Italian cookery and help prepare a wonderful spread of traditional Apulian fare. Savour the mouth-watering results at dinner; a relaxed affair to be enjoyed at your leisure.

Masseria Amastuola

Overlooking Puglia's west coast and close to the famed villages of the Valle d'Itria, Masseria Amastuola is well-placed for day trips to Matera, Lecce and the unspoilt beaches of the Salentine Peninsula. Set in one hundred hectares of organic vineyard, the hotel experience would not be complete without joining one of the many tours and tastings available at this highly acclaimed boutique winery.



Masseria Garrappa

Masseria Garrappa

Just south of Monopoli, close to the fashionable beaches of Capotolo, the owner's passion for this delightful hotel is evident throughout. The well-regarded restaurant is an oasis of elegant simplicity, and good food is at the heart of the experience here. No wonder, then, that cookery classes celebrate the very best in local produce; the resulting dishes matched judiciously to your choice of companion wines if you so wish.

Experience more
IN MALLORCA...

Pony trekking

From an introduction to riding geared especially toward children under six, to a full-day hack through the Mallorcan mountains, all ages and abilities can enjoy the thrill of pony trekking. We'll even arrange a little *tapas* to keep you going along your way.

Sail away

Cruise across the Bay of Pollença and beyond, stopping off at one of the many *calas* for swimming, snorkelling and paddleboarding. Take the plunge from the boat's very own diving board or simply relax and enjoy a bite to eat with a chilled glass of Cava on the deck.

You'll find many more activities and experiences on our website. For more information and prices, please contact experiencemore@simpsontravel.com or call us on 020 8108 2172.



Masseria Le Torri

ILE DE RÉ *and* HOSSEGOR

It's a long drive down to the ever-so-desirable village of Hossegor in the Aquitaine region of France – ten hours from Calais foot-to-pedal – so why not break your journey and squeeze in another gem of France's west coast: Ile de Ré? A mere six-and-a-half hours from Calais is La Rochelle, from where it's a short hop across the causeway to the Ile. Awaiting you there are stunning strands of golden sand, three of France's most beautiful villages and a foodie scene to rival the very best in Europe. Best of all, you can dump the car for a few days and take to your bike, leaving you revived for the four-hour hop down the coast.

Where to stay...

Ile de Ré: **Les Vignes de la Chapelle**. Sitting on the edge of a vineyard, this boutique hotel is the perfect stop-off, just a short stroll from the pretty village of Sainte-Marie-de-Ré. The sauna, steam room, hot tub and treatment area will ensure you leave revived for the next stage of your journey.

Hossegor: **Villa Ami** is a 3-bedroom contemporary villa just a 10-minute drive from Hossegor village. With a bakery, bar, restaurant and supermarket all within walking distance, you can happily park up the car and take to two feet.



Les Vignes de la Chapelle, Ile de Ré

Maison Fornello, Calvi

Palombaggia beach, South Corsica



Lumio, North Corsica

TWO *is* THE MAGIC NUMBER

Graham Horner, Managing Director of Simpson Travel, writes in praise of the twin-centre holiday.

So, here's my problem. I want to go everywhere. I mean it. I have an insatiable curiosity that makes me want to discover the next place, even when I love the place I am in. Yes, I might be happy now. But could I be *happier* somewhere else?

When it comes to holidays, to choose is to lose. I relish the freedom and space of a villa, but miss the sociability and service of a hotel. A break without the beach is, frankly, not a break; but it's not long before I'm craving an urban fix or a mountainous adventure.

Then there's travelling companions. Put their requirements into the mix (in my case, a wife and three kids) and settling on one accommodation, in one location, inevitably means someone's moaning.

I don't consider it melodramatic, therefore, to claim that the twin-centre holiday is my salvation.

Two holidays in one; no trade-offs required. Since discovering its merits, I've never looked back.

For me, finding destinations that 'go' together is half the fun. This involves pouring over road maps, train timetables, ferry routes and flight schedules, and avoiding the 3am wait at a port or a station. My advice is to make the most of the journey between the two destinations; a beautiful drive, bobbing boat ride or a swim at a secret beach can itself become a highlight of the holiday.

The good news is that, here at Simpson, we know what works when it comes to twin-centres, and our specialists can tailor a trip to make the most of your time away. If your appetite is whetted, or if, like me, you're already a convert, then here are my top five recommendations for doing the double this summer.



"For me, finding destinations that 'go' together is half the fun."

CORFU *and* PUGLIA

Here's an unusual one you probably haven't thought of, made possible by the reintroduction this summer of the hydrofoil service between Otranto and Corfu Town. Why not combine a week indulging in superlative Puglian food and wine before exploring the pebbly coves and crystalline waters of north east Corfu? The hydrofoil takes less than three hours and departs at 8.30am in the morning, getting you to Corfu Town by midday. Don't miss out on this Venetian gem – take time for lunch and a walk around the shady streets before heading north along the coast.

Where to stay...

Puglia: **Simpson Secret – Puglia**. This wonderfully quirky villa, not far from the Baroque town of Nardò, has its own natural rock swimming pool and a bedroom with a stargazing skylight positioned right above the bed.

Corfu: **Bella Mare Hotel**. From the hotel's jetty, you can hire a motorboat and take yourself off for the day to neighbouring beaches. Pretty Agni, with its choice of waterfront tavernas, should be your destination.



Otranto, Puglia



Agni, Corfu

Bella Mare Hotel, Corfu



Meganissi



Lefkada Town

MEGANISSI *and* LEFKADA

No-one could describe the Ionian island of Lefkada as busy but, after a week on neighbouring Meganissi, that's what it will seem. This is the perfect combo for those looking for an escape-the-world crash-out, followed by a bit of an explore. The charm of Meganissi is in the imperative to do absolutely nothing but swim in the gin-clear waters and linger over long lunches at the waterside tavernas. There's a more sophisticated scene waiting for you across the channel in Lefkada Town (do have dinner at Thymari), together with some mountain drives that will take your breath away. The short ferry trip between the two, skirting the exclusive island of Skorpios, is a delight.

Where to stay...

Meganissi: **Villa Mythos** is a stunning new addition to the Simpson portfolio, a 20-minute walk from charming Vathy with its tavernas and bars. The infinity pool and jacuzzi are built for relaxation.

Lefkada: **Katouna Suites**. The view from this 10-suite adult-only hotel will stop you in your tracks; but if you can tear yourself away, the lights and delights of Lefkada Town are just a 15-minute taxi ride away.



Katouna Suites, Lefkada

EAST *and* WEST CRETE

Crete is large and diverse; you could happily spend months exploring all its corners. Combining a week in the unspoilt, far east with a stay in the buzzier west makes for a perfect introduction to the island. Fly into Heraklion, from where it's a two-and-a-half-hour drive to the east coast (you can stop at Istron bay for a dip en route). Allow four hours to transfer back to the west but break the drive at Knossos, once the heart of the Minoan civilisation. You can fly back from Chania to save another long drive.

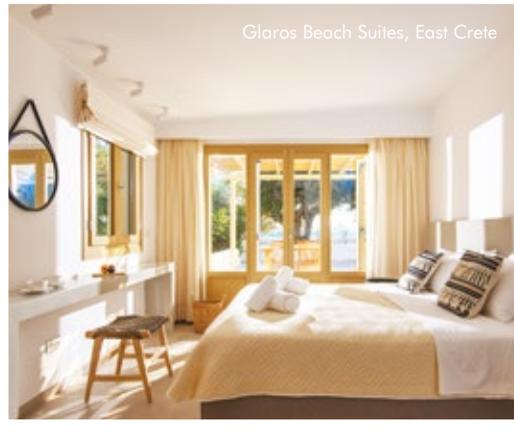
Where to stay...

East Crete: **Glaros Beach Suites**. Directly fronting Kouremenos Beach, there's nothing here to distract you but the sea and a few tavernas. Should you need a bit more hubbub, charming Palekastro village is a 10-minute drive away. A little further afield you have Vai, with its palm grove and Europe's only banana plantation.

West Crete: **Arosmari Village Hotel**. You're in the heart of the village of Vamos, famous for its crafts and culture. Susan, Arosmari's concierge, organises weekly not-to-be-missed classical music concerts in the hotel's own amphitheatre. Chania, just a 30-minute drive away, has Ottoman buildings and trendy restaurants, whilst the White Mountains beckon for glorious hikes.



Chania, West Crete



Glaros Beach Suites, East Crete

Glaros Beach Suites, East Crete



5 OF THE BEST

SIMPLY SIMPSON – A NEW COLLECTION

There's beauty in simplicity.



Apothikes Beach Suites

East Crete, 4 suites
Prices from £773pp*

Four charming waterfront suites let you slip back in time to rediscover simple seaside pleasures in this quiet corner of Crete.

Simply
SIMPSON



A Casarella

Porto Vecchio, 1 bedroom
Prices from £687pp*

A simple summer house with superb views set above Corsica's stunning Maora beach, only 10-minutes' drive from Bonifacio.



Saranda Beach House

Söğüt, 1 bedroom
Prices from £907pp*

The interiors are modest but this Turkish seafront location is sublime, complete with a private swimming and sunbathing platform.



Thea Cottage

Kefalonia, 1 bedroom
Prices from £1,038pp*

A prime water's edge position just 20 metres from the sea near charming Fiskardo makes this a wonderful car-free choice.



The Waterside Apartments

Paxos, 2 apartments
Prices from £909pp*

Set in the heart of tiny Loggos, a perfectly placed base to relax and observe the laid-back rhythms of island life.

To book your ideal Simply Simpson villa, visit simplontravel.com/simply-simpson or call our Destination Specialists.

*Based on the lowest priced available departure date as of 17 January 2020; for two people sharing, including flights, seven nights' accommodation and car hire or transfers.

