ON TRAVEL

2017 ISSUE

INTRODUCING ITALY • PROVENÇAL LIVING • REDISCOVERING EASTERN CRETE • A FINE CORSICAN ROMANCE
ON THE ROAD IN MALLORCA • TURKEY: MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE • REDEFINING LUXURY

Welcome

The more we travel, the more we find to inspire us – and the more we grow, quite literally. From a team of just six back in 2002, there are now 42 of us and, this year, I welcomed our new Managing Director, David Bence. With the company in his capable hands, I can now spend more time on the road, meeting owners and developing our programmes, which is my passion.

As we've evolved, the value of expert knowledge and experience has been undeniable. We've developed our team and partnerships around genuine talent, as well as our desire to create the exceptional holidays our guests are looking for.

In January, we launched our Italian holidays, drawing on the expertise of Jonathan and Daniela Magoni, formerly of Cottages to Castles, and Massimo Provenza, a born and bred Sicilian, who all value service and quality as much as we do. The result is two charming new Simpson Hotels and a carefully chosen selection of villas in Tuscany's much-loved Chianti region, as well as Sicily, Umbria and an apartment in Venice.

Even when we know a destination well, we continue to explore, spending months on the road to find the accommodation that makes our portfolio unique. I'm delighted to be returning to East Crete, as wildly unspoilt as it is authentic, as welcoming as it is relaxing – particularly as we've found some wonderful villas right on the beach.

Last year, we launched France and we've since discovered even more exceptional villas in the Dordogne and Provence, including a number in the exclusive Luberon region, with its spectacular countryside and famous medieval villages – Gordes among them.

Greece never fails to surpass even my expectations and Lefkada is another of its most beautiful assets. We've expanded our offering to give you even more opportunities to experience this spectacular destination. Or, for anyone who loves to deep dive into limitless blue seas and idyllic landscapes, there's Turkey. In spite of the challenges the country has faced in the last year, the abundant warmth and hospitality of its people continue to make holidays here a genuine pleasure. The glorious Turquoise Coast, resplendent in history, remains a destination that richly deserves your time and attention.

So I look forward to what 2017 will bring, but wherever we go, your feedback is invaluable. As important as our knowledge and expertise remain, you, our guests, are still at the heart of everything we do. It's your experience that counts.

Best wishes,

Graham Simpson

Chairman, Simpson Travel

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REPORTAGE

An award-winning year

As well as three British Travel Awards, our founder and Chairman, Graham Simpson received *Silver Travel Advisor's* 'Exceptional Achievement Award' – a fantastic industry accolade from one of Britain's largest travel portals.

New destinations

The New Year brought Italy into our portfolio, with the spotlight on Tuscany and a choice of villas in Sicily. We've included more beautiful French accommodation, particularly around Provence, and extended our Crete programme to include the most easterly corners for a truly 'off the beaten track' holiday experience.

A focus on customer service

For every completed guest survey we receive, we donate £1 to our chosen charity, Together For Short Lives. In 2016, we raised £2,738 to support families with terminally ill children – and gained valuable feedback to improve the service we offer all our guests.

On the small screen

The Night Manager, starring Hugh Laurie and Tom Hiddleston and *The Durrells*, featuring Keeley Hawes as Louisa Durrell, brought two of our destinations to TV schedules: Mallorca's Cala Deià and Port de Sóller and Corfu's lovely north-east coast respectively.

Six great competitions

We gained a great insight into the creative talents of our guests this year – and a big thank you to everyone who sent in artwork, photographs over social media and holiday memories to our travel writing competition. You can read the winning entry, chosen by *The Sunday Times*' bestselling author Susan Lewis, on page 80.

A better quality of hire car

Based on our guests' comments, we've upgraded our car hire service where it was needed, with 0% excess across the board, as well as larger vehicles in Greece and Corsica to make it easier to go exploring.

In the press

Over the course of 2016, Simpson Travel appeared in 220 articles, from *The Sunday Times* to *The Huffington Post*. Tim Watson (Rob Titchener of *The Archers*) reviewed his family holiday at **Mousses Villas** for *The Telegraph*, whilst TV presenter Katy Hill fondly recalled **The Rou Estate** in *Family Traveller*.

#SimpsonTravel

JOIN THE CONVERSATION

It's been quite a year on social media – from takeovers to behind the scenes, take a look at some of our highlights.

A toast to our milestones

In 2016, our Founder and Chairman, Graham Simpson, celebrated his 70th birthday with the team and we delivered our social fans a slice of life behind the scenes at Simpson Travel.

Instagram takeovers

We transported our Instagram fans to Greece and Corsica with takeovers from the Mini Travellers blog and Orange Pekoe tea rooms.

What you've been saying

We've listened to your feedback, and we're looking forward to introducing an even more seamless and personalised pre-holiday experience in 2017. We love reading the reviews that you leave on our Facebook page – here are a few from last year:

"Attention to detail is second to none."
Alicia Leontieff

"Excellent company to travel with."
Denise Jones

The year in numbers

#SimpsonTravel has been used just under

400

times on Instagram. Keep on tagging those photos!

We've gained just under

1,200

new followers on our social media channels – come and say hi!

Where we took you...

You followed our team as they swam in the warm waters off Meganissi, spent a day aboard a boat in Kalkan and took in the dizzying heights of the mountainous roads of Mallorca.

What was your favourite moment?

We asked you to share your favourite moments from your last Simpson Travel holiday on Facebook, using #SimpsonMoment. We were overwhelmed with entrants – the prize was a hamper worth £100! Stay tuned for future competitions...

Keep up-to-date with the latest news, offers and behind-the-scenes.
Like us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter and Instagram – use #SimpsonTravel to join the conversation.

/simpsontravel

ITALY

Where history, culture and landscapes combine to create alchemy

INTRODUCING ITALY

Italy, it is said, is everything all at once: the romance-seeker's oil painting, the music-lover's symphony, a truly world-class vineyard, a jet-setter's playground. And from upmarket *ristorante* to simple *osteria*, life tastes good there too.

It's where the Renaissance began and where the greatest minds ever known were influencing the greatest artists who ever created. And, over time, the works of the true masters – da Vinci, Raphael and Michelangelo – would become iconic, surrounded by the stirring soundscapes of Vivaldi, Rossini and Verdi and the waking dreamscape of the idyllic countryside.

After a seven-year break, we're delighted to bring Italy back into our portfolio, offering a choice of holidays in Tuscany, Umbria, Sicily, Liguria and Venice.

Our journey begins in Tuscany…

Creating a new holiday portfolio is a painstaking process. Simpson Travel acquired Cottages to Castles in 2015: two family run businesses finding common ground in excellent service, attention to detail and a passion for the pleasures and pastimes of Italy.

Back in March 2016, Graham Simpson joined Jonathan Magoni of Cottages to Castles on a 12-day road trip to choose the properties that would form the basis of our return to Italy. Covering Tuscany, in particular Chianti, as well as dipping across the border into Umbria and Lazio, the journey followed a learning curve that gave Graham enormous insights into all that this destination has to offer our guests in 2017 and beyond. It was here that Jonathan's 20 years' experience of creating holidays in some of the country's most beautiful destinations became invaluable.

"When I was planning the trip," Jonathan remembers, "I asked Graham (who had his 70th birthday last year) whether he wanted to factor in a day's rest or sightseeing, but, he said that as long as I gave him a 20-30 minute power nap in the back of my car every day, we could work until midnight. Which is basically what we did."

In less than two weeks, the pair covered 2,000km and visited around 60 properties. They also met the owners who play such an integral role in our Italian holiday experiences, sharing their food, conversation and local knowledge with warmth and generosity.

In some instances, the accommodation needed some creative touches to enhance the living spaces, but the handpicked end result is two new Simpson Hotels, 13 villas and six apartments, each with their own unique character and style – and if you need a little guidance on which would be just right for you, Daniela Magoni, Jonathan's sister, is now part of our Sales Team and one of our Italy experts who can guide you towards the best of Italian holidays.

Liguria

With World Heritage Sites, 25 Blue Flag beaches and pretty coastal towns, the Italian Riviera is far more than just a natural beauty.

Venice

Follow this beautiful city's famous waterways for an atmospheric and theatrical journey into Italian history at its most absorbing.

Tuscany

Including the 'Golden Triangle' of Florence, Siena and San Gimignano, the home of Chianti offers sensual opulence in abundance.

Umbria

Through its olive groves, forests and vineyards, the green heart of Italy creates a gentle retreat from the fast pace of 21st-century life.

Sicily

As a first foray onto this lemon-scented island, we chose lovely Cefalù, with its ancient town, grand cathedral and long sandy beach.

FROM CAPPUCCINO TO APERITIVO

Your guide to living like an Italian.

You can take the girl out of Italy, but you can't take Italy out of the girl and, although I now live and work in London as Simpson Travel's Operations Manager for Italy, the lifestyle I grew up with will always be a cherished part of who I am and what I still love about going home. Italian culture thrives around its famous food and drink, so here's my advice to help you blend in like a local, and enjoy your time there even more...

ROSSELLA FIORENZA *joined Simpson Travel in 2016 and works closely with Jonathan, Daniela and Massimo to create an Italy portfolio designed to be inspirational.*

Firstly, coffee isn't just a drink – it's a passion

It may have originated in Africa, but from the 17th century when traders first brought coffee to Venice (from where it spread to the rest of mainland Europe), we've made it our own. Today, we may sip it casually and often speedily standing at a bar as if it's merely incidental, but don't be fooled: meetings, friendships and indeed life itself runs on this humble bean. Milky variations (cappuccinos, lattes, macchiatos) are for mornings only and not with meals – and, as a general rule, don't flavour your coffee with anything but sugar. Or brandy. Or grappa.

Food is to be celebrated

While you're away, look out for the local *sagre* or food festivals. Often held around harvest times or with their roots in pagan traditions, they're proud celebrations of seasonal produce, often with tastings, demonstrations, competitions, feasts, parades and music – and the same gusto applies whether you're paying homage to white truffles or red wine. To help you master the art of food appreciation, I also suggest finding a weekly farmers' market where the fragrant, sun-ripened fruit and vegetables, freshly baked bread, cheese and newly pressed olive oils are the simple stuff of culinary inspiration.

Dining is a shared experience

Turn up at a restaurant alone and the waiters may take a while to serve you, assuming that a dining companion is on their way. In Italy, it's simply the norm to eat together – and we do it slowly. Lunch, generally seen as the most important meal of the day, can meander through an entire afternoon. It begins with antipasto (such as cold cuts and cheeses), followed by a main course divided into primo (pasta, soup or risotto) and *secondo* (meat or fish with side dishes) and then there's *dolce* (dessert). And coffee. And maybe a limoncello. And depending on the Italian in question, at dinner time the whole process may begin all over again.

The evening starts with an aperitivo

The idea of this pre-dinner drink began in Turin in 1786 when Antonio Benedetto Carpano invented vermouth by combining muscatel, a fortified wine, with herbs and spices believed to prepare the stomach for eating. Now, however, an *aperitivo* could be a Campari, prosecco or, my personal favourite, the bright orange Aperol Spritz, and is served with nuts or crisps on the side. It signals the end of the working day and creates a smooth descent into warm evenings spent with friends and loved ones.

OUR SICILIAN CONNECTION

Like every successful relationship, a great business partnership broadens your horizons and provides an invaluable opportunity to learn from each other, as well as enjoying all you have in common.

At the end of last year, we joined forces with Massimo Provenza, the Owner and Co-founder of Massimo Villas, to launch a new destination – Cefalù in Sicily. It's a partnership that works for five simple reasons…

Valued knowledge and experience

Cefalù is Massimo's home town. His first company, founded in 2003, offered holidays there and he's never lost his passion for this captivating destination: from the simplicity of daily life to the warmth of the people – and the weather. And for us, his considerable expertise and local knowledge are invaluable.

A shared passion for beautiful places

Described as 'the heart of the Mediterranean,' historic Sicily is a cultural melting pot with a landscape that changes dramatically from north to south, east to west. Cefalù itself is home to one of the island's finest beaches and an atmospheric Old Town that's shown off to its best advantage during the summer festival in August, when fireworks and processions are an open invitation to celebrate. Sicily is also home to Mount Etna, known to the locals as Mongibello, the 'beautiful mountain,' where olive groves, vineyards and orchards flourish in the fertile soil – and it's about two hours or a very popular day trip away from Cefalù.

MASSIMO PROVENZA *returned to Sicily after a number of years living and working in Europe and Asia, and has been organising Italian villa holidays ever since. He lives in Cefalù with his wife and children.*

Alternatively, you can take in the sights and sounds of the city in Palermo, the island capital just a 45-minute train ride from Cefalù, which shines brightly with its vibrant combination of 'East meets West' culture and architecture. You'll find Italy's largest opera house and great street food; the ornate Cappella Palantina chapel and Mondello's white sandy beaches; the famous Opera dei Pupi (Puppet Theatre) and a September ice-cream festival that brings together gelato makers from around the world to present their new flavours.

