



## Yes, you can skip breakfast

Dr Michael Mosley on common dieting myths

# Weekend

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**I don't  
know how  
he does it**



**Father's Day  
special**

**Single dads on  
school runs,  
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**50 best summer  
holiday bargains**



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in Barbados**



**Stay in the centre  
of Paris in August**



## 42 Travel

## Travel tips

## Camp at Sandy Balls

If you're looking for a less expensive camping option and the name doesn't put you off, Sandy Balls Holiday Village (0844 6931050, sandyballs.co.uk) in the New Forest has just launched its Camping Pods. The timber pods come with a seating area which converts into a double bed, two single pull-out chair beds, a TV, fridge and kettle, but no en suite. They cost from £199 for a four-night stay for four people.



## Glamping in the Arctic

Arctic cruises are so old hat. Now you can stay in two safari-style camps — one on the ice floes — and get really close to nature, from beluga whales to polar bears. The yurts have insulated double walls, king-size beds and hot-water bottles. Discover the World (01737 214291, discover-the-world.co.uk) has two summertime trips, a nine-night holiday to Somerset Island from £5,870pp, mostly full-board, with internal but not international flights. Its narwhal and polar bear safari, staying on the ice floes, costs from £8,734pp for seven nights on the same basis.

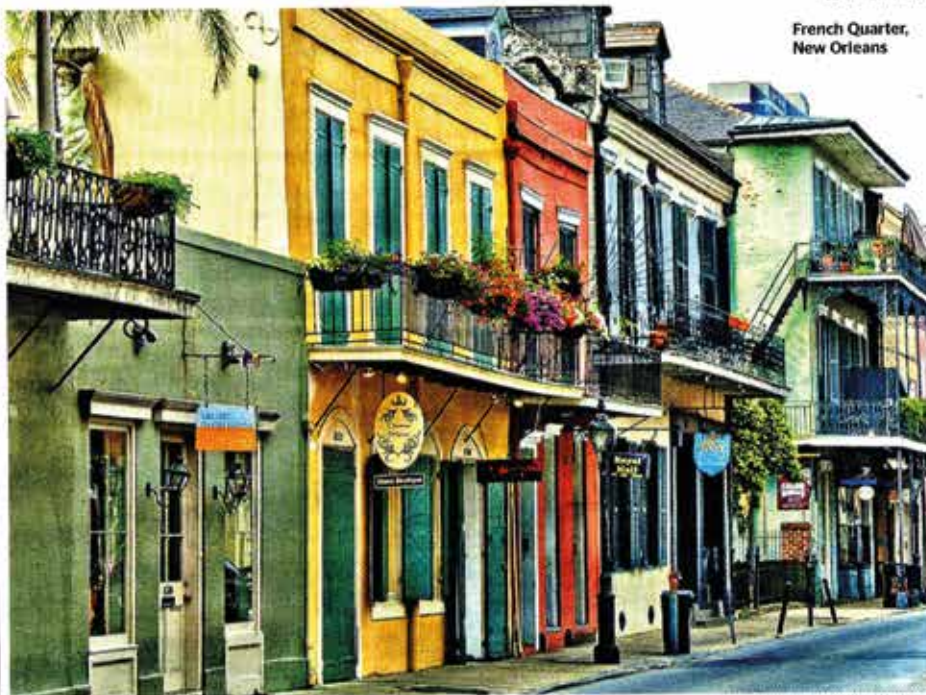
## Find the real Paddington

To celebrate this autumn's Paddington film, Inkterra (Inkterra.com) is launching a package to see the real Andean spectacled bear in Peru. Guests staying at Inkterra Machu Picchu Pueblo Hotel can shadow bear keepers at the Andean Bear Project as well as receiving a soft toy bear and tickets for the film at home, and a tour of Machu Picchu itself. Three nights' full board with the bear package costs from £622pp. Flights cost extra.