WHEN ONLY THE BEST WILL DO

Simpson Exclusive

Our Exclusive collection is home to a handpicked selection of our finest properties; exquisite villas in outstanding locations, with immaculate interiors and matchless views.

Exclusive Concierge Sami DaSilva

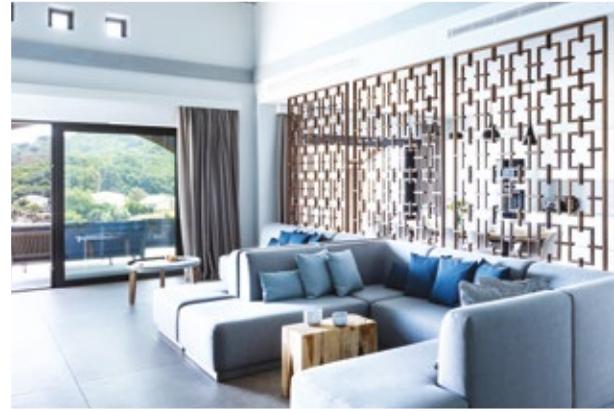
You're in expert hands with our Exclusive Concierge Sami DaSilva. When we say that we treat our guests as we'd like to be treated ourselves, we mean it. Among her many accolades, Sami organised the wedding of Graham Simpson's daughter in Paxos; a family affair perfected by her attention to detail and passion for people. When you book one of our exclusive villas, she'll be on hand to take care of the details from the outset, ensuring you experience the very best of everything.



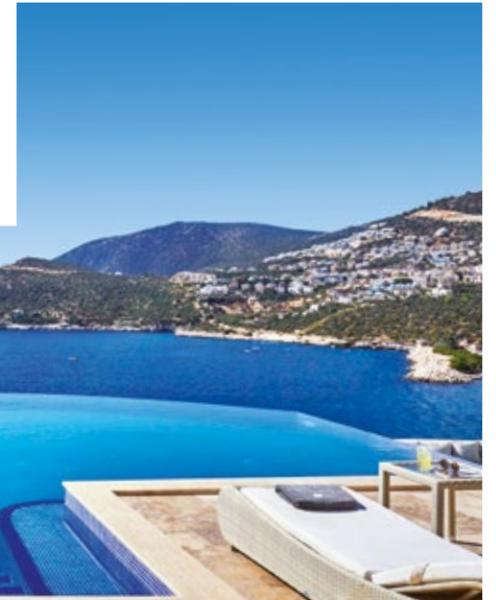
Villa Santa Giulia

Porto Vecchio & Bonifacio, Corsica

Sleek lines and contemporary design combine to give this high-end villa a real wow factor. The expansive interiors are enhanced by glass walls which retract to create a seamless flow between inside and out, and panoramic views towards Santa Giulia Beach give an exhilarating sense of being on top of the world. Sleeps 8.



SIMPSON
EXCLUSIVE



SIMPSON
EXCLUSIVE

The House @ Bella Mare

Corfu, Greece

For the ultimate indulgence, treat yourself to a stay at our sophisticated 7-bedroom villa within the grounds of the Bella Mare Hotel in north east Corfu. With an abundance of entertaining space and a private 30-metre infinity pool overlooking Avlaki Bay, this supremely stylish villa enjoys the best of all worlds. Sleeps 14.

Villa Canim

Kalkan, Turkey

Occupying one of the finest spots in Kalkan, Villa Canim boasts six luxurious en-suite bedrooms and a magnificent infinity pool that appears to melt into the azure waters of Kalkan Bay. Just a short stroll from the shops and restaurants of the Old Town, it also enjoys the use of a pathway leading directly to Palm Beach Club and the sea. Sleeps 12.



KAŞ is KING

Exotic, intriguing and flamboyant: Kaş is a vibrant melting pot of courtyard restaurants, bohemian shops and colourful bazaars. A distinctly Simpson destination, it's a jewel in the crown of the glittering Turquoise Coast.



Past and present...

Whitewashed Ottoman houses line the cobble streets of the Old Town, their balconies cascading with bougainvillea, and the ornate remains of a 2,000-year-old tomb feel remarkably commonplace amidst the gentle hubbub of day to day life. Lively markets brimming with fresh local produce, fragrant teas and exotic spices add to the spellbinding atmosphere and shops selling everything from lanterns to teapots, souvenirs to ancient artefacts create an intoxicating fusion of past and present.

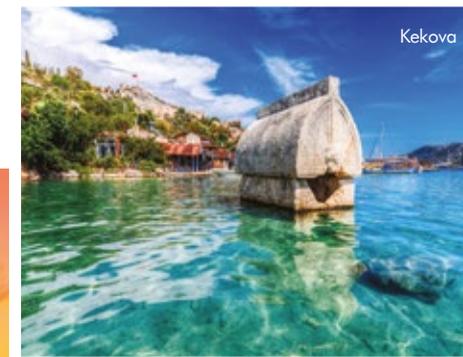
When in Kaş...

Play backgammon in a traditional teahouse, where the local brew is served strong and sweet in tulip-shaped glasses or dine Turkish-style in a pretty flower-filled courtyard and enjoy a traditional *mezze* selection while your main course is cooked to perfection on an open grill. Discover the 700-year-old amphitheatre and watch the sun set over the bay or take a boat trip over the sunken city of Kekova, an unforgettable reminder of the extraordinary richness of Turkey's past. Walkers will enjoy stepping out on the ancient Lycian Way, one of the world's great trails that passes through Kaş on its 500 kilometre route from Fethiye to Antalya, while those looking for more dynamic adventures will find a host of activities readily available, including kayaking, mountain biking and horse riding. Kaş is also one of the Mediterranean's premier diving destinations and the inviting sea temperatures and transparent water mean even novices can discover reefs and remains not far from shore.

A perfect peninsula...

The Kaş peninsula is a tranquil headland stretching out for six kilometres to the west of the town. Here, amidst the beauty of the natural landscape, you'll find our new **Lighthouse Loft Villas**, two elegant, contemporary retreats with infinity pools, private waterfronts, direct sea access and astonishing views across the bay. We're also delighted to welcome the perfectly situated **Deniz Feneri Lighthouse Hotel** to our collection, whose excellent private beach club is available to both villa and hotel guests. With taxis readily available and a regular *dolmuş* bus service into town, our new properties on this stunning peninsula offer a real opportunity to enjoy the best of all worlds; a glorious setting on the tantalising Turquoise Coast, with the rich diversity of Kaş just a short hop away.

“
Lively markets brimming with fresh local produce, fragrant teas and exotic spices add to the spellbinding atmosphere...



Kekova



Lighthouse Loft Ayisigi

NEW FOR 2020 in Kalkan

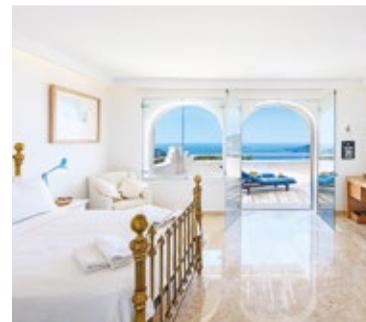
Five outstanding new properties on the Turquoise Coast.



Korsan Guney | Sleeps 10

Wooden steps lead from the grounds of this exceptional villa to a beach platform; swim, sunbathe and settle in to enjoy the spectacle of a Kalkan sunset.

Prices from £644pp*



House of Dreams Sleeps 4

A sun-warmed terrace, citrus-scented gardens, and sparkling swimming pool; this characterful private home makes a blissfully romantic base.

Prices from £735pp*



Sun, Sea and Sky Sleeps 10

The White Collection villas are a dazzling trio, each enjoying a private pool, spell-binding views and easy access to beaches and restaurants.

Prices from £885pp*



Villa Kral Sleeps 10

This stunning villa, perched above its own private waterfront is less than a minute from the Palm Beach Club and a 10-minute stroll from the harbour.

Prices from £753pp*



Kotti Evi Sleeps 10

Standing tall at the southern end of Kalkan, moments from the Mahal Beach Club, Kotti Evi has uninterrupted views over the brilliant blue of the bay.

Prices from £663pp*

TRENDS FOR YOUR HOLIDAY WARDROBE

From shibori to safari prints, our friends over at top beachwear boutique *Coco Bay* have rounded up summer 2020's most stylish and achievable fashion trends.

They share their favourite pieces to help you create your perfect look; by the pool, from beach to bar and all summer long...

1. Textured fabrics

It's touchy feely when it comes to swimwear styles for 2020. Luxurious ribbed fabrics with directional zig-zags and waves are popular, creating interest and providing flattering contours.

2. Shibori and ombre

Traditional techniques such as *shibori* and dip-dye are a popular choice for the new season, creating a relaxed yet striking holiday look. These sarong dresses are lightweight; the perfect throw-on after a hot day by the pool or on the beach.

3. Nature

This season is about taking inspiration from nature's textures and we're seeing beautiful soft prints, from classic animal to floral and bamboo. Our versatile summer dresses are all hand dyed and finished with natural elements, such as beading and shells.

4. Floral evolution

Florals are a natural choice for summer and each year we enjoy seeing the trend consistently reimagined. This summer, be sure to wear your flowers bold, bright and beautiful... wherever you are!

5. Belted swimwear

Belts are big news and we love the sophisticated, feminine edge that the belt brings to a bikini or one-piece. A belted waist creates a really flattering style and is guaranteed to give anyone's confidence a boost.

Use code **SIMPSON1520** for 15% off everything at cocobay.co.uk until 31 August 2020. One use per customer.

1 Florence Bikini £105



2 Tie-Dye Sarong £49



3 Butterfly Dress £108



4 Emerald Dress £75



5 Capri Sea Swimsuit £96



COCO BAY

CORSICAN BLUE...

it's good for you.