United by a commitment to great service

The advice and support our guests receive, both before and during their holiday, is an integral part of the Simpson Travel experience. It's the expertise that helps you find the right accommodation, and the local knowledge of villa owners, housekeepers and caretakers who ensure that, while you're away, everything flows smoothly. With Massimo's help, our service in Sicily will be seamless.

We believe a great villa comes with a view

Our stylish Sicilian accommodation is easy to reach from Palermo airport and features the qualities our guests love: stunning locations with character and style and easy access to shops, restaurants and lovely beaches – making your holiday experience complete.

Welcome to the Sicilian experience

With so much to see and do, no two Sicilian holidays need be the same. Inspired by Massimo's on-the-ground team, you can create a holiday itinerary tailored to entertain, from snorkelling tours to horseriding (one of Massimo's passions); and sunset cruises to fishing trips that include the option to cook your catch on board. Or you can book a private chef to come to your villa and cook it for you that evening.

As a father of two, Massimo is also clear on the value of creating extra services for children – a simple cookery course for little ones gives them a different way to enjoy their time away and meet other children. Sicily extends its warm welcome to everyone and it's our pleasure to share it with you in 2017.

IMAGES: From top to bottom – *Main Pretoria place in Palermo; Mondello beach, Palermo; a young student chef learns how to make pastry; Sicilian cart in Palermo; ancient theatre of Taormina.*

IMAGES: Clockwise from top left – *Cefalù; Cefalù cathedral; Cefalù coastline; narrow streets of Cefalù; markets along the streets of the historic centre; Aeolian Islands.*

CEFALÙ

An authentic slice of Sicilian life.

Thanks to its long Mediterranean summers, inviting sandy beaches, tranquil rocky coves and exceptional cuisine, Sicily's charms are undeniable. The distinctive cultural traditions, historic towns, archaeological sites and vast national parks make it an exceptional destination for an island holiday – the only challenge being what to do first...

Our villas that sit along Sicily's mountainous northern coast, near the historic town of Cefalù, are a great place to start your island exploration, their location offering a taste of real Sicilian life. Used as a location in Giuseppe Tornatore's celebrated *Cinema Paradiso*, Cefalù has an irresistible charm and authenticity. Pizzerias, fish restaurants, bars, bakeries and boutiques line its cobbled streets and, at its heart, lies the impressive Arab-Norman Duomo, now a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Sip a cappuccino on the cathedral square, climb the craggy mountain of La Rocca towering above the town or, from the medieval fortress, gaze across terracotta rooftops to Cefalù's long sandy beach and the volcanic Aeolian islands on the horizon.

Yet Cefalù is so much more than just a picturesque holiday destination. It's also a working town, still following the cultural traditions of the past. Stroll through the historic centre and you'll see street stalls overflowing with fresh fruit and vegetables, fishermen selling swordfish, octopus and lobsters and locals meeting for an aperitif, coffee or gelato. And after a leisurely lunch, as everyone heads home for a siesta, you can enjoy the buzz of motor scooters and the distant chimes of church bells in the air.

From Cefalù, the green mountains of the Madonie National Park beckon. Its fertile slopes are home to the vineyards and winery of Sant'Anastasia for wine tastings and long lunches. Discover walking trails, horseriding and mountain villages with food festivals and local traditions. For a taste of city life, Palermo is just an hour away by car or train. Where scenes from Francis Ford Coppola's *The Godfather Part III* were filmed, the city's lively markets with Sicilian street food and puppet theatres are a colourful prelude to dining by the elegant beach of Mondello in true Sicilian style.

DOLCE FAR NIENTE:

The sweetness of doing nothing.

A holiday offers you the perfect opportunity to relax and unwind, but it can be hard to switch off. Here's some advice on becoming an expert in the art of doing nothing – without feeling guilty.

Be here now

How often do you find yourself lost in the future, thinking, planning, often worrying or even fearful about what will happen next? It can be exhausting. Give yourself permission to rest in the moment, present to the sights and sounds around you and the feelings within you. Breathe deeply and let the multi-coloured, multi-textured, fragrant world fill you to the brim.

Redefine 'a good day'

Whether we've had a good day often rests on what we've done, how much we've achieved and how busy we've been – tangible accomplishments with which we measure our worth. But what if we gauged success on how often we smiled, the quality time we were able to share with loved ones or the moments of peace we enjoyed? Human beings not human doings.

Take in the view

Gazing at a beautiful view may seem like wasted time, but it lets the mind wander. The 24/7 bombardments of texts, emails and social media put us in act/react mode and leave little room for anything else. In the peace of limitless horizons, new thoughts and ideas can take shape and in that stillness and quiet, chances are you'll find out what you really think.

5 OF THE BEST

CHIANTI VILLAS

Choose Tuscany's most idyllic destination for a lifestyle devoted to the pursuit of simple pleasures.

Villa da Vinci

Tuscany, 7 bedrooms
*Accom-only prices from £3,500**

Trace history back to its 11th-century roots in a manor house that combines tradition, comfort and spellbinding surroundings, just a ten-minute drive from Greve.

La Casa dei Mandorli

Tuscany, 1 bedroom
*Accom-only prices from £1,095**

Facing south for all-day sunshine, this home sweet home comes with stunning views and a restaurant within walking distance.

Villa Castrum

Tuscany, 7 bedrooms
*Accom-only prices from £4,500**

An elegant stone villa with an enchanting walled garden and private pool, just a five-minute drive from San Donato in Poggio.

Casetta Carina

Tuscany, 2 bedrooms
*Accom-only prices from £1,100**

Take time to soak up the history of this 15th-century hamlet, when you're not soaking up the sun on the terrace or in the impressive saltwater pool.

Casa Momi

Tuscany, 1 bedroom
*Accom-only prices from £785**

Space and spectacular views are complemented by their close proximity to Radda in Chianti and the Monte San Michele Nature Park.

To book your ideal Italy holiday, get in touch with our travel experts on 020 8108 4545 or email sales@simpsontravel.com

*Prices are based on the lowest priced available dates as of 30 Jan 2017, on an accommodation-only basis, for seven nights.

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A TASTE OF OUR ITALY PORTFOLIO

Villa Lidia

Umbria, 6 bedrooms
*Accom-only prices from £2,900**

Large groups will really enjoy all that this comfortable hilltop villa has to offer, not least the views over Mount Cetona.

Villa Donatella

Umbria, 5 bedrooms
*Accom-only prices from £1,600**

Dedicate yourself to lazy afternoons by the pool or on the terrace, perhaps with a spot of lunch in the outdoor dining area.

Casa al Colle

Tuscany, 5 bedrooms
*Accom-only prices from £1,600**

A comfortable family home in a spectacular rural location set among forests, rivers, medieval villages, gorges and churches.

Villa Passione

Tuscany, 3 bedrooms
*Accom-only prices from £1,500**

A contemporary conversion styled by the charming owner herself and full of clean lines and thoughtful touches.

Villa Rita

Sicily, 3 bedrooms
*Accom-only prices from £2,811**

Set between green mountains and sandy coastline, families can relax in this spacious villa, which includes a children's play area.

Villa Splendida

Sicily, 4 bedrooms
*Accom-only prices from £2,533**

Get lost in views that stretch from sea to Duomo, with a villa that brings outdoor summer living to life.

*Prices are based on the lowest priced available dates as of 30 Jan 2017, on an accommodation-only basis, for seven nights.

FRANCE

From golden coastlines to exquisite antiquity, heritage and style

PROVENÇAL LIVING

For Ann Huff, the owner of our villa Mas des Lavandes, a year in Provence was not enough.

Many years ago, when our children were school age, my husband and I decided to take a year off from work and life and move our family to a small village in the south of France. It turned out to be the best year of our lives, and we've never looked back.

I grew up speaking two languages and I wanted to offer my children the experiences that come from living in a foreign country. They were welcomed into the small local school and we quickly made friends with other parents at the school gates. It felt so much like home, that we decided to put down roots and bought **Mas des Lavandes**, just a few kilometres from Gordes, officially named as one of the most beautiful villages in France.

Although spectacularly situated on seven acres with a great view of the Luberon mountains, this wonderful house was in pretty bad shape when we found it and needed renovating from the ground up. It was during these months that I met several local artists and artisans, whose work I decided to represent in Atlanta, where I now live.

A gallery followed to showcase this artwork and today my business includes a home furnishings store, the core of which is French antiques bought from Ile-sur-la-Sorgue, just down the road from Mas des Lavandes. And of course, our French home has proved the perfect setting to show off this beautiful furniture, with a few select paintings to add the finishing touches.

Ann's Provence holiday recommendations

Wineries: We love the fresh local wine from Domaine de la Bastidonne in Cabrières d'Avignon. For a special treat, we'll hire a driver and do an afternoon tour of some of the renowned vineyards of the Châteauneuf du Pape region.

Restaurants: There are so many, but one that always comes to mind, which has been consistently wonderful, is Le Fournil in Bonnieux. It's offered us warm and friendly service for over 20 years.

Michelin stars: A new category for this area! The Bistrot de Lagarde d'Apt is an amazing experience and absolutely divine. The drive there is spectacular too.

Apt's Saturday market: Although there are great markets in every town in the Luberon, this is like every other one on steroids. We usually end the morning at the Café de France in the town square and enjoy all the people watching, while dining on some yummy local fare.

Villages: Cassis is just over an hour's drive away and is a jewel of a fishing village. We dip our toes in the Mediterranean, have fish soup at Chez Gilbert on the port and then hike the spectacular Calanques along the water.

Shopping: The one shop that we visit every time is Edith Mézard's iconic store in Lumières. This tastemaker, who has been associated with many of the best designers in France, has everything from luscious linens to pencil sharpeners, carefully curated and beautifully presented with grace and humour in the most gorgeous stone stable.

Antiques: The French capital of antiques (next to Paris), is Ile-sur-la-Sorgue. Go on Sundays and have lunch at Le Jardin du Quai, making sure you book ahead.

Walks: We love our invigorating 45-minute hike to Gordes, which we usually do on Tuesdays when the market is in full swing. The village is spectacular from the trail and we feel very deserving of all the goodies the market has to offer when we arrive!

On my bucket list: To bike to the top of Mont Ventoux. (OK, I admit, this is for my husband. I'll stay at the bottom of the mountain and paint!)

ANN HUFF *is the Co-owner of Huff Harrington Home and the Huff Harrington Fine Art in Atlanta, and Co-author of 'The Artful Lifestyle' blog.*

To book **Mas des Lavandes**, call us on 020 8108 4545
or email sales@simpsontravel.com

IMAGES: Clockwise from top right – *Cassis; Mas des Lavandes' lounge; Gordes; Mas des Lavandes' artwork; and pool; and gardens.*

FRANCE AL FRESCO

Le Masgrès

If 'the fondest memories are made when gathered around a table', come and capture them in France.

The beautiful country homes and elegant restorations of France are the perfect scene setters, with outdoor dining areas surrounded by the loveliest gardens and exquisite views across green and gold landscapes. Accompanied by balmy evenings, plenty of privacy and abundant space, mealtimes are far more than a refuelling exercise – and in accommodation with room enough for all the family and friends you love the most, your dining table becomes the centrepiece for a celebration, be it for a birthday, anniversary or simply because wine and food taste better in the sunshine.

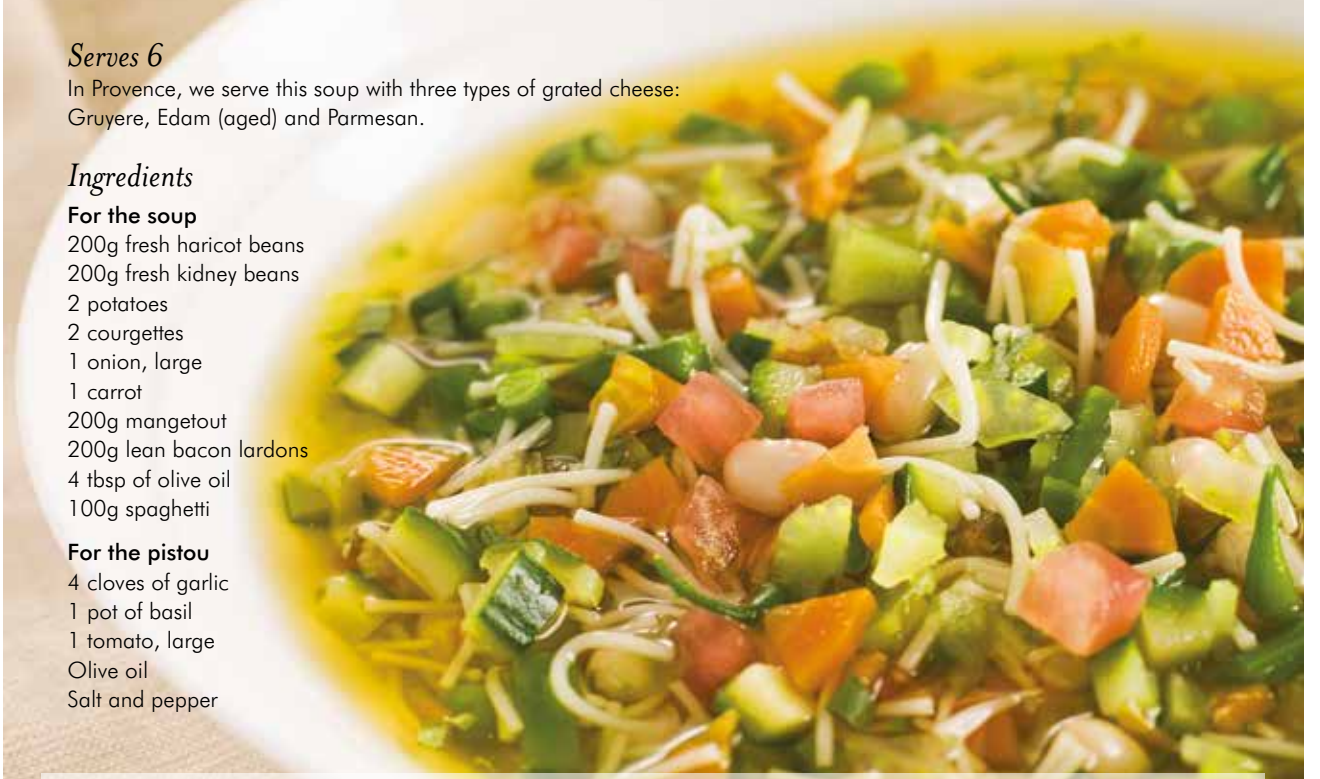
IMAGES: Clockwise from top right – *Beaumonnes; Villa d'Olea; La Bastide du Paon Bleu; Villa Rose; Vue Mer.*

For more information on the featured properties, get in touch with our travel experts on 020 8108 4545 or email sales@simpsontravel.com

A FRENCH FAMILY FAVOURITE

Provençal Pistou Soup

As a centrepiece for a hearty French-themed meal, we asked Marie, the owner of our villa **La Bastide du Paon Bleu**, to share one of her traditional recipes.