## Hit the new beach at Lake Como

Loving the sun and want some more of it? Head to Lake Como in Italy, where the Grand Hotel Tremezzo (grandhoteltremezzo.com) has just launched the new T Beach — a sandy beach with sunloungers, a floating pool, Italian cocktails and a new grill restaurant. What's not to like? The price, perhaps, at £524 per room per night. Jane Knight



French Quarter, New Orleans

## Travel doctor



**Q** My wife and I celebrate our ruby wedding anniversary next year and we want to mark the occasion by going somewhere different. We are both fans of the blues and while we don't want to go on blues trails all day, we would love to holiday by day and hear the blues at night. What can you recommend? Mike Davies, via email

**A** The easiest way to do this would be on a fly-drive package so that your hotels are all booked en route and you can do as much or as little sightseeing as you wish. American and Worldwide Travel (01892 779900, awwt.co.uk) has a 14-night Roots of Blues trip that would take you from New Orleans to the Mississippi Delta (where blues grew up on plantations), Memphis, St Louis and finally Chicago. It starts at £1,255pp based on two sharing and includes flights, accommodation (room only), compact car hire and a travel pack with a full itinerary with blues clubs. American Sky (0843 2495571, americansky.co.uk) has a similar tour lasting 12 days, starting at £1,119pp, also including flights, hotels and car hire. You'd pick up a car in Chicago and head for St Louis, Nashville, Memphis, Vicksburg and New Orleans. The Blues Highway by Richard Knight is an excellent guidebook (£18, amazon.co.uk).

**Q** My husband and I are Italophiles and we would like to visit Italy in the Christmas holidays, leaving on or around December 22 for 12 to 14 days. We would prefer some warmth if possible and while we have already visited Sicily, we have never been to Sardinia. We live in Leeds and our budget is from £500 to £900pp. Joy Mitchell-Kardasz, via email

**A** If you're set on Sardinia, the resorts will be quite forlorn out of season so you should base yourself in a town. I'd plump for Alghero, with its Christmas market, the annual performance of the medieval Song of the Sibyl in Catalan in the cathedral on Christmas Eve and bumper New Year's Eve celebrations at Cap d'Any d'Alguer, complete with fireworks. The best flight for you is the nonstop service with easyJet from Stansted to Cagliari, which operates three times a week. Leaving on December 23 and returning on January 3 would cost about £220. Staying at the Hotel Catalunya, close to the old town, in a double with a sea view starts at £926 for 11 nights through booking.com. Expect mild rather than warm weather — highs of about 16C are the norm. Southern Italy specialist Long Travel (01694 722193, long-travel.co.uk) thinks Sardinia would be too quiet and recommends Lecce, the capital of Puglia. It offers the Palazzo Persone, a lovely boutique B&B with only six rooms in the heart of the city and over Christmas the price is £42 to £48pp per night, so it would fit within your budget. EasyJet

flies from Gatwick to Bari but not on your dates; if you have to stick to those there are indirect flights with Alitalia from Heathrow.

**Q** I am trying to bring my brother from Cyprus to the UK for a holiday this summer. However, for medical reasons he cannot fly. Can you suggest the most cost-effective way of doing this? Douglas McCowan, via email

**A** There are no ferry services from Cyprus to Greece so the cost-effective way would be via ferry from Northern Cyprus to southern Turkey and then on by bus, taxi and train to Istanbul from where it's a four-night train journey to London. You can find full details on seat61.com, but this is not a trip for the faint-hearted. The far more expensive alternative is to book him a single cabin on a freighter such as Grimaldi Lines' weekly Euro-Med service from Limassol to Portbury (for Bristol). It takes 13 nights and costs £1,835 one-way. Book through Strand Voyages (020 7953 7607, strandtraveltd.co.uk).

Julia Brookes is the Travel Doctor

Don't put up with this  
Hotel compensation delay

I booked a hotel in Brussels through hotels.com in January, paying in full at the time of booking for what the company said was the cheapest deal. Immediately afterwards, I found the hotel cheaper on other websites, plus its own. After some email exchanges, hotels.com agreed that I qualified for its Best Price Guarantee and that I was eligible for a refund of €35 euros (£28), although this could not be paid until after the stay. I obtained a receipt from the hotel, photographed it and sent an image to hotels.com at the end of February, and despite many attempts I have received nothing so far. It's only €35 but there's a principle at stake. Roz Edridge, via email

After my intervention, hotels.com got to grips with your complaint. A spokesman

said: "Hotels.com apologises for any inconvenience caused to Ms Edridge for the delay in processing her refund. Unfortunately, human error caused this delay. Our customer service team has spoken with Ms Edridge and the full refund has been processed. She has also been offered a gesture of goodwill." This is a £40 voucher for a future booking. However, it took further prodding to ensure you received confirmation of both the refund and voucher.

## Contact us . . .

If you have a gripe, suggestion or question about holiday travel, write to Travel Doctor, The Times Travel Desk, 3 Thomas More Square, London E98 1TT, or e-mail traveldoctor@thetimes.co.uk. Please include contact details. If you have a dispute with a travel company, try to resolve it before contacting us.

Do not send us original documents. Unfortunately we cannot reply to every inquiry.

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