Research suggests that we really do feel healthier in more scenic locations and it seems that a blue vista is right up there when it comes to a positive impact on wellbeing. Corsica's white sands and exceptional water quality give rise to a shade of blue so sublime, it deserves its own name. We bring you... Corsican blue!



Saleccia Beach

TO THE NORTH...

Where else but Corsica can you expect to share the view of pearl-white coral sand and turquoise water with a herd of cows? Reachable by boat from Saint Florent, **Saleccia Beach** also benefits from mesmerising views across the gulf to the mountains of Cap Corse.

Stay nearby at: **Le Sirocco, sleeps 7**



Villa Santa Giulia

TO THE SOUTH...

Even by Corsican standards, the colour of the water at **Santa Giulia Beach** near Porto Vecchio is remarkable, rivalling anything you might find in the Caribbean. Hire a pedalo to get out into the deeper water, where the depth and clarity is almost dizzying.

Stay nearby at: **Villa Santa Giulia, sleeps 8**



Santa Giulia Beach



Pinarello Beach

TO THE EAST...

Regarded as one of the Mediterranean's finest, **Pinarello Beach** is lapped by water almost too blue to be true. A gentle shelf backed by soft white sand is a sure-fire recipe for a relaxing day by the sea and the beachfront restaurants in Pinarello village are a delight.

Stay nearby at: **Alto di Pinarello, sleeps 2-6**



Campomoro Beach



Alto di Pinarello

TO THE WEST...

At the southern end of the Valinco Gulf, the beach at **Campomoro** is one of the most peaceful in Corsica. The warm, shallow waters and golden sand make it an ideal spot for younger children, and outside of July and August you'll have it almost to yourselves.

Stay nearby at: **U Scudu, sleeps 6**



U Scudu

5 OF THE BEST

ROMANTIC VILLAS IN CORSICA

Just for two.



Villa Barbarossa

Porto Vecchio, 1 bedroom
Prices from £1,177pp*

A pretty stone-built villa in a secluded vineyard setting; generously-sized and ideally located between Porto Vecchio and Bonifacio.



A Muredda

Porto Vecchio, 1 bedroom
Prices from £737pp*

Tucked away amongst the herb-scented *maquis*, a delightful hideaway for two within easy reach of the beach.



Mon Cabanon

Porto Vecchio, 1 bedroom
Prices from £737pp*

Full of country cottage charm with a dash of vintage chic and glorious views, just 10-minutes from Porto Vecchio town.



U Piazzale

Calvi, 2 bedrooms
Prices from £862pp*

Timeless and romantic, a restored shepherd's cottage with a stunning curved swimming pool and spectacular sea views.



Villa l'Alta

The Valinco, 1 bedroom
Prices from £977pp*

A sweet retreat with a plunge pool and spectacular views from the bedroom; slide back the glass and let the sunshine in.



STAY LONGER

When one week isn't enough and two is a little too long, why not extend your seven-night villa holiday with a few nights in a boutique hotel? With flexible stays available at many of our Simpson and Partner Hotels, it may be just the answer. Not only will you see more of the country you love, you'll often find it pays to travel mid-week when there's a little less competition for flights.

A perfect fit...



10 nights in Aquitaine

The relaxed Californian charm of a villa holiday in Hossegor is perfectly complemented by a three-night stay in **Hotel La Villa l'Arche** in the charming village of Bidart, just a few kilometres from glamorous Biarritz.



10 nights in Corsica

Pinarello Beach has been named one of the finest in the Mediterranean and **Hôtel le Pinarello** enjoys prime position. Three nights here makes a wonderful addition to a week in one of our villas in the Valinco or further north towards Calvi.



10 nights in Greece

If time is on your side, why not break up your journey to Crete and enjoy three nights in Athens before flying on to Sitia in the east of the island for a relaxing week at our **Glaros Beach Suites**, just a half-hour drive from the airport.

To book your romantic villa in Corsica, visit [simpsontravel.com/corsica-holidays-couples](https://www.simpsontravel.com/corsica-holidays-couples) or call our Destination Specialists.

INDULGE YOUR SENSES

at our Simpson Hotels

Touch... luxury linens and sumptuous beds.



Masseria Le Torri, Puglia

Taste... local produce, prepared with love.



Kalkan Regency, Kalkan



The White Company Lime & Bay scent

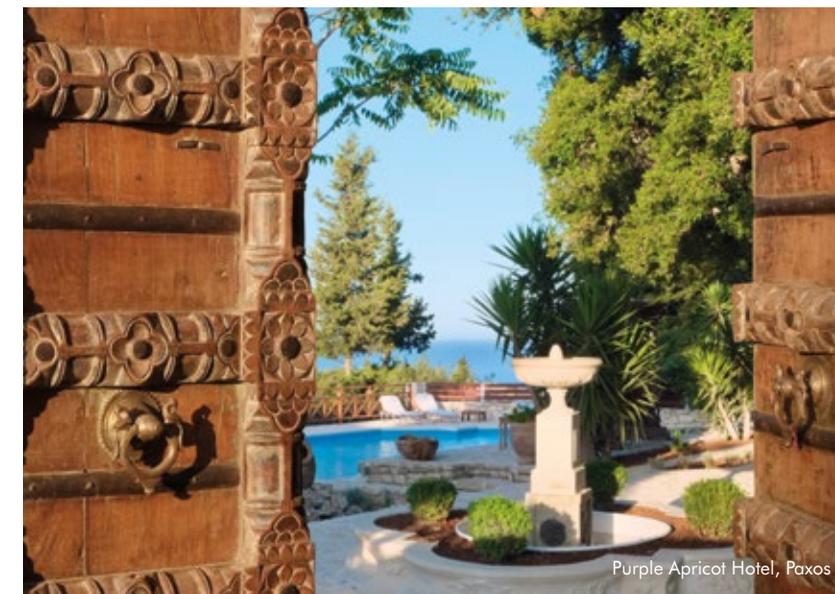
Smell... the uplifting scent of Lime & Bay.

Sight... sublime locations, matchless views.



Katouna Suites, Lefkada

Sound... the song of cicadas; the rhythm of the sea.



Purple Apricot Hotel, Paxos

Distinctive, intimate and truly individual, our boutique hotels never compromise on the personalised service that makes your stay a pleasure from start to finish.

Exclusive to Simpson Travel, each has been carefully chosen for its idyllic location, so whether you're metres from the golden sands of the Mediterranean or gazing out over Tuscany's rolling hills, you'll find the same thoughtfully designed accommodation, a dedicated Simpson Concierge and the attention to detail that makes all the difference.



Sample the scent of summer...

Celebrating our new partnership, The White Company's Lime & Bay comes to Simpson Hotels. This evocative fusion of citrus and bay with warming notes of jasmine and patchouli will delight your senses and linger long in the memory.

Touch the limes to release the scent.



THE WHITE COMPANY
LONDON

MASSERIA LE TORRI

In 2019, our very own Masseria Le Torri was crowned the best boutique hotel in Puglia by *Sky One Italy*. This year, we're celebrating with a series of wellness weeks and activities designed to enhance its winning formula. With yoga, massage, cookery classes, cycling and more, 2020 at the masseria is all about sensory pleasures. Add our exclusive wellness package to your holiday for just £185 per person. For full details visit simpsontravel.com/wellness-weeks.



News from our Simpson Hotels



Bademli Bahçe Hotel, Bozburun Peninsula

Set in an almond grove within walking distance of the picturesque village of Söğüt in Turkey, our new Adult Only Bademli Bahçe Hotel faces the Greek island of Symi and enjoys beautiful private gardens with breathtaking sea views at every turn.



GK Beach Hotel, Crete

A few extra touches for 2020 include comfy new sofa-beds in our family suites, hammocks and bean bags for carefree lounging in the gardens, beach bells for bar service to your sunbed, and Beach Life, our complimentary childcare programme in July and August.



Korsan Suites, Kalkan

The Korsan Suites combine the generous space and facilities of an apartment with the first-class hospitality of a boutique hotel. In 2020, all guests will receive a very warm welcome with an invitation to enjoy a complimentary meal in the excellent restaurant.

Introducing... HOTEL PANZANO



A hidden paradise

With so much in its favour, you can imagine our delight when we found a Simpson Hotel right at the heart of this feted town; a hidden paradise, so exquisitely discrete you might not even notice it was there. Yet just moments from the main square, **Hotel Panzano** is a place of elegance and serenity, where simplicity reigns and life's gentle pleasures are the order of the day. The astonishing view from the hotel terraces showcases the very best of the Tuscan landscape; an achingly romantic panorama where neat vineyards border ancient woodland, stone farmhouses nestle amidst fertile olive groves and the silhouettes of distant mountain ridges rise as an indomitably proud backdrop to it all.

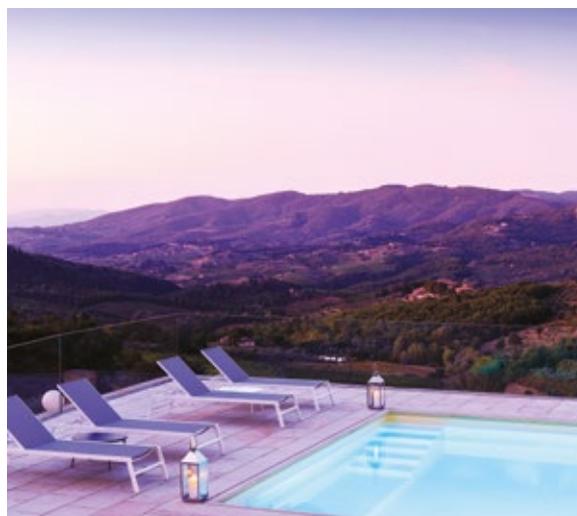


“

*There's a lovely local expression, **con calma**, meaning 'calmly' or 'easy does it'... Hotel Panzano epitomises the sentiment.*

A Chianti classic

The small hilltop town of Panzano sits halfway between Florence and Siena, in the beautiful Chianti Classico region of Tuscany, home to some of the most exceptional boutique wineries in the world. It's rapidly gaining a reputation as *the* place to stay, due, in part, to its auspicious position between Florence, Siena and San Gimignano – the aptly named Golden Triangle. But the culinary genius of local celebrity Dario Cecchini is another big draw. A third-generation butcher, restaurateur and friend of Jamie Oliver, he is the proud owner of three excellent restaurants in the town; famed as much for their food as for the infectious ebullience of their proprietor!