Serves 6

In Provence, we serve this soup with three types of grated cheese: Gruyere, Edam (aged) and Parmesan.

Ingredients

For the soup

200g fresh haricot beans
200g fresh kidney beans
2 potatoes
2 courgettes
1 onion, large
1 carrot
200g mangetout
200g lean bacon lardons
4 tbsp of olive oil
100g spaghetti

For the pistou

4 cloves of garlic
1 pot of basil
1 tomato, large
Olive oil
Salt and pepper

Method

1. Shell the beans, peel the potatoes, onion, courgettes and carrot; remove the ends and the strings from the mangetout and wash all the vegetables together.
2. Cut the potatoes into cubes, and chop up the carrot, onion, courgettes and mangetout.
3. Brown the lardons for five minutes in a stew pot with the oil and onion. Add the beans and carrot along with 3 litres of water and bring to the boil. Cover and let it simmer for 45 minutes.
4. Add the mangetout, courgettes and potatoes to the pot and cook for ten minutes.
5. Cut the spaghetti into pieces, add to the pot and cook for ten minutes.
6. Now prepare the pistou. Peel the garlic cloves and crush them in a mortar with the basil leaves. De-seed and skin the tomato (plunging it into boiling water for 30 seconds will make skinning it easier), then add to the mortar.
7. Gently mix it all together with the pestle, gradually adding olive oil in a trickle, taking care that the mixture stays thick.
8. Once the soup is ready, pour in the pistou sauce, season and stir. Serve hot or cooled down.

5 OF THE BEST

VILLAS IN FRANCE FOR EFFORTLESS LOCATION

All within walking distance to wine, dine and relax,
these villas are the epitome of easy living.

Villa Belle Vue

Provence, 4 bedrooms
*Accom-only prices from £2,800**

With Roussillon just a 20-minute walk away, you've got everything you need close by, along with a stylish contemporary villa.

Mas des Cyprès

Provence, 3 bedrooms
*Accom-only prices from £2,750**

Surrounded by woodland, this stunning villa creates the illusion of remoteness, but with celebrated Gordes almost on your doorstep.

La Calade

Provence, 5 bedrooms
*Accom-only prices from £2,350**

Adorned with traditional shutters in Provençal blue and draped in rambling wisteria, La Calade is both picture-perfect and brilliantly convenient.

Vendée Beach House

Vendée, 4 bedrooms
*Accom-only prices from £1,500**

Enjoy beach house chic and 8 kilometres of golden sands, just minutes away from shops, restaurants, watersports, bike hire and tennis courts.

Villa d'Agay

Côte d'Azur, 7 bedrooms
*Accom-only prices from £2,903**

With the convenience of a seaside village location and within walking distance from the beach, total relaxation couldn't be easier.

To book your ideal France holiday, get in touch with our travel experts on 020 8108 4545 or email sales@simpsontravel.com

*Prices are based on the lowest priced available dates as of 30 Jan 2017, on an accommodation-only basis, for seven nights.

To book your ideal France holiday, get in touch with our travel experts on 020 8108 4545 or email sales@simpsontravel.com

A TASTE OF OUR FRANCE PORTFOLIO

Villa Rose

Provence, 3 bedrooms
*Accom-only prices from £2,400**

A stylish villa perfect for couples and families, with contemporary design and views that will nourish the soul.

Puntayucca

Côte d'Azur, 3 bedrooms
*Accom-only prices from £3,440**

Among vineyards and rolling hills, but not far from the sea, this not-so, traditional Provençal home is extremely well located.

Le Diamant Noir

Provence, 5 bedrooms
*Accom-only prices from £3,600**

Recently renovated, your chic retreat boasts a spectacular jet-black pool with a stunning rural setting and five acres of grounds.

Vue Mer

Côte d'Azur, 4 bedrooms
*Accom-only prices from £3,763**

A hillside villa with elegant interiors, landscaped gardens and incredible views over the Gulf of St Tropez.

Simpson Secret – Dordogne

South West & The Dordogne, 5 bedrooms
*Accom-only prices from £1,774**

Enjoy a taste of the 18th century with exposed beams inside and endless woodland views from the peaceful gardens.

Quercus

South West & The Dordogne, 5 bedrooms
*Accom-only prices from £2,473**

Experience a more stylish retreat with 37 acres of private grounds, offering a generous space for families to relax.

*Prices are based on the lowest priced available dates as of 30 Jan 2017, on an accommodation-only basis, for seven nights.

GREECE

Turquoise seas and meandering coastlines

IMAGES: Clockwise from top left – *Makriyialos; Palekastro; Kato Zakros; Sitia; Xerokambos; Evening dining on the balcony of Villa Isidora; Villa Palekastro's pool with a view.*

RETURNING TO THE ROAD LESS TRAVELLED

From starting a language school franchise to certifying precious stones, Stelios Barnias, Graham Simpson's nephew and our new Greece Contracts Manager, is comfortable with a challenge or two — and over breakfast with Graham one morning, he was presented with another…

The subject of our meeting was the beautiful far corner of East Crete, a destination featured in my uncle Graham's Simply Travel portfolio over 20 years ago. He was keen to know whether the area was still the same and wanted me to take a look at a couple of villas there. It was a simple enough request but, as it turned out, this trip was the start of something much bigger…

Because of its remoteness, even after all this time, the furthest corners of East Crete are still fantastically free of the usual tourist trappings. The lovely villages are largely self-sufficient, their heart and soul more likely to be found in traditional farmers' markets and family run kafenions and tavernas than in brightly lit commerciality – and the people are so warm and welcoming: the most hospitable people on the friendliest of the Greek Islands.

East Crete is also unspoilt enough to be intriguingly mysterious – a destination of ancient Minoan ruins, dramatic gorges and soaring mountain ranges. It's drier and wilder than the rest of the island – more desert-like – but also where you'll find its most beautiful beaches. There's Xerokambos, which evokes the Caribbean with its turquoise waters and white sands, and Blue Flag Vai, a sweeping curve of seemingly tropical paradise, backed by thousands of palm trees – get there early to appreciate it uninterrupted. We also have one of Europe's windsurfing and kitesurfing meccas, the 1.5km stretch of picturesque Kouremenos near Palekastro, and even if you're not catching a wave yourself, there's a great community spirit.

However, although I was born and bred in Crete, when I went exploring on behalf of Simpson Travel, I discovered some things I didn't know…

Firstly, as soon as I mentioned Graham, villa owners welcomed me into their homes like an old friend. Food was prepared in my honour and one meeting led to another. Instead of two villas, I saw 80 and chose 20, of which ten now belong in our new East Crete programme – and there are more we'd love to include in the future.

I thought I knew the region well, but in my new role, I've discovered a different side to East Crete, taking the time to see it through the eyes of a Simpson Travel guest and doing things I've never done before. I've explored the understated charms of Palekastro village and Kouremenos beach, where we have five villas metres from the sea, and experienced for myself the waterfront dining on Chiona beach nearby, which is never too crowded, even in high summer. I've also visited Sitia, Crete's most easterly town, where there's an impressive Venetian fortress that becomes a festival venue in the summer. Everything I've learned, I've shared with our sales team to help them see how it is simply an exceptional place to stay. And, for now, it's our secret, which I'm looking forward to sharing with our guests.

STELIOS BARNIAS *lives in Greece and liaises closely with all our property Owners, while also following his passion for sailing and photography.*

FROM AMBRIDGE TO AMBELAKI

Vathy

Taking a well-earned break, actor Timothy Watson, The Archers' Rob Titchener, shares his experience of a Simpson Travel holiday in Meganissi.

You only have to look at the pictures to see that this little Greek island is a slice of heaven on earth. The romance and beauty of Meganissi were hugely appealing to my wife and I, but we did wonder if our children would be equally captivated. The words 'romance' and 'beauty' can be lost on the under-12s and they weren't keen to leave behind Lefkada, Meganissi's larger neighbour, where we have happily holidayed for years. Still, there were no complaints as we sped across the bay in our water-taxi to the idyllic port of Vathy. So far so good.

TIMOTHY WATSON *is a British actor best known for his role as Rob Titchener in BBC Radio 4's long-running soap opera, The Archers.*

Villa Mentes

We were greeted by Rebecca Telford, Simpson's delightful representative and a resident of the island. As she showed us to our accommodation, she explained how she'd arrived some years ago and hadn't been able to tear herself away. With such breathtaking views, I was beginning to see why.

Our home for the week was **Villa Mentes**, one of three fabulous new properties a short walk up from Vathy harbour and overlooking sparkling Ambelaki Bay. It was light, airy and beautifully equipped and, outside, the garden and terraces were all perfectly placed to take in the spectacular sunsets. The swimming pool generated just the response from the children we were hoping for. "Awesome," shouted the 11-year -old; "Awesome," squealed the five-year-old – and in they went. For once, the word 'awesome' didn't grate. The island had begun to work its magic and within hours we'd all succumbed to its laid-back pace; son chasing a cricket around the terrace, daughter sunning herself poolside and grown-ups reading (reading!).

"The island had begun to work its magic and within hours we'd all succumbed to its laid back pace."

The sense of peace remained as lazy day tumbled into lazy day. 'Family friendly,' it turns out, doesn't have to mean round-the-clock entertainment or high-octane watersports. The children were more than happy with the simple pleasures on offer and spent countless hours knee-deep in the crystal waters befriending the sea creatures they held captive in their nets. We enjoyed lazy lunches at the bar on Fanari beach and twice we hired a boat to circumnavigate the island, exploring the many coves and inlets that make up the varied coastline, seeking out little beaches to snorkel and picnic without another soul in sight. In the evenings, we would wander down to the harbourside for ice cream, to play cards and (new for this year) a game of 'Which boat would you choose?' Some of the yachts really are 'awesome'!

If you want to shake a tail feather, some excellent restaurants and bars have sprung up in recent years, with good wines and a decent cocktail readily available. And if dancing under the stars is your thing (and even if it isn't), Lakis Taverna in charming Spartochori is a must. Meganissi has the feel of a Greek island from another age – a genuine step off the beaten track. It was enchanting to watch our children fall under its spell. They loved the warmth of the people and the gentle way of life. Even, perhaps, its romance and beauty.

To book **Villa Mentes**, call us on 020 8108 4545 or email sales@simpsontravel.com

THE BEAUTY OF LEFKADA

Guided by our Island Managers Paul and Susanne Noakes, take a journey of beautiful contrasts across the Ionian Island of Lefkada.

Follow the spectacular coastal roads that stretch across the island and you'll discover the natural diversity that makes Lefkada stand out among the other Greek Islands. In the west, you'll find the kind of beautiful white sands, soaring cliffs and famous blue seas embodied in Porto Katsiki (named as the loveliest beach in Greece). Or swap those west-coast blues for the greens of the east where the lake-like waters and gentler terrain offer a calmer panorama, more like the rest of the Ionian Islands.

In the dramatic mountain landscape, walkers and nature-lovers can follow scenic hiking trails through ravines, gorges and past natural springs – the higher you climb, the more spectacular the views, across rolling green hills of olive groves and fragrant pines.

The quaint mountain villages are our favourite places for refuelling, particularly Karya, towards the centre of the island. It's a great spot to enjoy a coffee or two and the central square comes with the added entertainment of competitive games of backgammon between the locals.

From board games to bird's eye views and in the 600m-high Exhanthia village, further west from Karya, you'll find a mountainside restaurant called Rachi, serving delicious food with stunning views and an array of cocktails. Put it on your 'things to do' list and time your visit for just before sunset to enjoy this spectacular vantage point with drink in hand as the sunset lights up the shimmering waters below.

As it's only a short two-hour drive from north to south, Lefkada is easy to explore on two wheels. The port of Sivota in the south is a great place to stop for lunch, with waterside tavernas that serve the freshest fish accompanied by laid-back hospitality and wonderful harbour views.

We also love chic Lefkada Town in the north – an essential day trip for travellers. Full of wonderful seafood restaurants, lively cocktail bars and a colourful maze of narrow alleyways in the Old Town, this waterside town should be at the top of everyone's must-see lists.

Although you won't find the crowds of mass tourism here, Lefkada strikes the perfect balance between too much and too little, providing everything you need to enjoy a traditional beach holiday, from sunbathing to snorkelling. Vasiliki, in the south, is one of Europe's kitesurfing and windsurfing hotspots – and, while you're in the area, visit one of our favourite beaches, Afteli, which is a great place for an early morning swim and snorkel.

To us, Lefkada is the perfect destination for anyone looking for that quintessential Greek Island experience and we hope you love it as much as we do.

PAUL and SUSANNE NOAKES *are our Island Managers for Lefkada and Meganissi. They met working in Rhodes and are now married and living in Lefkada.*

Stay at Acqua di Mare villas

Lefkada, 2 bedrooms

*Prices from £716pp**

Experience this lovely island for yourself; our new waterfront villas are perfect for couples, families and larger gatherings.

To book one of our **Acqua di Mare villas**, call us on 020 8108 4545 or email sales@simpsontravel.com

*Price is based on the lowest priced available date as of 30 Jan 2017, for maximum occupancy and includes flights, seven nights' accommodation and car hire. Flight supplements may apply.

IMAGES: Clockwise from top – *Vasiliki Harbour; Lefkada Town; the view near Nidri; Lefkada Town; a west coast beach in Lefkada.*

A GREEK LOVE AFFAIR

Victoria Hislop reminisces about her first holiday to Greece and the subsequent desire to travel the country that stole her heart.

Since my first trip to Athens 40 years ago, I have had a passion for Greece. I arrived there, with my mother and sister, in the middle of a steamy July night and we were taken on a bus to our hotel. I woke up to the sight of the bluest sky I had ever seen. Until then, summer holidays had been spent in Bognor Regis, on the beach where lunch was a sand-filled sandwich and tea from a flask. The sea, various shades of brown, the sky a single shade of grey.

For a week, we went sightseeing all around Athens and in the afternoons sometimes went down to Glyfada to swim. I loved the chaos of the city (this was pre-Olympics, so no underground had been built then) and the heat and dust were intense. As far as I remember, street signs were not transliterated, so I recall being lost some of the time, but most of the time being overpowered by the charm of the city, and the magnificence of its antiquity. The first glimpse of the gleaming Parthenon is never forgotten.

After an intensive week of culture and an introduction to feta cheese, watermelon and spinach pies (all of which I still love), we went on the ferry to Paros. The contrast was perfect. The sight of the neat, white, almost cubist buildings enchanted me immediately.

The comparison with the pebbles of a Sussex beach and the fineness of the white sand and tiny shells of a Cycladic beach… well, there is no comparison. I was in love, and still am, with this beautiful country. From that year, 1977, to this, I have been every year, on holiday, to work or simply to travel.

I'm on a mission to see every town and village in Greece (it might take a lifetime). I love the north, close to the Grammos mountains, and extraordinary places like Meteora. I find the islands endlessly contrasted and each of them has some kind of unique beauty. I adore the Peloponnese, which are magnificent and so green. Every region has a fascinating history and culture, both ancient and modern. I now have a house in Crete, a flat in Athens, and I have spent the past six years on a mission to learn the language. It's more than a second home. It's where my heart is.

VICTORIA HISLOP *is a writer and journalist. Victoria's fifth novel, 'Cartes Postales from Greece', was published in September 2016 and was a hardback Sunday Times bestseller.*

5 OF THE BEST

POOLS WITH A VIEW IN GREECE

There's nothing like a stunning seascape to help you relax, unwind and put those everyday stresses into perspective.

Villa Avra

Corfu, 3 bedrooms
*Prices from £717pp**

With two beautiful bays spread out before you and a location in the heart of picturesque Gerald Durrell country, soaking up a life al fresco is the only sensible thing to do.

Vasiliki Cottages

Lefkada, 1 bedroom
*Prices from £867pp**

One of four, white-painted cottages – and an obvious choice if you're in search of a romantic setting.

Callista

Lefkada, 5 bedrooms
*Prices from £699pp**

A stay in one of our luxury Simpson Exclusive villas is the best complement to these sweeping panoramic views.

Spilia Bay House

Meganissi, 2 bedrooms
*Prices from £791pp**

Capture the essence of Meganissi as you enjoy the view of Spilia Bay from the terrace and infinity pool.

Villa Isidora

Eastern Crete, 3 bedrooms
*Prices from £643pp**

Full of light, this contemporary villa is an architect's dream – just a ten-minute drive from the vibrancy of authentic Sitia.

To book your ideal Greece holiday, get in touch with our travel experts on 020 8108 4545 or email sales@simpsontravel.com

*Prices are based on the lowest priced available dates as of 30 Jan 2017, for maximum occupancy and include flights, seven nights' accommodation and car hire or transfers. Flight supplements may apply.

To book your ideal Greece holiday, get in touch with our travel experts on 020 8108 4545 or email sales@simpsontravel.com

A TASTE OF OUR GREECE PORTFOLIO

Cavo Mare Villas

Zakynthos, 3 bedrooms
*Prices from £692pp**

Luxurious villas where cutting-edge technology meets contemporary design and idyllic views over the Ionian.

Simpson Secret – Lefkada

Lefkada, 2 bedrooms
*Prices from £791pp**

The ultimate beach retreat with stylish interiors, swimming pool and a secluded pebble cove just a few steps away.

Kalami Bay House

Corfu, 2 bedrooms
*Prices from £730pp**

A charming villa between Kalami and Kouloura with sea views and a platform perfect for sunbathing by the clear waters.

Villa Palekastro

Crete, 2 bedrooms
*Prices from £704pp**

Surrounded by trees with the family-friendly sands of Kouremenos metres from the door and lovely mountain views.

Apothikes Beach Suites

Crete, 1 bedroom
*Prices from £679pp**

Four traditional beachside suites, just steps from the water's edge and perfect for guests looking to explore the southern coast.

Muses Beach Villas

Crete, 1 bedroom
*Prices from £843pp**

These villas offer couples independence and beachside living, with everything needed to relax and unwind.

*Prices are based on the lowest priced available dates as of 30 Jan 2017, for maximum occupancy and include flights, seven nights' accommodation and car hire or transfers. Flight supplements may apply.

CORSICA

Experience the soft sand and soaring mountains of the Île de Beauté

THE FAMILY ROAD TRIP

David Bence stepped into the role of Simpson Travel's Managing Director last May – and a few months later, he had the chance to explore Corsica with his family for the very first time.

What's it like to be a Simpson Travel guest? It's a question I return to frequently as I dig more deeply into how to make the experience even better. From the first contact with our team in the London office to the flight home, it's a journey we aim to make as smooth and as pleasurable as possible, and the easiest way to really understand how it all comes together is to go on holiday as our guests do. My family were not unappreciative!

Corsica has some of the best beaches in the Mediterranean, with upmarket resorts and spectacularly unspoilt scenery that make it quite unique. I'd been eager to go for some time and last summer, we had the chance to see this island of white sands and Caribbean-style waters for ourselves.

I planned a family itinerary that included everything from the beaches we should visit to boat trips that we would remember for years to come. This is where the advice of Claire Carnell, who looks after our Corsican Product and Operations, and Holly Rudd, our Sales Team Leader, proved invaluable. They know the island inside out and have visited every single villa. With their suggestions and those of our overseas representatives, some of whom have lived in Corsica for years, I felt I was in very safe hands.

Travelling from the south to the north of the island, our first stop was the stylish **Casa Julia** – the perfect base to explore Pinarello, five minutes by car, as well as the village of Sainte Lucie de Porto Vecchio, an easy stroll away. We were spoilt for choice when it came to beaches too. As well as the famous Santa Giulia, my children, George and Millie, loved spending early morning snorkelling off the sand at Pinarello, followed by competitive afternoons back at the villa playing pool games, with plenty of different restaurants to try nearby.

Elegant Bonifacio was just under an hour away and, with little ones in tow, exploring the town by miniature train made easy work of the hill. The harbour is ancient, said to be the one mentioned in Homer's famous *Odyssey*, although today's iteration is all about upmarket restaurants and super yachts, but even they pale slightly into insignificance in such an incredibly historic setting.

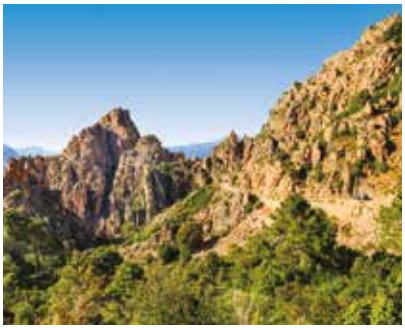
The next leg of our journey took us to Cavallo, an exclusive 300-acre island, where we swapped cars for golf buggies – you can imagine the childrens' excitement! On paper, this location excited me the most and it didn't disappoint: a laid-back island, where the daily roll-call involved relaxing, reading, snorkelling and 'losing' at games with the children. Castaway in **Maison Bleu** beach house for a few blissful days, we enjoyed barbecues on our terrace and peaceful moments on our own private beach.

It was hard to leave the beauty of this little island behind, but the four-hour journey up to the impressive **Villa Monte Ortu** in the north was one of the best drives of my life. Whilst the children slept soundly, we travelled through what seemed like a rolling sea of mountains – and the amazing scenery didn't stop when we reached our destination. The villa has incredible panoramic views – blue waters as far as the eye can see – and it was definitely one of the best barbecue spots of the holiday.

We dedicated ourselves to investigating the lovely bays and coves along the coast towards Calvi, about 15 minutes away by car. The town itself was an amazing place to explore too – an ancient citadel towering over the sea and below it an absorbing assortment of cafés and restaurants, including some by the pretty harbour. There was also an impressively long, white sandy beach, with watersports and plenty of picnic spots. This family-friendly destination was the perfect way to draw our restful and restorative trip to a close and add to the amazing store of memories that I'd built up over our time away – appreciating more than ever how very easily business can also become a pleasure.

DAVID BENCE *joined Simpson Travel initially as Finance Director. As well as sailing, he loves all things outdoors – cycling, long family dog walks and kayaking with his children.*

IMAGES: Each row, left to right – *Casa Julia; Bonifacio; Cavallo Island; Santa Giulia; Maison Bleu; Cavallo; the drive to the north of Corsica; Villa Monte Ortu.*



To find out more about our Corsica holidays, call us on 020 8108 4545 or email sales@simpsontravel.com

THREE GENERATIONS, ONE HAPPY HOLIDAY

Vermentinu Primonte

A gathering of mother, brother, sister and son, Marianna's holiday needed to work hard to accommodate everyone – and Corsica rose to the challenge.

Finding the perfect home from home

Our villa, **Vermentinu Primonte**, was set in beautifully landscaped gardens, with a large sundeck overlooking Santa Giulia bay. It was spacious enough for everyone to do their own thing, with numerous alcoves where Mum could curl up and read a book. The views were stunning and there was a secluded outdoor saltwater swimming pool where Elias could make as much noise as he liked. After a day out, it was a place to gather as a family around the large kitchen table and spend time together.

Sea and sand worth celebrating

I'd recommend Corsica's beaches to anyone with young children, as the calm, blue waters were completely safe. St Cyprien was our favourite, a sheltered bay with fish in the reefs and a floating pontoon where we spent hours jumping into the sea. The beach restaurant served a selection of fresh food, with beautiful wine and great service.

The town we loved

Porto Vecchio was an easy 15-minute drive away from the villa. We had a lovely day walking around the beautiful harbour, ogling the super yachts, and Mum was very happy to potter around the boutiques, while we explored the Old Town. She enjoyed the chance to sit and watch the world go by.

The verdict?

As a family, we take an annual holiday religiously. It's a time when we can come together and be there for one another, but also enjoy time alone to unwind. Corsica was a dream for that. We travelled at the end of August and the flight times were very manageable. It wasn't too hot and the beaches are perfect for little ones. We were never organised enough to take a packed lunch, which meant we spoilt ourselves with lunches in the lovely restaurants – a holiday treat that was totally worth it!

MARIANNA HADJIGEORGIOU *is the founder of Orange Pekoe, a pretty tearoom in a leafy suburb of London. Find out more at orangepekoeteas.com*

Vermentinu Primonte

To book **Vermentinu Primonte**, get in touch with us on 020 8108 4545 or email sales@simpsontravel.com

Bonifacio

St Cyprien beach

Santa Giulia bay

Three generations of Simpson Travellers

Grandmother

Effy

Eating in restaurants so close to the water was fantastic. I loved to sit with my tea and watch everyone around me enjoying themselves.