Easy does it

There's a lovely local expression, *con calma*, meaning 'calmly' or 'easy does it'. A luxurious adult-only retreat for the most part (though available in July and August to rent as a private villa) Hotel Panzano epitomises the sentiment. Life within feels just as it's meant to be; unhurried and harmonious. Yet beyond the gates, the best of Italian living awaits, with artisan shops, wine bars, restaurants and vineyards just a short stroll away. And this may leave you in a quandary. With accommodation so inviting, views so captivating and a lifestyle so absorbing, you might find it difficult to tear yourself away. But as any guidebook will tell you, Chianti's evocative landscapes, golden towns and hilltop villages are unmissable; and all are on your doorstep. What to do? Naturally, the choice is yours, but whether you simply put your feet up and drink in the soul-stirring views or venture out and catch the local bus into Florence, may we recommend you do it the Tuscan way – *con calma*.

SIMPSON KIDS

Our younger guests share their thoughts...



George, aged 6
Periyali Kids' Club

"I love Periyali. Everybody is so much fun. Barbecue night is the best and I also liked fishing with my Dad on the beach."



Leo, aged 3
Mousses Kids' Club

"I liked the swimming pool and lunch and going on the boat. Daddy was Captain. I want to go back again."



Mila, aged 2
Periyali Kids' Club

"I liked the ice cream and singing with the children. I love Mummy and Daddy and all the things on holiday!"



Lily, aged 9
Bella Mare Hotel

"I loved Bella Mare because they had lots of fun toys and we made friendship bracelets. I made so many friends that we were never bored. People who came brought lots of inflatables so we could all have fun and everybody shared. There were lots of different flavours of ice cream too. My sister Evie said her favourite thing was the ice cream, the ice cream was delicious."

Carlos, aged 7
Mousses Kids' Club

"Mousses had really big gardens and some lovely fruit trees. Every few days we got to watch a movie with popcorn – we even had a popcorn fight – and my parents got free time to themselves."



- Villas with complimentary infant packs and rash vests
- Family Favourite villas with garden games and toys
- Crèches and Kids' Clubs for children aged 6 months to 11 years
- Beach Life – complimentary childcare in Corfu and Crete

Find your perfect family holiday at simpsontravel.com/simpson-kids

TEENAGE PICKS

Kalkan, Kalkan... So good she went there twice! Simpson Traveller Emily Harris (15) tells us why it's the perfect teenage destination.

As a general rule, my family never go back to the same place twice, but we all loved Kalkan so much that, in 2019, we broke our own rule and returned for a second summer to spend two weeks at the Kalkan Regency on Turkey's glorious Turquoise Coast. Kalkan suits everyone: for my Dad there are enough views to paint for eternity, and for my Mum there are colourful shops selling ceramics, scarves, jewellery and countless 'designer' handbags. For my brother and me (18 and 15), it has everything a teenager could wish for.

There are a variety of beach clubs close to town, including Indigo (free entry for Simpson Travel guests) and several others just a short boat ride across the bay. Our favourite was the Mahal Beach Club with its series of oceanfront, olive-tree-lined terraces. You can read, sunbathe and snorkel or, if you're feeling energetic, paddle around in a canoe.

The Old Town is buzzing with rooftop restaurants and bars, plus a few open-air nightclubs. It's a really safe place to be, so I could go to the clubs with my brother, then walk or taxi back to the hotel and play pool with friends until the early hours of the morning.

The holiday included a boat trip on Poseidon, the hotel's magnificent traditional gulet, and we toured around the bays and stopped off for snorkelling. We saw turtles, sea snakes and countless multi-coloured fish, and at one point a small motorboat drew up alongside selling beautiful handmade sarongs and kaftans! I never would have imagined sea-shopping back in rainy London.

There are day trips to the Greek island of Kastellorizo or the neighbouring town of Kaş, plus the opportunity to paraglide over the bay. In the hotel itself there's a pool (with swim-up bar), spa, gym, table tennis table, Turkish bath – which everyone enjoyed – and even mezze cooking lessons with Mama. By the end of the first week, we were on first-name terms with all the staff and quickly made friends with the other teens around the pool.

Our second visit to Kalkan was just as amazing as the first. My vote is to make it a hat-trick!



Draco Penthouse Suite, Kalkan Regency



Kalkan Regency

EXCLUSIVE READER OFFER

Quote SIMPSON2020 and enjoy 20% off*

SUNUVA
KIDS UV SWIMWEAR & BEACHWEAR



Simpson Kids UV protection rash vests

For 2020, every family booking with children aged 6 months to 10 years old will receive a complimentary sun protection Simpson Travel rash vest made by Sunuva.

*Valid until 30 September 2020 on all full-priced items. Not valid on sale items or gift voucher purchases. One use per customer.

5 OF THE BEST

FAMILY FAVOURITE VILLAS

All our family favourites have a child-friendly layout, spacious grounds for outdoor play and a box of toys and garden games on standby, just perfect for when the pool alone is not enough.



Villa S'arieta

Pollença, 4 bedrooms

Prices from £1,549pp*

A finca-style villa with expansive gardens and generous pool, just a short drive from Pollença and Mallorca's sandy beaches.



Sapphire

Sivota, 3 bedrooms

Prices from £1,886pp*

Situated on the Greek mainland, with superlative views across to Corfu; book your friends into neighbouring Indigo for double the fun.



Villa d'Ilbarritz

Aquitaine, 5 bedrooms

Accom only from £5,995**

Enclosed private gardens, with a large pool and fantastic run-around room for active kids, just five minutes from the glamorous French resort of Biarritz.



A Stellina

Porto Vecchio, 3 bedrooms

Prices from £1,860pp*

Perched on a hilltop above Corsica's La Rondinara bay with space for all the family, the toughest daily decision here is 'beach or pool'?



Villa Da Vinci

Tuscany, 7 bedrooms

Accom only from £6,730**

Families have gathered at this magnificent spot for centuries; bring your nearest and dearest to enjoy spellbinding views of classic Chianti.

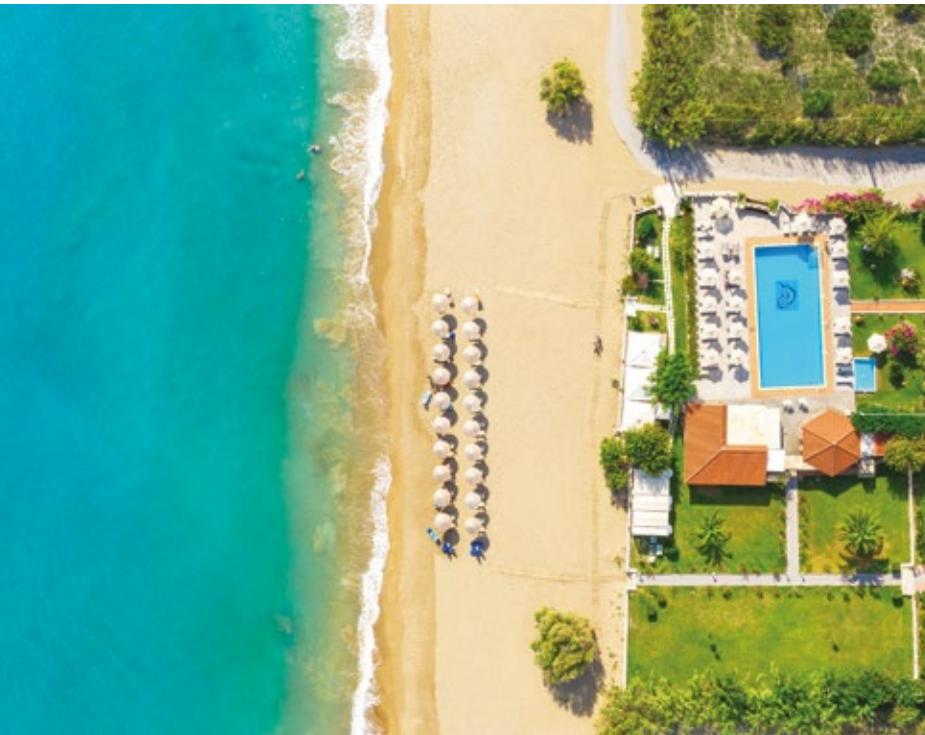
To book your Family Favourite villa, visit [simpsontravel.com/family-favourites](https://www.simpsontravel.com/family-favourites) or call our Destination Specialists.

*Based on the lowest priced available departure date as of 17 January 2020; for two adults and two children sharing, including flights, seven nights' accommodation and car hire or transfers.

**Based on the lowest priced available departure date as of 17 January 2020; accommodation only.

SIMPSON BEACH LIFE

Bring me sunshine...



In July and August, we make beach life a breeze with a complimentary programme of supervised activities for children aged 5 to 11. Available at our beachfront hotels in Crete and Corfu, parents can kick back and unwind while children make new friends and enjoy pool games, treasure hunts, movie nights and more under the expert supervision of our UK-qualified nannies. Relax with a drink at the bar while the youngsters make a splash, or join them out on the water and prove that youth is wasted on the young.