Mother

Marianna

My son embraced the sea for the first time and the still, shallow waters and soft sands were the highlight of my trip.

Brother

Sav

We'd planned to take a boat out one day, but never quite got round to it. We ended up just beach hopping and staying out until sunset.

Son

Elias

The food was yummy with loads of pizzas and ice creams different from the ones at home.

A FINE ROMANCE

Falling in love all over again.

With its white sands, ancient citadels and fragrant maquis wilderness, Corsica's cinematic splendour turns a holiday for two into a far more romantic affair. Claire Carnell – who looks after our Corsican Product and Operations – spends seven months of the year in the south of this beautiful French island, met her partner there and, being half-Corsican herself, she's not unfamiliar with its more seductive features. So we asked her to share a few…

CLAIRE CARNELL *has been a key member of Simpson Travel for more than ten years. As a child, she spent every school holiday in the village of Sotta, near Tarabucetta, in the south of the island.*

Taglio Rosso rock pools

Petit Spérone beach

Cavallo Island

The Taglio Rosso, rock pools

I love it here! Near the village of Taglio Rosso not far from Pinarello, the scenery is spectacular and it's easy to find a quiet spot to sunbathe on a smooth rock or take a dip in the pools. You can go mountain biking or hike up to the waterfall, which takes about 90 minutes, and there are a couple of little restaurants for a big helping of wild boar stew once you've worked up an appetite.

Ballistra beach

Beach lovers are never disappointed on Corsica, but there are some stretches of coastline that still take my breath away and this is one of them. South of Bonifacio, it's not well known, so it's quieter, the sand is whiter than white and the water is crystal clear. There are no sunloungers, but there is a little shack of a restaurant, serving up the most wonderful mussels, best ordered in advance.

Porto Vecchio's Old Town

There are so many places to enjoy a good glass of wine in Corsica – and they really do keep all the best for themselves! For atmosphere, the cobbled streets of Porto Vecchio's Old Town are hard to beat. You'll find many of the best restaurants around the ancient walls and, from there, you're also just a ten-minute walk from the marina and the bay. With all its twinkling lights, it's lovely for an evening stroll with plenty of Côte d'Azur elegance.

Paddle away from Piantarella

Piantarella beach is a windsurfing hotspot if your time for two includes an adrenaline rush. To set a more genteel pace, hire a kayak instead and potter your way around to the beaches of Spérone and Petit Spérone. They're beautifully unspoilt and reaching them by sea adds a desert island castaway feel to the whole experience.

And speaking of castaways…

I can't ignore the private island retreat of Cavallo. Catch the boat from Piantarella and this blissful private retreat is a world of strange rock formations, blue seas and untouched beaches, part of the protected Lavezzi marine park. There are no cars, just near-silent electric golf buggies, but because it's so small, I suggest taking a walk or some couples' pampering in the hotel spa, followed by dinner at La Ferme for sunset views across to the mountains of Corsica. Or, for our villa guests, there's a private chef service so you can just focus on each other.

To book your ideal Corsica holiday, get in touch with our travel experts on 020 8108 4545 or email sales@simpsontravel.com

A TASTE OF OUR CORSICA PORTFOLIO

U Scudu

The Valinco, 3 bedrooms
*Prices from £699pp**

A contemporary villa near the beautiful bays of the Valinco – with mesmerising views of the shimmering waters below.

Villa Laura

Porto Vecchio & Bonifacio, 4 bedrooms
*Prices from £660pp**

Spend quality time by the swimming pool or head out to explore Porto Vecchio and Pinarello, a 30-minute drive away.

Villa U Casone

Calvi & The Balagne, 5 bedrooms
*Prices from £755pp**

A show-stopping villa with high-spec features which is also conveniently located near the charming coastal town of L'Ile Rousse.

Casa Nera

Porto Vecchio & Bonifacio, 4 bedrooms
*Prices from £747pp**

Indulge yourself with elegant, contemporary accommodation including picture windows to frame the vineyard views.

L'Oliveraie de San Francescu

Calvi & The Balagne, 5 bedrooms
*Prices from £612pp**

Combine contemporary design with five acres and a private pool in a villa that welcomes the whole family.

Villa Laetitia

Porto Vecchio & Bonifacio, 5 bedrooms
*Prices from £634pp**

Near elegant St Cyprien beach, with stunning mountain views and restaurants nearby, this is a great choice for extended family gatherings.

*Prices are based on the lowest priced available dates as of 30 Jan 2017, for maximum occupancy and include flights, seven nights' accommodation and car hire or transfers. Flight supplements may apply.

MALLORCA

Dramatic mountains, picturesque villages and glorious sandy beaches

TAKE CENTRE STAGE IN SINEU

The Romans knew it as Sinium; the Moors, Yiynau – and centuries later, the past still plays out in rural Sineu, the starting point for a hundred holiday experiences.

Every Wednesday, history repeats itself in the small rural community of Sineu – the weekly market descends on the town. Accompanied by live music and pony rides for the little ones, it's an exuberant gathering of stalls piled high with farm produce, leather goods and crafts, whilst chickens, pigs, goats and rabbits add to the general cacophony from their stations in the medieval town square.

And if you could transport yourself back to the 14th century, the experience would have been much the same. Along with Sineu's megalithic remains, the atmospheric Palace Convent and seven-story parish church of Nostra Senyora de los Angeles, the town market is a reminder of how much – and how little – lives have changed.

And when the past comes calling in Sineu, it's worth embracing it fully with open arms, whether that means letting your evening unfold deliciously inside one of the atmospheric cellar restaurants; soaking up the atmosphere of Sa Fira, the grand Spring Fair, or being swept along by the lively summer festival.

Located in the very centre of the island, Sineu also comes with many exceptional reasons to leave and go exploring. Binissalem's famous wine trails are an easy 20-minute drive away and 25-minutes northwards lie the white sands and clear waters of the stunning Playa de Muro, Mallorca's most beautiful beach. Or you can head towards the sunrise and more stunning sandy coastlines around Santanyi in the south-east.

Forty minutes away, the elegant island capital of Palma is a meeting point of shimmering marina, leafy boulevards and a nightlife to make any cosmopolitan city proud – or scale down to Bunyola, on the edge of the Tramuntana Mountains in the west, a hillside stop-off for the little train from Palma to Sóller and home to the well-preserved house and peaceful Jardines de Alfabia.

In short, of course, there's a whole island within easy reach and, like the point of a pair of compasses, Sineu, within the rural heartland of olive groves and open plains, makes the perfect place for that adventure to begin.

Stay at Ca Na Fustera

Pollença & Puerto Pollença, 5 bedrooms

*Prices from £347pp**

New for 2017, our family-friendly villa near Sineu is a converted farmhouse of Oriental flourishes and hacienda chic.

To book **Ca Na Fustera**, call us on 020 8108 4545
or email sales@simpsontravel.com

*Price is based on the lowest priced available date as of 30 Jan 2017, for maximum occupancy and includes flights, seven nights' accommodation and car hire. Flight supplements may apply.

IMAGES: Clockwise from top right – *Treats found at Sineu Market; view of Sineu Church from the outskirts of the town; Sineu Market; Playa de Muro; Sineu Market; the streets of Sineu.*

ON THE ROAD

Mallorca's most scenic driving routes.

Featuring cinematic landscapes and fascinating stop-offs, these are the road trips worth adding to your holiday itinerary.

Pollença–Sóller road

Deià

1 *Carretera de Sa Calobra*

Off the Pollença-Sóller road, this is one of the most scenic routes in the world. *Top Gear* dubbed it the work of an artist. Or a madman. Certainly the hairpin bends and vertical drops metres from the driver's seat give it a certain edge…

Rich rewards: Aside from switchbacks and stunning mountain views, you'll find Sa Calobra beach at the end of it, with restaurants, and a second hidden beach at the mouth of the dramatic Torrent de Pareis Gorge – just follow the footpath through the mountain.

Road tips: Get on the road early or late in the day to avoid meeting the coaches.

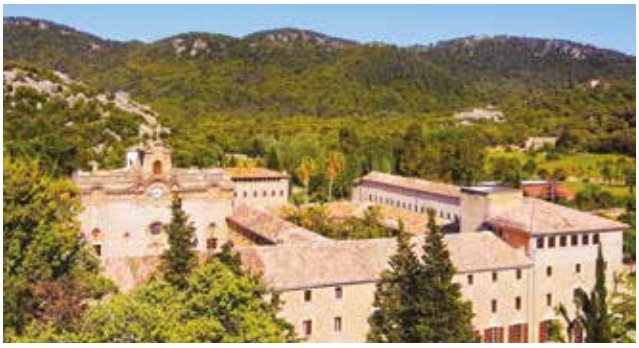
2 *Andratx to Sóller*

With the Tramuntana Mountains, blue seas and unforgettable views alongside, this winding road is a journey back in time through Mallorca's most picturesque villages.

Rich rewards: Follow in the footsteps of the poet Robert Graves with a stop-off in beautiful Deià; discover Chopin's atmospheric Valldemossa and visit the Real Cartuja Monastery, which houses a collection of the composer's pianos. And then there's Sóller, in a valley of orange groves. Its art nouveau mansions, galleries and pavement cafés are reason enough to get out of the car.

Road tips: Set aside a day – you'll need time to enjoy the many distractions en route.

The Formentor Peninsula lighthouse



Lluc Monastery

3 *The Formentor Peninsula*

This rollercoaster of a road gives Sa Calobra a run for its money. Built by the same engineer, the views have proved equally televisual. Your holy grail is the impressive lighthouse 384m above sea level at the end, 20 kilometres from Puerto Pollença.

Rich rewards: A tunnel through a mountain, pine forests, steep ascents and 400 metres cliffs are just a few of the highpoints. You'll also pass the Blue Flag Formentor beach – and the lighthouse has a bar, should your passengers need a drink.

Road tips: Although the general condition of the road is good, look out for cyclists and hikers.

4 *The old Pollença–Sóller road*

The narrow Ma-10 is a slower meander than the inland route, but the mountain views are stunning, plus there's the added advantage of the impressive Lluc Monastery along the way – and the hair-raising detour down to Sa Calobra.

Rich rewards: There are plenty of viewing points for admiring the spectacular scenery and if you've got little ones who need to run around, the monastery offers welcome respite from the heat, with a fascinating museum, botanical gardens and children's play areas.

Road tips: Note where the viewing points are before you set off, as the small parking areas are easy to miss.

5 OF THE BEST

MODERN MALLORCAN VILLAS

Combining creature comforts with 21st-century design, our 2017 Mallorca portfolio includes a fresh take on island accommodation.

Empaltada

Pollença, 3 bedrooms
*Prices from £534pp**

Surrounded by expanses of beautiful countryside, this elegant villa is also within walking distance of the pretty village of Selva.

Ca Na Fustera

Pollença, 5 bedrooms
*Prices from £347pp**

Near Sineu, this chic converted farmhouse is right in the centre of the island, making it an upmarket starting point for holiday exploration.

Sa Rota Nova

Pollença, 3 bedrooms
*Prices from £417pp**

Being just a 15-minute drive from lovely Playa de Muro, you'll find a holiday experience made for the style-conscious sun worshipper.

Ca Na Rieres

Pollença, 3 bedrooms
*Prices from £508pp**

Distinctly stylish, and hidden down a narrow street off Pollença's main square, locations don't come much better than this.

Villa Raconet

Pollença, 3 bedrooms
*Prices from £426pp**

Stake your claim on a stylish villa on the edge of charming Cala San Vicente within walking distance of the beach and restaurants.

To book your ideal Mallorca holiday, get in touch with our travel experts on 020 8108 4545 or email sales@simpsontravel.com

*Prices are based on the lowest priced available dates as of 30 Jan 2017, for maximum occupancy and include flights, seven nights' accommodation and car hire or transfers. Flight supplements may apply.

A VERY MALLORCAN TIPPLE

Exceptional wines are not very hard to find in Mallorca and many of the most famous names are gathered around Binissalem on the plains below the spectacular Tramuntana Mountains. There are over 70 wine producers on the island, the different terrains lending a unique personality to the reds, whites and rosés they nurture.

Of course the Mediterranean climate, combined with just the right amount of rain, abundant sunshine and good soil, forms the perfect environment for creating these excellent wines, but overlaid is a unique combination of innovation, tradition, eco-awareness and international influences, as well as the location of each vineyard.

The award-winning Bodegas Angel is in the heart of the wine region, in the town of Santa Maria del Cami. Its wines are shaped by a close proximity to the sea, the local red clay known as 'Call Vermell,' which is rich in iron oxide, and the influence of the north wind.

Blending indigenous with foreign varietal grapes, its 50 acres of vineyards are currently planted with a combination of young vines and 50-year-old plants; a diverse selection of vines, including the Mallorca Prensal Blanc (Moll) and Manto Negro to the French Viognier and Chardonnay for the white wine and Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon for the reds. These vines are pruned, fertilised, weeded and yield controlled to produce the ideal grapes for harvesting, which are handpicked to arrive at the bodega in the best possible condition. The overall result is a selection of satisfyingly complex wines.