GK Beach Hotel, Crete

A beachfront position and a mountain backdrop, served with the finest Cretan hospitality.



Bella Mare Hotel, Corfu

Stylish family rooms and suites on one of north east Corfu's most beautiful beaches. Also available at Villa Eva, Villa Georgia and The House @ Bella Mare.



solar buddies
Sunscreen applicator

Solar Buddies' child-friendly sunscreen applicators allow you to use the UVA and UVB creams or lotions of your choice and apply them simply and effectively without the fear of costly spills and mishaps. Children love to help, thanks to the unique design which renders those sticky battles for sun safety a thing of the past.



Use code **SIMP10** for 10% off everything at solarbuddies.co.uk until 31 October 2020. One use per customer.



Kalkan Regency, Kalkan



TAKE FIVE

Karen Beddow, mother of three and editor of award-winning travel blog *Mini Travellers*, negotiates the difficulties of travelling as a family of five...

When you're a family of five it can be difficult to find accommodation that ticks all the boxes, particularly if you're looking for a hotel. So many seem to have rooms that only sleep four, but Simpson Travel has lots of options when you're holidaying with three children. Here are some I'd highly recommend.

During the school holidays, why not take a look at the **Kalkan Regency** hotel in Turkey? Adult-only for the majority of the year, it turns into a family-friendly haven in the school holidays, with a couple of suites able to accommodate five and a number of comfortable interconnecting rooms. The food is incredible in Kalkan, the skies and sea are a brilliant blue and the people are a delight. Even better, you can experience the whole trip without a car and walk to the local beach clubs and restaurants.

Don't miss... Barbecue night at the hotel. The food is exceptional – the kids loved it!

At **GK Beach Hotel** in Crete, you'll not only find family suites and a penthouse sleeping six, but a complimentary programme of supervised activities for children aged 5-11 (Beach Life). A perfect balance of kids and parents ensures the sunset drinks can last all evening and a dedicated hotel minibus will take you for a memorable day at the waterpark.

Don't miss... A trip to the Venetian harbour in Chania.



“At GK Beach Hotel in Crete, you'll not only find family suites and a penthouse sleeping six, but a complimentary programme of supervised activities for children aged 5-11 (Beach Life).”

Bella Mare Hotel in Corfu offers family suites and interconnecting rooms, many of which have their own kitchenette. Like GK Beach Hotel, there's also complimentary childcare in the form of Beach Life and you can see what my eldest daughter thought about her week at Bella Mare on page 40. I can't say I disagree with any of her comments; though I might have put excellent staff above ice creams!

Don't miss... A sundowner in Agios Stephanos.

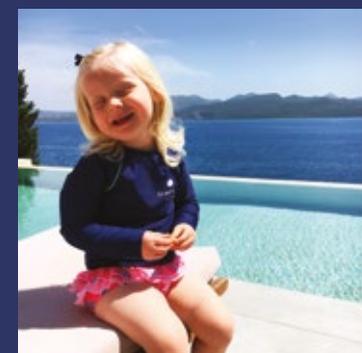
Mousses Crèche and Kids' Club in Lefkada is brilliant and has two villas for families of five, each with private pool and access to the clubs and on-site bar and restaurant. I have very fond memories of cooking the children a little pasta, opening a bottle of wine and ordering our supper to be delivered later from the restaurant – it really was the perfect balance with a young family.

Don't miss... Seven Islands Taverna – on the beach about 10-minutes away.

If you're not looking for professional childcare and prefer the privacy of a villa, it's well worth taking a look at **Family Favourite villas** or those offering **Simpson Family Extras**. You'll find family-friendly layouts, garden games, boxes of toys, complimentary infant packs and gated pools. Or you might simply prefer to look at the **Experience More** collection and source a villa with a private chef available, ensuring everyone enjoys a relaxing holiday.

“Share...
and share a like...”

Share holiday photos of your little ones in their rash vests on Instagram or Facebook and tag them **#SimpsonKids** – we'll feature our favourites and share the ❤️



#SimpsonKids

Instagram icon /simpsontravel

IDEAL INTERIORS

IDEAL

1. adjective: ideal

Satisfying one's conception of what is perfect; most suitable.

The old adage is true – when it comes to interiors, beauty's definitely in the eye of the beholder. One person's minimalist haven is another's impersonal shell and what some may think rustic and charming, others think old and *passé*. Fortunately, we've visited every one of our properties and can help you find somewhere as individual as you are. Whether you're after a traditional waterfront idyll or a contemporary designer villa, our Destination Specialists will make sure your holiday home is ideal.

Images from left to right: Purple Apricot Hotel, Paxos, Greece; Villa Favorita, Puglia, Italy; Simpson Secret – Akyaka, Turkey; Villa Santa Giulia, Porto Vecchio, Corsica; The Rou Estate, Corfu, Greece; Villa Oliveto, Corfu, Greece.



SHARING CRETE

with MasterChef Irimi Tzortzoglou



MasterChef champion Irimi Tzortzoglou has lived in England for 40 years. Last summer she returned to the country of her birth to enjoy a multi-generational break with her family.

Western Crete has always held a special magic for me, perhaps because coming from Heraklion it seemed (and was) pretty remote until the northern axis road was constructed and transport became more widely available. It appeals for its unique landscape (greener than that of the rest of the island as in the winter months it benefits from more rainfall) and the local produce of chestnuts, oranges and dairy for which it has always been known. For as long as I can remember I have been interested in archaeology and architecture, so the Venetian influences in and around the harbour in Chania also add to the charm.

Last summer I enjoyed the great pleasure of sharing some of the region's many highlights with my extended family, spending a blissful week in **Villa Vereniki**. My step-grandchildren, Ava and Noah, soon embraced the Greek way of life, staying up much later than they do at home. The climate draws you outdoors and the best time of the day is arguably the evening, when the extreme heat of the day has passed. They loved the pool and just adored the opportunity to stay out late and play. I kept waiting for them to get bored with jumping in, climbing out and jumping in again – but they seemed to have an inexhaustible appetite. “Just one more time” was their most-used expression!



“... I enjoyed the great pleasure of sharing some of the region's many highlights with my extended family...”



The flip side was that they woke relatively late, and as a family we could enjoy a lazy start to the day. I experimented with some baking, perfecting a bread loaf from one of the other islands with the help of the little ones, who were very keen to be involved – on the strict understanding that they were then entitled to eat the results!

Our villa was less than half-an-hour's drive from Chania and naturally, since food is my passion, I was drawn towards its lively covered market. What I love most is that whilst there are the unavoidable stalls selling the usual tourist tat, there are also people who have been working there for decades, selling their homemade produce and things I remember from my childhood, like salted cod, salted anchovies, wild herbs and snails. It was exciting to see that these things don't change and particularly enchanting, I found the fact that visitors like ourselves were welcomed and served with the same reverence as locals who have clearly been shopping there all their lives. And finally, the romantic in me loves the notion of people finding all their food provisions under one roof and sitting to have a coffee or a bite to eat with friends in a weekly ritual they've had for years. The best kind of psychotherapy there is – and free!

We visited Iordanis (established in 1924) for a Greek coffee and their famous *Bougatsa*, which I have since made with the children; filo filled with fresh sour *mizithra* cheese, baked and sprinkled with cinnamon and sugar. It's extremely popular with the thousands of people who visit Iordanis every year and now a firm favourite with my family too.

My favourite dish from western Crete though, is the little round flat *pitas* from Sfakia which can be either savoury (with wild fennel) or sweet (with *mizithra* cheese) served hot with honey. I also always buy *pichtogalo* – a creamy, slightly sour soft cheese used in Greek salad or on *dakos* instead of feta, utterly delicious!

We spent many hours in Chania – walking, exploring the shops and enjoying a drink or meal by the seafront as we watched the world go by. One evening, we finished off the day with a visit to a beautiful beach on the Akrotiri Peninsula, just east of Chania.



The beach shelves so gently that even 30 metres or so from the shore, the sea is still only knee-deep; Ava and Noah absolutely loved it! They were in the water until it went dark, before we finally persuaded them to go for dinner. We ate in a beautifully situated taverna overlooking the bay and enjoyed fresh octopus and another local favourite, *maridoulas*, similar to whitebait – fried and eaten whole. Before returning to the villa, we couldn't resist another trip through Chania, which at night is vibrant and buzzing. And, of course, we were home in time for the children to enjoy “just one more” pre-midnight dip in the pool!

IRINI COOKS

Elderflower, Greek yoghurt, strawberry and prosecco gel dessert

“During our week in Villa Vereniki, I made a child-friendly version of a delicious summer pudding. Here's a more grown-up version that goes down a treat in hot weather after a classic Greek meal. I've used elderflower but feel free to substitute any cordial you prefer.” ~Irimi

What you'll need (2-litre jelly mould or bowl)

For the prosecco gel

- 500ml of prosecco
- 5 gelatine leaves
- 50g of caster sugar
- 100ml of water

For the strawberry gel

- 500ml of strawberry purée (made from approx. 800g of fresh strawberries)

- 5 gelatine leaves
- 40g of sugar

For the yoghurt and elderflower gel

- 300g of Greek yoghurt
- 8 gelatine leaves
- Zest of a lime
- 100ml of water
- 100ml of elderflower cordial

What to do

For the prosecco gel

1. Submerge the gelatine leaves in cold water and leave for a few minutes to bloom.
2. Place the water and sugar in a saucepan and heat until the sugar is dissolved. Squeeze the water from the gelatine leaves and add them to the hot syrup until everything has completely dissolved.
3. Add the prosecco to the mix and let it cool before placing in the mould. Add some chopped fresh strawberries to the mould.

For the strawberry gel

4. Bloom the gelatine leaves as before.
5. Blitz the 800g of strawberries in a blender and pass through a sieve to obtain a seedless purée.
6. Place the strawberry purée and sugar in a pan and heat up gently to dissolve the sugar. Don't let it reach boiling point.
7. Add the squeezed gelatine leaves, mix well and let cool for ten minutes.
8. Pour into the mould (over the prosecco gel) and let it set.



For the yoghurt and elderflower gel

9. Start by blooming the gelatine leaves.
10. In a saucepan, heat the water, add the gelatine leaves and stir until dissolved. Pour the mixture into a bowl and add all the other ingredients, mixing well.
11. Leave to cool for a few minutes. Pour into the mould (over the strawberry gel) and let it set.

Irimi's book *Under The Olive Tree: Recipes from my Greek Kitchen* will be published in July 2020.



“ And to serve...

Immerse the sides of the mould in some hot water for a few seconds until you see the edge of the dessert come loose. Turn over onto a platter. Decorate with fruit, flowers, nuts or small meringues.

Have fun and let your creativity flow! ~Irimi

5 OF THE BEST

VILLAS FOR LARGER GROUPS

Celebrate with family and friends.



Dolce & Toscana

Tuscany, 6 bedrooms
Accom only from £3,030**

Dressed to impress in true Italian style, this spacious home combines rural tranquillity with easy access to the unspoilt Maremma coastline.



Mas des Lavandes

Provence, 7 bedrooms
Accom only from £5,200**

From lavender-filled gardens to Provençal-blue shutters, this grand country house for 12 rises admirably to any special occasion.



Casa Regina

Corsica, 6 bedrooms
Prices from £472pp*

An immaculate and super-stylish villa for two or three families or a group of friends, with a heated swimming pool and outstanding views.



Villa Oliveto

Corfu, 4 bedrooms
Prices from £1,371pp*

This grand hillside property enjoys wonderfully elegant entertaining space and sensational views across Corfu's dazzling north east coastline.



Caponet

Mallorca, 4 bedrooms
Prices from £462pp*

Tucked away beside the iconic Calvary steps in Pollença, yet within walking distance of all the Old Town attractions, complete with private pool and garden.

To book your large group villa, visit [simpsontravel.com/large-group-villas](https://www.simpsontravel.com/large-group-villas) or call our Destination Specialists.

*Based on the lowest priced available departure date as of 17 January 2020; for maximum occupancy, including flights, seven nights' accommodation and car hire or transfers.

**Based on the lowest priced available departure date as of 17 January 2020; accommodation only.

Q&A

Last summer, we caught up with Simpson Traveller Hugh Bonneville on the idyllic island of Meganissi, enjoying a little respite before the press tour and global release of the *Downton Abbey* movie...



You live in the beautiful South Downs. Could anywhere else ever be home?

I am passionate about the area in which I live. My most vivid moments of contentment are when I'm up there looking out over Hampshire, Sussex and, on a clear day, the Isle of Wight. But I also love Somerset and Dorset. I spent a lot of time in that area as a kid. My parents had a cottage outside Sherborne for a while, where I was at school for five years, so its landscape, accents and weather patterns are very familiar to me and I find them rather comforting. Perhaps one day I'd like a home with a view of the sea, from which we all emerged once upon a time.

Why Meganissi?

I hadn't been to Greece for decades and had always wanted to return. I visited Athens and Aegina on a prep school trip in the late '70s; I remember thinking our Classics teacher looked old enough to have taught Greek to Homer.

More recently I sailed the Aegean for a week with a pal. Now, with a teenager and a handful of his school friends in tow, I had specific requirements in mind. I'd never heard of Meganissi but once I looked it up, I had a hunch it would be special. Talking to friends who'd visited convinced me. Out of the way, but accessible. Small, quiet, yet full of character. Just my cup of tea.

First impressions count.

What were yours?

The route from the airport at Preveza teases you along the east coast of Lefkada. Hotels and villas jostle on the shoreline, eager to dip their toes in the sea – and who can blame them? We were getting closer.

We came to a halt at a quayside and looked out towards the neighbouring islands, stretching their arms after a good lunch, the red water taxi growing larger as it approached from the horizon.



Villa Mimi, Meganissi, Greece



“Meganissi is not a one-eyed street cat” she scolded, “it’s a beautiful, friendly dog that hasn’t been to the groomer.”

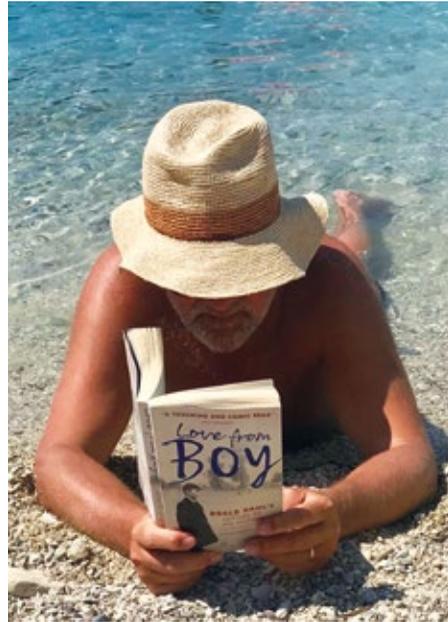
There's something about reaching a destination by boat that I find intoxicating. However rapid your journey has been so far, a final leg by sea makes the pulse beat to a different rhythm... hopefully – unless you arrive in a storm – a slower one.

Easing into the port of Vathy in the late afternoon sun felt like a long, slow, soothing exhalation. Tiny wooden fishing boats and larger sailing yachts, stern-to along the quay; cafés and bars dotted along the shore road leading to the little square. Shoulders were well and truly down by the time we stepped ashore and were greeted by two Simpson Travel staff and with an even bigger smile by Paris, with the keys for the hire car. The drive from the port, up through the village of Katomeri to the hinterland, requires cautious navigation – paint-flecked scars on the whitewashed walls of the hugger-mugger houses highlighting the trickier corners.

Maybe the purring, one-eyed street cat we passed was a figment of my imagination, but my first impression includes it – an island that's resilient and content with its lot, bumps and scrapes and all. My wife thought this description way too harsh. “Meganissi is not a one-eyed street cat” she scolded, “it's a beautiful, friendly dog that hasn't been to the groomer.”

What makes the perfect villa holiday?

Space and seclusion within four friendly walls. Room to swing an elephant, with the intimacy of a home-from-home. Whatever the size of the group, cabin fever can become a reality, so the means to break out and explore is advisable. On our trip to Meganissi, we were blessed with astonishing sunrises and sunsets, with blue skies in between so that we could have quite happily lounged all day by the infinity pool, gazing over the sparkling sea. Nevertheless, trips to the beaches and far-flung tavernas – which aren't very far at all on an island as small as Meganissi – were welcome key changes in the song of the day.



Swimming – sea or pool?

With the fishes, every time.

Most remote place you've been recognised?

Stopping to buy snacks at a shack on a dusty track in Rajasthan, India, I noticed a young lad aged about ten, shadowing me round the shop, studying me closely. Having been in this situation before I fully expected his opening line to be a question about my nationality, followed by an offer of his incomparable services as a tour guide. He approached me with beaming eyes. Here it comes, I thought. "Mr Brown!" he exclaimed. He was a devoted fan of the *Paddington* movies.

Childhood travel?

I have vivid memories of a camping holiday in France by a lake. I can't have been older than three or four because I was in the tent having a compulsory afternoon nap, while my parents and older siblings were down at the water's edge, paddling or canoeing or whatever. The piercing scream I let out as the wasp stung me brought a Belgian couple sprinting to my rescue from two tents away. Dad arrived seconds later. The Belgian couple turned out to be doctors with industrial strength ointments in their first aid bag and the crisis was soon over. This chance encounter led to the Belgian couple becoming lifelong friends. We'd visit them in Ghent and they'd stay with us in England; my parents went on spring walking holidays with them in the Alps. They were two of the kindest people I've ever met. I still hate wasps, though.

Worst holiday you've ever had?

Four days in a dank cottage in Galway with perma-drizzle frosting the windows, which were already wet with condensation. That was pretty bleak. The other one was a Christmas in the Maldives. An incredible (and incredibly pricey) hotel where my wife and son were both ill for the first week and were confined to bed with the curtains shut. It was the most expensive sick bay on the planet. Then on the eighth day a relative died and I had to fly home

"...the shining highlight for me was the villa experience itself. The villages and beaches are completely unspoilt and utterly charming too..."

Villa Mimi, Meganissi, Greece



Eagle's Nest, Paxos, Greece

"...the Eagle's Nest on Paxos keeps waving at me. I wonder how much longer I can resist its smile."



alone leaving my family in the sunshine.

Top tips on travelling with teenagers?

I think you have to accept that you're likely not to get it right whatever you do, because you're a parent. Sporting activities and outings aside, nightlife, at least for the older teens, is a major consideration. So, a bar or club not too far from the hotel/villa is a must. Ideally, there should be a choice of at least two, so that if the Embarrassing Parents turn up, the Young can activate Plan B.

Top of your Simpson wish-list?

Whenever I look at the Simpson Travel website for a summer hideaway, the spectacular, expansive glamour of the **Eagle's Nest** on Paxos keeps waving at me. I wonder how much longer I can resist its smile. I've also noticed **Hotel Panzano** in Tuscany is new to Simpson Travel and looks wonderful. It says Adult Only. The teenagers can lump it.

Highlights of Meganissi?