Dedicated to the wine lovers

Other tasting opportunities in Mallorca come with sunset boat trips, train rides, helicopter excursions and concerts out by the vineyards, as well as a host of tours around boutique wineries. This year's Pollença Wine Fair takes place on the 6-7 May and in September there's Binissalem's boisterous Festa des Vermar, including the famous grape fight and fire run.

To find out more about our Pollença and Sóller properties, call us on 020 8108 4545 or email sales@simpsontravel.com

IMAGES: Left – *Mallorcan wines.* Below – *Bodegas Angel Vineyard.*

Stay at Ca'n Pensit

Pollença, 2 bedrooms

*Prices from £401pp**

Set on the slopes of the Tramuntana Mountains, and lovingly furnished by the owner, Margarita, who has made this a real home from home.

*Price is based on the lowest priced available date as of 30 Jan 2017, for maximum occupancy and includes flights, seven nights' accommodation and car hire. Flight supplements may apply.

To book your ideal Mallorca holiday, get in touch with our travel experts on 020 8108 4545 or email sales@simpsontravel.com

A TASTE OF OUR MALLORCA PORTFOLIO

Villa Jordi

Pollença & Puerto Pollença, 2 bedrooms
*Prices from £416pp**

Combining contemporary styling, countryside and time to chill out for small families or couples looking for more space.

Son Pelat

Southern Mallorca, 5 bedrooms
*Prices from £402pp**

A beautiful country home set within spacious, stunning gardens, with an extra-large private swimming pool.

Cabanellas

Pollença & Puerto Pollença, 3 bedrooms
*Prices from £399pp**

Enjoy a chic retreat in your own characterful villa with landscaped gardens, sandy beaches and a choice of restaurants nearby.

Sa Fontasa

Pollença & Puerto Pollença, 2 bedrooms
*Prices from £415pp**

Holiday the Mallorcan way, and make your escape to the country in a stylish villa within walking distance of pretty Moscari.

Caponet

Pollença & Puerto Pollença, 4 bedrooms
*Prices from £389pp**

Halfway up the famous Calvary steps, this elegant mansion is discreetly hidden yet enjoys views over the town.

Ca'n Antuna

Fornalutx & Sóller, 3 bedrooms
*Prices from £424pp**

Take time out in Mallorca's loveliest village, with this charming stone house accompanied by panoramic rural views.

*Prices are based on the lowest priced available dates as of 30 Jan 2017, for maximum occupancy and include flights, seven nights' accommodation and car hire. Flight supplements may apply.

TURKEY

Spectacularly forested mountains and the bluest of seas

THE START OF SOMETHING GOOD

Our Simpson Hotels are a much-loved part of Simpson Travel, but did you know that it was Turkey where the collection began?

IMAGES: This page, left to right, top to bottom – *Losta Sahil Evi, Asia Suite terrace; Kalkan Regency suite; evening dining at the Korsan Suites; aerial shot of Kalkan.*

Opposite page, left to right – *Kalkan Regency; Korsan Suites; Mediteran Hotel.*

The subject of Simpson Hotels began over strong Turkish coffee and truly inspirational sea views – and, not long afterwards, the intimate **Mediteran Hotel** became the first in our Simpson Hotel Collection – and, happily, we still include it today, along with the celebrated **Kalkan Regency**, the **Korsan Suites** and **Losta Sahil Evi**, all on the fabulously beautiful Turquoise Coast.

Whilst our Simpson Hotels in Turkey exceed expectations when it comes to service – it comes naturally in this uniquely hospitable destination – they each have an individual style and personality that, for Mathew Simpson, our Product Director, makes them stand out from the crowd. He's spent time really getting to know the local families and building the relationships that have resulted in a Turkish collection that sets us apart from other tour operators.

Where do you belong?

For the family minded

The Korsan Suites is an 'aparthotel' – a flexible, innovative 'best of all worlds' alternative to the traditional notion of what a hotel can be. It offers the luxury, location, service and style that gives tots, teens and in-betweens the best holiday ever – and their parents, quite possibly, the easiest.

Fully-equipped kitchens, the hotel restaurant and room service can be swapped for a short walk into Kalkan, where you can dine out or stock up from the many shops and lively weekly market. Kalkan is also the place to join boat trips and embark on family adventures along the Turquoise Coast, with its beach clubs and fabulous beaches, nearby Patara among them. The hotel has eight, two and three-bedroom suites, each with a spacious terrace and private Jacuzzi, so you can walk straight from bed to tub.

For those who like indulgence

With style, sophistication and more of those simply stunning Kalkan views, the prestigious **Kalkan Regency** is one of the Turquoise Coast's best-loved destinations. This is due to the abundant generosity, attention to detail and passion of the Tomambay family who run it and have been our exclusive partners since 2016. They bring the warmth and personalised service that makes every guest feel like a dear friend, prompting many to return year after year.

The outstanding food is enough to make hotel dining a real alternative to Kalkan's celebrated restaurants nearby and with the addition of a traditional Hammam, chlorine-free pool and elegant spa, days simply drift along in the sunshine. Children are welcome during the school summer holidays, but otherwise the Kalkan Regency is an Adult Only Hotel and, for special occasions, the new Pool Suites are an excellent way to celebrate.

For the sunset chasers

There are few views as magical as those from the bar of the **Mediteran Hotel** at sunset, as the pink of dusk dances over the sea and the twinkling lights of Kalkan come to life. Set between soaring mountains and with its famous rooftop-restaurants, harbourside dining and laid-back cocktail bars, Kalkan is a unique destination, just a 15-minute walk downhill from the Mediteran. The hotel's shuttle service can replace downhill strolls – opt for a taxi back, to enjoy Kalkan at your own leisure.

A sociable, relaxing place to stay, the Mediteran offers you a choice of rooms and suites, many with sea views, and an infinity pool for those exceptionally lazy days when even your complimentary entry pass to the nearby beach club can't entice you away from those spectacular views.

For those who love authenticity

What better way for a day to begin than with a dip in the bluest of seas – and morning swims at **Losta Sahil Evi**, which has its own private jetty, are just one of the reasons why this intimate six-bedroom hotel feels like a real home in the heart of all that's perfectly unspoilt.

From this quiet spot on a Bozburun Peninsula waterfront, you can stroll into lovely Selimiye village and linger in smart restaurants and cafés right by the sea, with evenings along the stylish promenade lifted by the lilting strains of jazz. In the busier season, when the expensive yachts glide into harbour, take in the traditional side of the village, set back from the seafront, or wander over to the sandy beach, just a ten-minute walk away.

MATHEW SIMPSON *is our Product Director and Graham Simpson's son. He joined the company with his brother Daniel in 2004.*

MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE

As destinations go, Turkey is a vast and colourful one with a fascinating history and, over the years, we've got to know it very well – but even we were surprised by a few of these interesting facts and figures...

Turkey is the original destination of the Orient Express.

The *Nazar Boncugu* or 'Evil Eye' is worn across the country to ward off evil, a superstition that's at least 3,000 years old.

Turkey provides 70% of the world's hazelnuts.

Saint Nicholas, popularly known as Santa Claus, was born in Patara near Kalkan.

The Temple of Artemis at Ephesus and the Mausoleum at Halicarnassus are two of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World.

Celsus Library in Ephesus

The words turquoise, parchment, yoghurt, meander, angora, kismet, kilim and chock-a-block all originate from the Turkish language.

The cherry was discovered by the Romans in Kerasos, now Giresun, on the Black Sea Coast.

Wine production began here as early as 4,000 BC.

Turkish wine

Tulips from Amsterdam? Not quite. Turkey introduced them to Holland in the 6th century and remains an international supplier. The tulip is its national flower.

Its historical relics pertain to three of the world's major religions: Christianity, Judaism and Islam.

Julius Caesar uttered the famous words "*Veni, vidi, vici*" (I came, I saw, I conquered) in Amasya, East of Ankara.

The Uluburun shipwreck near Kaş, saw one of the largest excavations of Bronze Age artefacts – amounting to nearly 17 tons.

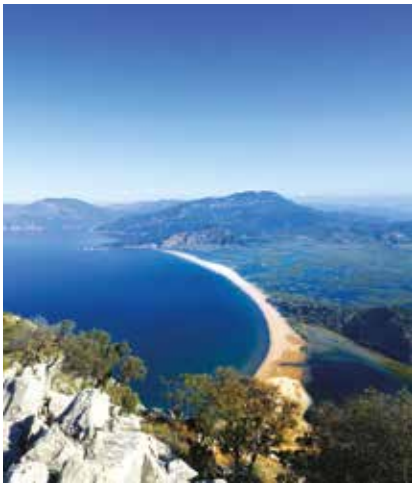
Coffee has been served here since 1555 when it was brought to Istanbul by two Syrian traders.

Around 150 archaeological excavations take place every year.

Part of the south-western shore was a wedding gift from Mark Antony to Cleopatra.

Approximately 20% of the population live in Istanbul.

Dalyan's Iztuzu Beach is a breeding ground for the endangered loggerhead turtle, a 45-million-year-old species.



Iztuzu Beach

To book your ideal Turkey holiday, get in touch with our travel experts on 020 8108 4545 or email sales@simpsontravel.com

A TASTE OF OUR TURKEY PORTFOLIO

Villa Askim

Bozburun Peninsula, 2 bedrooms
*Prices from £560pp**

A villa with a private jetty just metres from the water, offering ample outdoor space for dining by the sea.

The Pasha's Retreat

Dalyan, 3 bedrooms
*Prices from £440pp**

Dwarfed by dramatic cliffs, this 300-year-old lovingly restored home offers guests an exceptionally peaceful retreat.

Sakli Ev

Islamlar, 1 bedroom
*Prices from £775pp**

Set the scene for romance with a holiday off the beaten track in this stylish villa, boasting glorious views over Kalkan Bay.

The Korsan Kuzey

Kalkan, 5 bedrooms
*Prices from £526pp**

A luxurious villa that spoils guests with mesmerising sea views, a beach platform and a secluded waterfront.

Villa Konak

Kaş, 3 bedrooms
*Prices from £507pp**

Style on a hillside with spectacular views and a diving platform for welcome dips into perfectly clear waters.

The Korsan Taş Bahçe

Kalkan, 2 bedrooms
*Prices from £623pp**

A romantic and stylish villa with stunning sea views, a ten-minute walk away from vibrant Kalkan.

*Prices are based on the lowest priced available dates as of 30 Jan 2017, for maximum occupancy and include flights, seven nights' accommodation and car hire or transfers. Flight supplements may apply.

YOUR GUIDE TO PACKING LIGHT

Belinda Robinson, founder of online swimwear company, Coco Bay, offers us a peek inside her suitcase.

I'm always telling our shoppers that it's possible to create a versatile holiday wardrobe without breaking the bank (or the suitcase!). With my own holiday in sight, it was time to practise what I preach and my aim was to find a couple of bikinis that work together, so I could take just a few accessories and mix and match everything.

So, where to start?

I'm a sucker for blues and this year there are some stunning blues running through the Seafolly collections. There's a style to suit everyone, offering good lift and support. I also packed a few kaftans and cover-ups to match the bikinis I had chosen. And then there was my new crush of the season: Seafolly's beautiful Tapestry dress to take you from a day at the beach to evening sundowners.

Belinda's suitcase essentials

1 The all-important sun hat
2 An easy, lightweight dress, which can be dressed up or down
3 A colourful playsuit, handy for day or night
4 A couple of pairs of shorts and bikinis
5 Active wear – just in case
6 A pair of Havaianas – do flip flops get more comfortable?

What you don't need to pack

Travel with Simpson Travel and, in addition to your welcome pack, containing some helpful edibles for your first meal, we also provide pool and beach towels and usually a hairdryer too. However, for a list of what's in or out, check with our helpful Sales Team for the details of your particular hotel, villa or apartment.

On *Travel* readers are entitled to a 15% discount* at cocobay.co.uk until 31 August 2017. Just enter SIMPSON1701 at the checkout!

*The Simpson Travel discount is valid until 31 August 2017 and can only be used once per customer. Valid on full priced items only. Not valid with any other offer.

COCO BAY

FAMILIES

From a toddler's first trip abroad to your annual family escape

ALL THE RIGHT INGREDIENTS

Award-winning Mini Travellers blogger, Karen Beddow, shares the qualities that made her Simpson Travel family villa holiday so special.

WATCH THE VIDEO!

From first impressions of the villa to a boat trip to remember, take a look at our 'fly on the wall' Beddow family holiday video at simpsontravel.com/family-holidays

Simply stunning villas

The villas are often beyond words. You only have to spend five minutes browsing the photos on the website to see that – and believe me, you can trust the photos!

Space for multi-gen holidays

Multi-generational holidays can be so much fun and you've got a generous choice of large villas with space to share, so you can travel with friends or grandparents – who can be the best babysitters too!

Everything is taken care of

Car hire with car seats added, ferries, transfers from the airport to the port – it's all booked for you. An email arrives the week before you leave with all your travel documents attached, so no hunting around for the bits you've booked separately over the course of the last few months.