We stayed in **Villa Mimi** which, with its sister **Villa Xen** next door, has to be one of the best-appointed villas I've ever stayed in. It's been lovingly built by its half-Brit, half-Greek owner, with interior design by wife and daughter; a truly family affair. So, the shining highlight for me was the villa experience itself. The villages and beaches are completely unspoilt and utterly charming too – I particularly enjoyed lounging around with a beer at Fanari Beach. We also hired a rib for a day and toured the peninsulas and coves of nearby islands, stopping for lunch in the port of Kalamos and strolling through the silent village, before swimming in yet another isolated bay. Unforgettable.



5 OF THE BEST

SIMPSON SECRETS

Do you promise not to tell?



Anti Paxos

1 bedroom
Prices from £1,440pp*

Blessed with breathtaking views and its own small pool, this Greek island hideaway offers a unique opportunity to relax and leave the beaten track behind.



Islamlar

1 bedroom
Prices from £760pp*

A light, bright home-from-home with wonderful sea views, a short walk from the traditional Turkish shops and restaurants of charming Islamlar.



Mallorca

1 bedroom
Prices from £682pp*

Wonderfully private and picturesque, our bougainvillea-draped country house is perfect for those looking for a more authentic slice of island life.



Southern Corsica

1 bedroom
Prices from £687pp*

A place for purists and explorers; swim in the rock pools, hike the mountain paths or retreat to the beach by car in just 15 minutes.



Corfu

1 bedroom
Prices from £1,065pp*

Perched amongst olive trees above the calm, aquamarine waters of Nissaki Bay; a stylish contemporary escape with hypnotic views.

THE IONIAN ISLANDS COME TO

INDIGO ISLAND



“

*Indigo Island is a state of mind...
Simpson Travel takes you there.*

Lulu and Tarty, founders of Indigo Island.



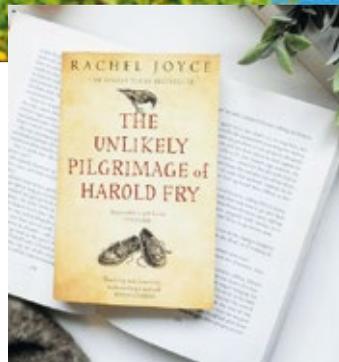
This year, brand partners Indigo Island are celebrating our collaboration with the launch of their Ionian Collection and an exclusive offer for *On Travel* readers. Their signature shirts, hand printed on the finest Indian cotton, are guaranteed to add some effortless style to your holiday wardrobe.

Enjoy **15% off** at indigoisland.co.uk when you quote **SIMPSON15** before 31 August 2020. One use per customer.

To book your Simpson Secret villa, visit simpsontravel.com/simpson-secrets or call our Destination Specialists.



Gaios



THE JOY OF THE UNKNOWN

Rachel Joyce, bestselling author of *The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry*, shares her impressions of Paxos.

I will be straight with you. I am not a good traveller. I am frightened of planes, I am frightened of boats, I worry about not being able to speak the language, of making mistakes, of being out of my depth – both physically and metaphorically. I am not the obvious person to do a piece about travel.

Last summer, I was struggling with a book I was writing. I had a choice between staying at home, in my stuck place with my writing, or spending a week in a Simpson villa in Paxos. We had travelled twice before to **The Rou Estate** in Corfu and, though I may be a bad traveller, I'm no fool. We went on holiday – me, my husband, and two of my children, one 17, the other 24.

Here is the magic of Simpson Travel. I relaxed the moment we arrived at Heathrow. There is something about knowing someone else is responsible for your trip that makes me suddenly light-headed and childish. On leaving the plane, we were met by the overseas team, taken to the port and shown exactly where to leave our luggage as we waited for the hydrofoil. The crew grabbed our cases and chucked them towards the hydrofoil – but since no one from Simpson looked in the slightest bit concerned, neither was I. I felt liberated.

An hour later, the hydrofoil drifted into a small green cleft in the rocks that opened like a tiny fjord. The green of Paxos was so green it was practically fizzing. Olive trees everywhere; cedars as tall as towers, while the sea was so clear it was like liquid turquoise. In the distance, the buildings of Gaios, white and pink and ochre, stretched the length of the harbour, reflected in clear squares in that ridiculously clear water, so placid and blue it seemed to be something other than water, like a surface you might walk on.

Paxos is a small thing. At just ten kilometres long and three kilometres wide, it is the smallest of the Ionian islands. The story goes that when Poseidon, God of the Sea, wished to find a quiet place to live with his lover Amphitrite, he chipped a corner off Corfu with one blow from his trident.

Even by Greek standards, it is laid back. There was no queuing for a hire car and signing paperwork; our car was simply waiting at the port with the key in the ignition. Off we went, weaving into the hills, higher and higher; past olive groves and painted tavernas, until we reached a small track, so unused it was more like the ghost of a road. A yellow bush came to life and turned into a horde of butterflies. And there was **Kallista House**; a stone

villa that smelt of the pine trees all around it and faced the sea. I felt another bit of me unwind.

In the week that followed, we explored Paxos by car, by boat, by foot. We visited the bigger towns, Lakka and Gaios, where we wandered paths that glared white-bright in the sun, or tiny alleyways where washing hung above our heads like coloured flags. We ate freshly caught fish, dishes of soft-baked aubergine, and giant beans with feta, and I began to love the fact that this island is so small, you can have a relationship with it, even during the course of a week. We hired a boat to Anti Paxos, Paxos's little sister island, where we moored alongside other small boats, and people leapt into water so clear you could see all the way down to the white sand.

By our last day, I had begun to write again; simply following the path of words, as surefootedly as we followed the unused track every night to our villa. I knew when the sun rose, and how the sky turned a pearlescent pink, while the islands in the distance rested on the horizon like vast dusty whales. We watched the sun set at Erimitis Beach where the rocks that look like scooped-out ice cream flashed red as the sun slipped down, and hundreds of thousands of birds filled the sky, briefly pink as flamingos.

On our final day, we decided to take the car and find one more beach, off the beaten track. In the end we abandoned the car and just walked, following a faint path through gorse bushes. My husband pointed out that – since this was an island – anything that was going downwards was bound to lead to a beach.



And the one we found was tiny. A perfect stony bay, and so small I am not sure it has a name – it didn't have one on the map. It was – for me at least – an unknown bay. We slipped into our swimming costumes – no snorkels, no eye masks – and headed in.

I swam out, far out. The water buoyed me up, full of salt, and clear as glass. I swam until I could look back at the island and see the movement in the rocks, the clefts that would be caves, the way a gust of wind took

“By our last day, I had begun to write again; simply following the path of words, as surefootedly as we followed the unused track every night to our villa.”

up and made deep blue scribbles of the water. And it occurred to me that writing blocks come when people are afraid of going out of their depth. I came out of the water and my skin was sticky with salt and it's hardly true that I had solved the world's problems, but I did realise that over the years I had lost touch with something in my writing, and that was the wonder, the joy of the unknown. Maybe it's something many of us have forgotten recently.



Paxos; we will be back.

Rachel's new novel *Miss Benson's Beetle* will be published in June 2020.



Erimitis



Lakka



Dates for your diary

Our Local Concierge teams keep guests posted about the many festivals, exhibitions and celebrations that take place throughout the season. But there are some events so special, we thought you should know about them in advance – just in case you fancy planning a trip around them.

Polignano a Mare, Puglia

Paxos Festival

Paxos, 20 June – 9 September

Celebrating a rich cultural history, the 34th Paxos Festival will embrace the island's artistic temperament with a host of art exhibitions, music concerts, films and workshops.



Tour de France

Ile de Ré, 7 July

The 10th stage of this thrilling race will finish in the island capital Saint Martin on 7 July 2020, after a historic ride that will see competitors cover two islands in a single day.



Cliff Diving World Series

Puglia, 19 July

The beautiful clifftop town of Polignano a Mare is an attraction in itself but the annual Red Bull Cliff Diving Championships are a not-to-be-missed spectacle that take the exhilarating setting to even dizzy heights.



Vino al Vino

Tuscany, 17 – 22 September

Celebrating the 22 boutique wineries for which the region is so famous, Panzano town square is given over to tastings and festivities for this wonderful long weekend. Our own **Hotel Panzano** will play host to a dinner for the vintners and their international patrons on 18 September.

ABOVE *and* BEYOND

We always aim to exceed expectations and provide our guests with a personalised approach that makes their holiday experience as effortless as it is memorable. From emergency help to animal rescue, our overseas concierge team went above and beyond once again in 2019, admirably demonstrating that a passion for service lies at the heart of everything we do.



THOMAS COOK

The sad demise of Thomas Cook last year left many of our guests wondering if they would be stranded overseas. We are incredibly proud to say that our fabulous teams in London and abroad got the vast majority of our clients home on the day they were due to return and, even more impressively, to the same UK airport they departed from.

LOVE CONQUERS ALL

We helped Dave the cat ditch his lonely life of strays and scraps in Kefalonia and fly over 2,000 miles to join his new family in the UK, adopted following their trip to **Avithos Beach Estate**. Pictured at his new Wimbledon home, Dave revealed he was feline fine!



A SAFE HAVEN IN ITHACA

Last summer, one of our families took a day trip from Lefkada and were left high and dry in Ithaca when a storm blew up and the return ferry service was cancelled. Our local concierge came quickly to the rescue, making sure they were comfortably accommodated overnight before they were able to make the journey back the following morning – in brilliant sunshine!



EXCLUSIVE READER OFFER

Avithos Beach Estate in Kefalonia is leading the way as we look to reduce our impact on the environment. In 2020 we are introducing a free filtered water supply and hotel guests will receive one of SHO's reusable bottles to help in the fight against single-use plastic.

All *On Travel* readers can benefit from our eco-friendly new partnership and enjoy **15% off** at the checkout using the code **TRAVEL15**.