Be seriously spoilt

On a Simpson Travel villa holiday you'll feel completely looked after, like you have lived as the celebs do, and be left wondering why you have to go back to reality! When your daily life is crazy-busy with children, this is something everyone could do with.

Seamless customer service

Nothing is too much trouble. The customer service is excellent from the beginning to the end of the booking process. And if you know you need a break but don't know where to go, you can always ask for a recommendation.

All the help you need

The representatives genuinely can't do enough for you. You can text or call them and they will do their best to make it happen for you. That may mean looking after you at the airport, making sure you are where you should be and looking after your children whilst you move more bags than you needed to bring!

Tried and tested locations

You won't be staying in a villa in the middle of nowhere. It will be in an accessible location with restaurants, good beaches and places to visit nearby. These things are essential with children, as you never know what you might need.

A home from home – but even better

Cook a meal for the children, put them to bed and enjoy some quality time together watching the sunset. You could also ask for a private chef to come to your villa and the fantastic maid service takes away any need to do chores.

Holiday Extras

Simpson Travel can also arrange all your travelling extras, so you don't have to. Airport parking, airport hotels and lounges: everything to make life easier for you.

KAREN BEDDOW *is the editor of MiniTravellers.co.uk, which she founded whilst doing what she loves most… going on holiday!*

The Beddows stayed at Sapphire

Sivota, Greece, 3 bedrooms

*Prices from £736pp**

Sitting high on the hillside above Sivota, this villa combines jaw-dropping views and luxurious seclusion.

To book **Sapphire**, call us on 020 8108 4545 or email sales@simpsontravel.com

*Price is based on the lowest priced available date as of 30 Jan 2017, for maximum occupancy and includes flights, seven nights' accommodation and car hire or transfers. Flight supplements may apply.

THE CRÈCHE FACTOR

Natasha Sholay, our Crèche Manager, reveals how our Crèches & Children's Clubs ensure even our youngest guests have a holiday to remember.

Welcome to your extended family!

Some of the children have never even been left with their grandparents before, so the challenge that my team and I face is making them feel comfortable. I contact the parents before the holiday, so we already know one another when they get here. Many of the families return year after year, and I still keep in touch with others through emails and the UK office.

It's all in the details

Before the holiday, we ask parents to fill out a Crèche & Children's Club form, which helps us understand and build a profile on each child. It sheds some light on their interests. For example, last summer one of the children absolutely loved trains, so I was able to tell the nannies to put extra train-themed toys out before he arrived.

We're a small, close-knit team

We see this as a huge asset because it means we're able to deliver a personal service. We get to know the children really well and treat them like our own. And they love it too, as they get all the hugs they want, but we're also able to listen to all of their funny stories – it's easy to get lost in their world.

It's about flexibility

We release a weekly schedule of activities, from bubble days to a day of crazy art. However, on a day-to-day basis, this may change as we try to keep the children happy by doing what they want to do. Our ability to be flexible allows the children to feel like they're on holiday – and for us it feels like a day of fun with the children rather than a day at work.

It's their holiday too

Our children not only leave the club skipping, but they turn up early skipping too. We want happy children, as happy children means happy parents – and that means a great family holiday for everyone.

WATCH THE VIDEO!

To find out more about the role of our amazing nannies, along with all the details that a parent needs to know, visit simpsontravel.com/simpson-creches

Natasha's favourite crèche moment

A couple of years ago, I received an email from a family considering travelling with their autistic son and his brother. With my background in special needs, they were confident in booking their holiday and he came to the crèche every day, interacted with the other children and enjoyed himself in a way he'd never done before. We gave the family something money couldn't buy: quality time together and total peace of mind.

Periyali Villas and Crèche

Zakynthos, Greece, 11 villas
*Prices from £747pp**

A collection of light, bright family villas, each with a small gated pool and a larger swimming pool to share – and, as well as a peaceful peninsula location, you'll find a sandy beach just a ten-minute walk away.

Mousses Villas and Crèche

Lefkada, Greece, 12 villas
*Prices from £630pp**

With spa treatments and its own taverna and bar (including indulgent poolside service), Mousses looks after parents as well as their offspring, and has a large pool, comfortable villas and lush gardens loved by everyone.

NATASHA SHOLAY *is our Crèche Manager based at Mousses in Lefkada. She's also in charge of recruiting all our nannies.*

*Prices are based on the lowest priced available dates as of 30 Jan 2017, on four sharing and include flights, seven nights' accommodation and car hire. Flight supplements may apply.

MAKING A SPLASH

Swimming pool games, courtesy of Zoggs, The Fun Swim Company

Horse race For 2+ players

You will need: a pool noodle

- Start at one end of the pool, sitting with your legs either side of the noodle – remember to hold on to the side with both hands.
- Use your hands to paddle forwards and the first to the other side wins!

Diving for shells For 1+ player

You will need: Zoggs' 'Clam Dive & Hunt'

- Separate the clams and throw them into the swimming pool.
- Race against the clock or other players to retrieve and put the two halves of each clam together as quickly as you can. The quickest time wins!

Sequence search For 1+ player

You will need: Zoggs' 'Dive Sticks' or different coloured objects. Make sure they're safe to submerge – and don't forget your goggles!

- Place the items in a line at the bottom of the pool, at roughly two metre intervals.
- Racing against the clock or other players, retrieve the items in the right colour order, one after the other.

On Travel readers are entitled to 20% off Zoggs' swimming products when you order online at zoggs.com. Just use the code SIMPSON20 at checkout.*

*The discount code can be used once per customer. Savings apply to full-priced items only. Valid until 31 October 2017.

#SimpsonTravel

JOIN THE CONVERSATION

We love reading your wonderful testimonials from your time away, but you can also share your photos on Instagram with us by tagging #SimpsonTravel. Thank you to our guests for sharing their special moments with us.

Pollença, Mallorca
@hannahtanner84

Corfu, Greece
@guiltymother

Porto Vecchio, Corsica
@orangepekoeteas

Greece
@simpsontravel

Sapphire, Sivota
@mini_travellers

GK Beach Hotel, Greece
@thewholesomehunter

The Kalkan Regency, Turkey
@andrewporte

The Rou Estate, Corfu
@naomichavasse

Anti Paxos, Greece
@eyeowna

/simpsontravel

To book your ideal family holiday, get in touch with our travel experts on 020 8108 4545 or email sales@simpsontravel.com

A TASTE OF OUR FAMILY-FRIENDLY PORTFOLIO

Finca Malena – Mallorca

Pollença & Puerto Pollença, 3 bedrooms
*Prices from £441pp**

A charming Mallorcan house with a striking mountainous backdrop and restaurants only a few minutes away.

La Bastide du Paon Bleu – France

Provence, 5 bedrooms
*Accom-only prices from £7,000**

This 19th-century country house is perfect for large gatherings with a home cinema, children's play area and pool.

Villa Pierre Paul – Corsica

Porto Vecchio & Bonifacio, 4 bedrooms
*Prices from £814pp**

The sports pitch, play area and summer kitchen create a perfect villa holiday for a larger family gathering.

Acqua di Mare Villas – Greece

Lefkada, 2 bedrooms
*Prices from £716pp**

Right by a sandy beach and with a private pool, few contemporary villas can boast a location like this – or the style.

Casa Brilli – Italy

Tuscany, 3 bedrooms
*Accom-only prices from £950**

Surrounded by rolling Tuscan countryside, go al fresco with a pool, large garden, shady pergola and outside dining area.

Villa Lapis – Turkey

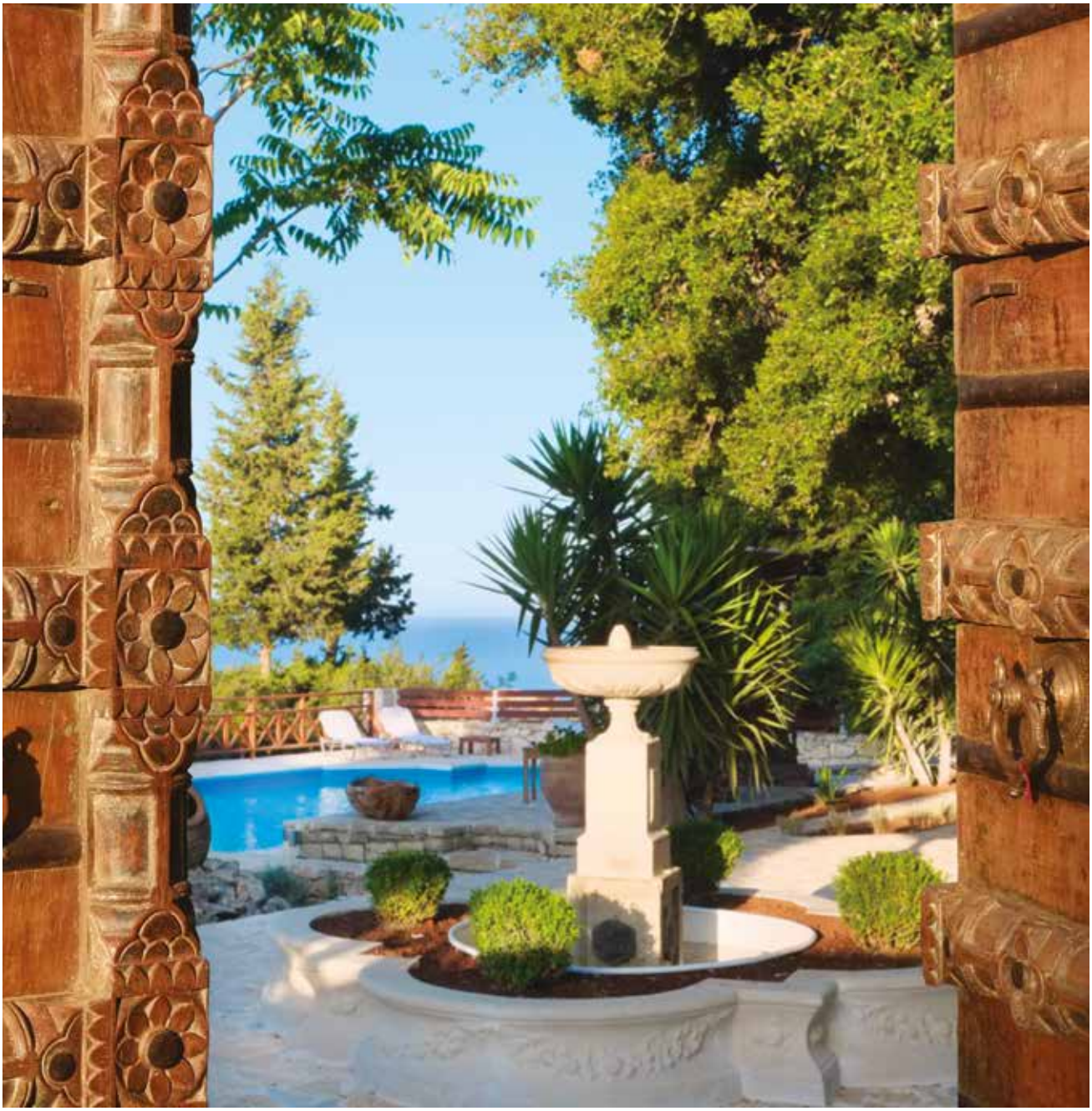
Kalkan, 5 bedrooms
*Prices from £748pp**

An ultra-modern villa with stunning views over Kalamar Bay, an infinity pool and your own private rooftop bar.

*Prices are based on the lowest priced available dates as of 30 Jan 2017. Per person prices are based on four sharing and include flights, seven nights' accommodation and car hire or transfers. Flight supplements may apply. Accommodation-only prices are for seven nights.

SIMPSON HOTELS

One elegant concept, 12 uniquely different holiday experiences



FROM SERVICE TO EXPERIENCE

Over the years, we've refined our vision of what makes an exceptional holiday and our Simpson Hotels Collection draws on that experience: each carefully chosen, each truly individual and each reflecting the values that make your stay a world away from impersonal high-rise homogeneity…

IMAGES: Top to bottom – *Arosmari Village Hotel, Crete, Greece; Purple Apricot Hotel, Paxos, Greece.*

Boutique is beautiful

Our small, distinctive, intimate hotels offer an experience tailored to the needs of a more discerning traveller – those who value character and comfort as much as they love the aesthetics of style and good taste, all delivered with genuine care and attention to detail.

Service that's personal to you

Whether it's our own staff or the owners of the hotel themselves, you'll discover a commitment to proactive, warm and friendly service that exceeds our guests' expectations in unexpected and helpful ways. To put it simply, when we say that nothing is too much trouble, we really mean it.

A higher class of comfort zone

From cool cotton bed linen to breakfasts bursting with fresh local produce, we never compromise on the essentials of a comfortable stay – and we often add our own personal touches too, redesigning rooms or designing a new swimming pool, for a smoother, more relaxing experience from start to finish.

Luxurious locations

Whether you're metres from a secluded beach or gazing out across miles of exquisite coastline; surrounded by olive groves or relaxing in the soothing presence of rolling hills, Simpson Hotels are chosen not only for what they are, but also for where they are. And where they are is heavenly.