You'll be pleased to know that 10% of all SHO profits are donated to Mary's Meals, a life-changing organisation ensuring some of the world's poorest children receive the daily nutrition they need.

shoreusable.com



Avithos Beach Estate, Kefalonia, Greece

*Valid until 31 October 2020 on all non-sale items. One use per customer.

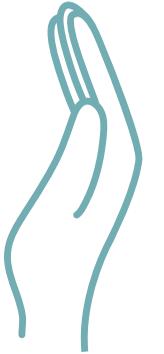


GIVING BACK



Organising holidays is generally a happy business, and at Simpson Travel we feel very lucky to be able to spend our days doing something we love. However, an appreciation of our privileged position makes us all the more aware of the plight of those less fortunate and, therefore, keen to engage with worthwhile causes wherever we can.

Throughout 2019, we were pleased to donate a number of holidays for auction, raising a cool £55,000 which went directly to the charities concerned. At a more local level, our dedicated overseas teams raised an impressive €19,000 from raffles, bake sales and all sorts of brave sponsorship challenges. Here's a brief snapshot of some of the projects we've been involved with:



Together for Short Lives

With your help, we're proud to have supported Together for Short Lives once more in 2019, donating £2 for every completed holiday questionnaire we received and achieving a total of £12,000 over the course of the season.

togetherforshortlives.org.uk

Beach cleans

We're fortunate that our chosen beach destinations tend to be pretty pristine, but spring tides always wash up plenty of debris. Our resort teams from Corsica to Corfu bagged up everything from discarded fishing nets to wellie boots and a rather fetching pair of boxers!

“
OVER £12,000
DONATED TO TOGETHER
FOR SHORT LIVES FROM
OUR HOLIDAY SURVEYS

Operation Christmas Child

Our office elves did themselves proud this year, sourcing, filling and dispatching 100 boxes of much-needed Christmas cheer to deserving youngsters both in the UK and overseas.

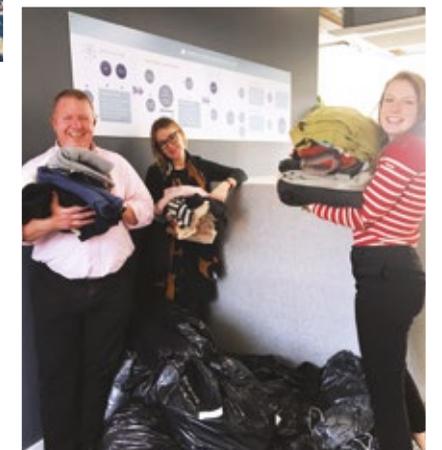
samaritans-purse.org.uk



SPEAR

The London office dug deep into their wardrobes to donate warm clothes to SPEAR Rough Sleeper Outreach programme during a chilly February last year.

spearlondon.org



Charity overseas

We regularly deliver leftover non-perishable items from our villa welcome packs to support hardworking local organisations like The Smile of the Child, Analipsi Orphanage and Corfu Town Refuge for the Homeless & Elderly. In 2019, our industrious Corfu team raised funds from charity walks, cake sales and even a spot of carol singing.

“
£55,000 RAISED
FOR CHARITIES THROUGH
HOLIDAY AUCTIONS

A poetic WINNER

Thank you to all who entered our 2019 writing competition, judged by Sarah Hartley, author and Travel Editor of *The Mail on Sunday*. The worthy winner, Joanna Flowers, received £500 of Simpson Travel vouchers for her poem about **Avithos Beach Estate** in Kefalonia but a special mention must go to our two runners up, Roger Sparrow and Kim Williams, both of whom sent us delightful accounts evoking the unspoilt, traditional feel of eastern Crete.

OUR JUDGE SARAH HARTLEY SAID:



“Joanna Flowers’ poem is like a postcard written to a friend or an entry in a holiday diary as she captures in rhyming verse why she loves the Avithos Beach Estate. She writes warmly of this place, which is new to her, and in very little time, becomes both familiar and special. Without seeing it, we know that it is small, welcoming and exists in harmony with the natural environment. Indeed, Joanna interweaves the natural world she sees around her and its historical past with the colourful characters she encounters. And although she stresses it is a first visit, the reader knows she will be back.”



Avithos Beach Estate, Kefalonia, Greece

What I love about Avithos Beach Estate

Is it the beautiful golden beach
Or the view of Zante; just out of reach
Or the thrill of the loggerhead turtle nests
Cocooned in sandy treasure chests?

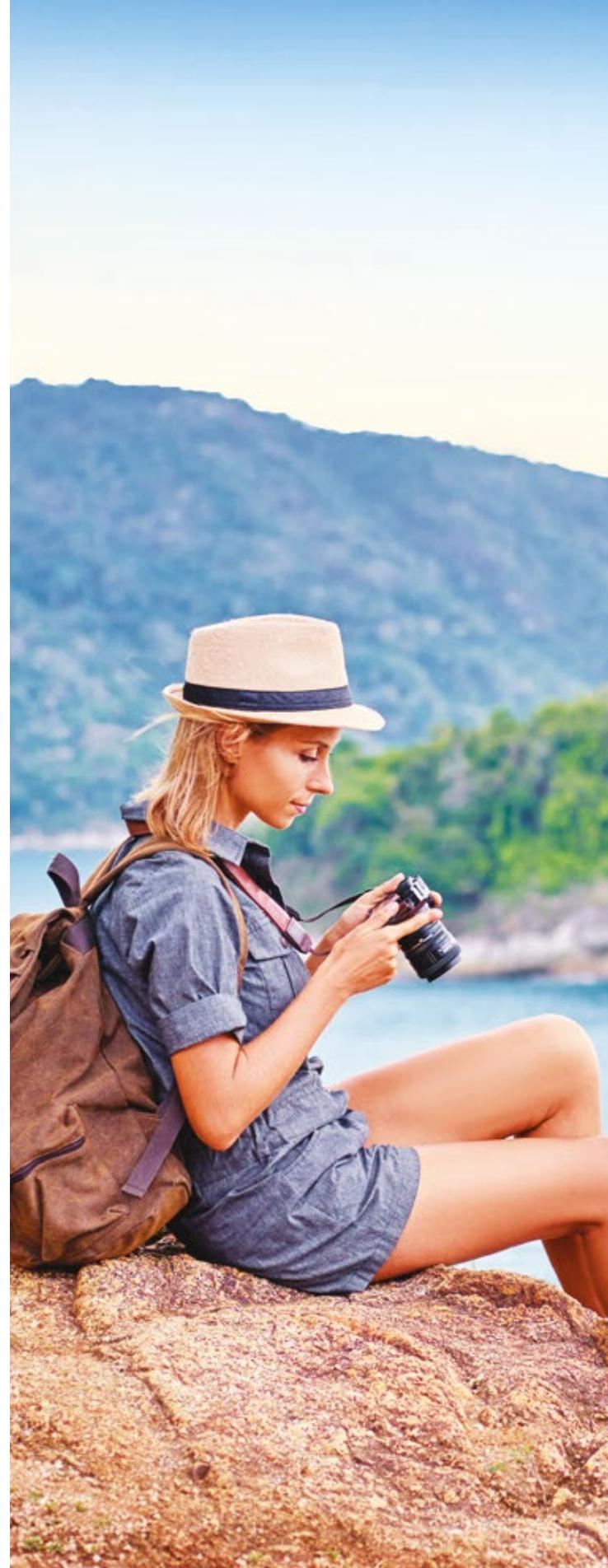
It could be John’s delicious jam
Or his breakfast for Kings of eggs, cheese and ham.
Maybe it’s Gianna’s cheerful chat
Or it could just be her crazy hat.

It’s possibly Simon whose wit is so dry
Or Makis’ advice on mountain roads high.
The garden blossoms with Mick’s tender care
A place to gather with tales to share.

Karen’s wealth of passion and knowledge immense
Even Greek mythology finally makes sense.
It could be the pool, cool and inviting
Attracting the swallows that dive like grease lightning.

Dave the cat, stealing the show from
Gary the owl in the moonlight glow.
All of these pleasures have a part to play
In enticing me back for another stay.

~ Joanna Flowers.



SNAP your way to A HOLIDAY...

Put your photographic skills to the test and share your Simpson Travel holiday memories for a chance to win a week away. Our 2020 photography competition will be judged by company founder Graham Simpson and the winning entry will feature in next year’s *On Travel* magazine. The closing date for entries is 31 October 2020 – good luck!

The prize

Seven nights’ bed and breakfast accommodation at our Adult Only **Katouna Suites** in Lefkada, valid for selected departure dates in July and August 2021.



FIND OUT MORE AT
simpsontravel.com/snap-your-way



THE BRIDE AND GROOM

In July 2019, against the clear blue skies of southern Crete, Graham and Yianna Simpson's eldest son Mathew and his beautiful bride Simi were married in the little village of Loutro, accessible only by boat across the warm waters of the Libyan Sea. In a glorious celebration embracing the couple's Anglo-Greek and Punjabi heritages, family and friends gathered to wish the happy couple well. They danced into the small hours in true Cretan style and it was touching to know that, more than 40 years on, there were many familiar faces from the early days of Simply Travel amongst the revellers. We wish our Product Director Mathew and his new wife Simi every happiness together.



The road less travelled

“The road less travelled’ means going the extra mile where others might take shortcuts – and in doing so, we offer a superior experience to all those who travel with us.”

Graham Simpson, Founder



Book with confidence

Book your 2020 holiday secure in the knowledge that we're a member of ABTA and AITO, and our flights are ATOL protected by the Civil Aviation Authority.

SIMPSON KIDS

Simple pleasures, grand adventures...

Family villas, beachfront hotels, expert childcare.



SIMPSON
KIDS