Uniquely ours, chosen for you

Our guests come to us in search of something a little different so we're always extremely selective about the hotels we choose to work with – and most are exclusive to Simpson Travel. Our Simpson Hotel Collection is built on relationships that are made to last, from our close-knit team to our hotel owners, but above all, with our guests who trust us to create the holiday they've been hoping for.

Our Adult Only Hotels

An invitation to make the most of lazy summer days, our Adult Only Hotels come with an abundance of peace and quiet. Without little ones around, pool time is a tranquil affair, with good breakfasts, like-minds and stunning views to enhance your experience. And should you wish to explore beyond the lovely gardens, a beach and a choice of welcoming restaurants are never too far away.

To see our complete Simpson Hotel Collection and find out why our guests return year after year, visit simpsontravel.com/simpson-hotels

IMAGES: Clockwise from top – *GK Beach Hotel, Crete, Greece; Kalkan Regency, Kalkan, Turkey; Purple Apricot Hotel, Paxos, Greece; Blue Jamine Hotel, Kefalonia, Greece.*

HOTELS REIMAGINED

Years of experience in the travel industry has taught us many things – among them, the power of potential. Not every villa or hotel we look at is the finished product, but we see a picture of what it could be – and, if the owners are willing, that's the start of an exciting journey that involves turning a vision into reality.

This was certainly true of our two new Simpson Hotels in Italy, **La Madonnina** and **Mille Desideri**, which had their full potential revealed by our interior designer, Laura Doggett.

How did you get involved with our Italian project?
I've been designing interiors since 2001 and had done some work for Graham and Yianna Simpson. When he saw these beautiful houses, but felt the interiors weren't quite up to Simpson standards, he asked me to go and have a look.

What was your starting point for the designs?
I did an audit and, initially, it was about looking at what we could work with and what should be taken out. I don't do show; I do homes that people feel comfortable in and want to spend time in: ones that are homely and traditional with a contemporary edge. My aim was to retain the integrity of each hotel, but to reflect a Simpson Travel 'theme' within the designs for both – touches such as the handmade headboards, the cushions and throws – so that even though they're individual properties, they look like they belong together.

What did you have to do?
Mille Desideri, owned by Nicola and Rosa, was the biggest project. It was an absolutely beautiful property, but rather dark inside and needed a spot of decluttering. It was a case of clearing it all back to reveal the wonderful features of the house. La Madonnina, owned by Maria and Rinaldo, was much more about changing the colour scheme, brightening it up with new furniture and adding softness; making it a more comfortable space. Ultimately, for both properties, I sourced every item we brought in for both properties, from the furniture and soft furnishings to the accessories and luxury bedding.

How did the owners react to you being there?
I think they were a little nervous at first, but as we got to know each other better, they trusted that I wasn't going to ruin their property and saw the value in what I was doing. Equally they were all totally charming and it was important to me that their personalities remained part of the work I was doing. I asked them what colours they liked and talked them through each step so they understood the process.

What were the highlights for you?
I'd never worked in Italy before and the hospitality I received was amazing. I had to eat a lot. Lots and lots of meals. Maria, one of your hosts at La Madonnina, is a great cook and anyone who stays at Mille Desideri is also in for a treat. Rosa's roast pork is some of the best I've ever tasted!

LAURA DOGGETT *is the owner of interior design company Home(ing). You can find out more about her work and projects by visiting homeing.co.uk*

NEW FOR 2017

Mille Desideri

Tuscany, Italy, 6 bedrooms
*Prices from £701 per room**

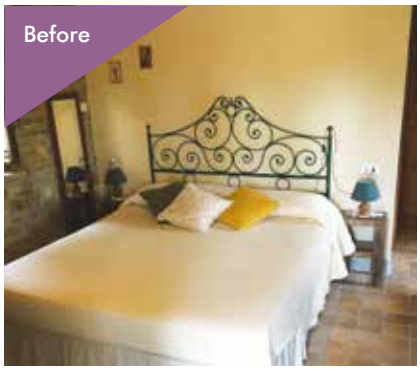
To book **Mille Desideri**, call us on **020 8108 4545** or email **sales@simpsontravel.com**

*Price is based on the lowest priced available date as of 30 Jan 2017, on a room-only basis, for seven nights.

NEW FOR 2017

La Madonnina

Tuscany, Italy, 2 bedrooms
*Prices from £927 per room**



To book **La Madonnina**, call us on **020 8108 4545** or email **sales@simpsontravel.com**

*Price is based on the lowest priced available date as of 30 Jan 2017, on a room-only basis, for seven nights.

COUPLES

Where would you like your relationship to take you?

TAILOR-MADE FOR TWO

We've spent many years refining our couples' holidays to ensure there's something for everyone, however you like to spend your time together...

Muses Beach Villas – Urania

Chiona taverna

Kouremenos beach

Sand underfoot, Muses Beach Villas – Urania

East Crete, Greece, 1 bedroom
Recommended by Zoe Bowyer, Greece Product Executive

Named after the Astronomer's Muse, comfortably contemporary Urania is a heavenly place to stay – and being on Kouremenos beach in the beautifully unspoilt East Crete, it asks nothing more of you than a passion for sun, sea and sand.

The view you wake up to...
Of the four **Muses Beach Villas, Urania** is nearest the beach, so there's nothing between you and the sea but your own private pool and a few small trees. This is a popular spot for windsurfers but if you're not there for the waves yourself, you can still enjoy the relaxed atmosphere at the beach bar-taverna.

Don't feel like cooking?
Why not soak up the quintessentially Greek vibe a ten-minute walk away, and enjoy excellent seafood in Chiona's beach taverna, with the water just a few feet away. The shops and restaurants of Palekastro are no more than a ten-minute drive.

The love interest
Crete's most beautiful stretch of sand, Xerokambos, is a 45-minute drive away or find a 'taste of paradise' on Erimoupoli beach.

A country retreat, Villa Barbarossa

Porto Vecchio & Bonifacio, Corsica, 1 bedroom
Recommended by Claire Carnell, Corsica Product and Operations

Given Corsica's passion for its own fine wines, this contemporary countryside retreat places you in esteemed company – namely the vineyards of the prestigious Clos Canarelli Wine Estate. And thanks to its location, there's a wonderful sense of seclusion too.

The view you wake up to...
Fifty shades of green and your own private pool.

Don't feel like cooking?
Historic Figari is just a ten-minute drive away and Porto Vecchio is 20 minutes by road. There, the walls of its Old Town are home to excellent restaurants with views across the upmarket marina. There's also a choice of cosy *fermes auberges* on the Figari road.

The love interest
Corsica's Figari region is a cosy gathering of 14 hamlets where you'll find numerous opportunities for wine tasting. **Villa Barbarossa** is also close to a number of historic sites and Caribbean-style beaches, Santa Giulia and Palombaggia among them.

Life and soul, Bella Vraka Suites – Vassos

Sivota, Greece, 1 bedroom
Recommended by Mathew Simpson, Product Director

Give every day the potential for exploration and adventure with a stay in this amazing location; the starting point for golden beach days and magnificent gorge hikes, complemented by Zagoria's breathtaking wilderness.

The view you wake up to...
A panorama of blue seas and green coastlines so perfectly peaceful it's tempting to spend all day lounging by the pool and taking advantage of the honesty bar.

Don't feel like cooking?
Sivota's tavernas are a ten-minute downhill walk away and nightlife happily treads the fine line between too much and too little.

The love interest
Explore with wild abandon! Picnic among ancient ruins; take a boat out to find a secluded sunset bay or visit Zagoria's timeless villages and the UNESCO-protected Hanging Monasteries of Meteora. You can even go rafting on the mythical River Styx.

Villa Barbarossa

Bella Vraka Suites – Vassos

For more holiday recommendations for couples, call us on 020 8108 4545
or email sales@simpsontravel.com

THE THREE R'S...

Renew, relax, recharge – Jennie Carr, of Silver Travel Advisor, recalls her Simpson Travel holiday to The Windmill, Paxos.

Warm sand, cool wine and a photographer's dream of a sunset... and just the two of us. This was exactly what I'd been looking for after a manic year, where himself and I seemed to have exchanged only domestic admin details, slightly tersely, both dashing around the country for work. Even the cat had become tense. Spending time together, to totally down tools, was essential. And we'd got that! Marvellous.

There is a clear tipping point when you know getting away is vital. We hadn't wanted to travel long haul for a huge adventure, but more to find space to reconnect and enjoy easy moments together, with not a gas bill to pay or leaky shower to fix in sight. I love the sea, so as the booker of our holidays, this is what I choose.

"We hadn't wanted to travel long haul for a huge adventure, more to find space to re-connect and enjoy easy moments together, with not a gas bill to pay or leaky shower to fix in sight."

We also like a degree of quiet: busy city streets, commuter trains and hectic meetings being part of our every day. A peaceful meal, with good wine, and a gentle stroll afterwards, hand in hand, fulfilled our undemanding wishes. The night skies, filled with starry, sparkling brightness, almost never found in the UK, and balmy air, fragrant with herby aromas, worked their magic. We relaxed, we smiled, we definitely did not rush.

Mornings were spent sipping coffee, reading and admiring the endless horizon for far too long, not quite guiltily, but almost! Then we swam in the sea, a light doze on the beach afterwards, or lazily ambled around the harbour, people watching. A favourite afternoon was spent on a boat we hired, sailing into a remote cove, anchoring and enjoying a spot of sunbathing, disturbed unexpectedly by a herd of goats and a somewhat embarrassed shepherd! We laughed out loud and felt a million miles from life at home.

"Good choice", I was told, "let's do this every year." Yes, indeed, I fully intend that we do! The cat is much relieved.

JENNIE CARR *is Creative and Communications Director of Silver Travel Advisor. She also presents the Silver Travel Show, talking to destinations experts about their experiences.*

EASY AS A-B-SEA

We don't just help you book your holiday and welcome you to your destination. In between, our dedicated Pre-departure Team come into play – a chance to book those helpful Holiday Extras, such as airport hotels, parking packages and airport lounges – that take the stress out of travel and get the holiday started even before you leave the UK.

With many of our flights departing early in the morning, we often recommend our guests stay at one of the comfortable and convenient airport hotels – and if you're flying from Gatwick or Heathrow, the Sofitel Hotel is a popular choice as you can walk under a covered walkway to the North Terminal or T5 in a matter of minutes. But, a holiday with Simpson Travel isn't only about great service, it's all about the experience too.

Sofitel's four-star reputation offers own-brand, MyBed beds that guarantee a great night's sleep, combined with triple-glazed windows, so you'll wake up rested, without the worry of missing your flight. If you've travelled with us before, you will know that beautiful views are a Simpson Travel hallmark and although it may not be panoramas over stunning crystal clear waters, the optional views over the runway give children (and the young at heart) an extra reason to get excited!

You can also take your tastebuds on a journey with a choice of restaurants or spoil yourself at the spa. With a sauna, aromatherapy steam room and hot tub, you can soothe tired muscles and minds before you embark on your flight with a massage as an extra treat.

We're here to make your holiday as seamless as possible and can help with any questions you have before you leave home.

You can call our Pre-departure Team on 020 8392 5747 or email pre.departure@simpsontravel.com and make your journey as easy as a-b-sea.

We can offer…

- Airport hotels
- Parking services
- Airport and parking packages
- Airport lounges
- Fast-track services

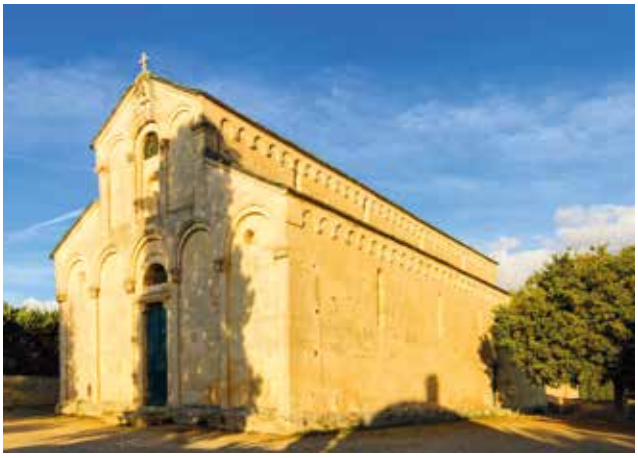
THE WINNER OF OUR TRAVEL WRITING COMPETITION

The competition, a first for Simpson Travel, opened in the spring of last year and we'd like to thank everyone who took the time to enter and share their holiday memories so eloquently. We loved reading them!

The challenge of picking just one fell to *The Sunday Times'* bestselling author, Susan Lewis and opposite is the entry she chose. Many congratulations to **Ilene Sterns** of Bath who wins a one-week stay at our lovely Adult Only Blue Jasmine Hotel in Kefalonia.

Four other entries were also shortlisted – look out for them on Facebook.

To stay up-to-date with upcoming competitions, follow us at Facebook.com/SimpsonTravel



Winning entry:

A concert in St Florent, Corsica

We climbed the steep lane to the Cathedral of the Nebbio. Lit by the rays of the setting sun, the ancient church glowed like a beacon. Sheep grazed lazily in the surrounding fields and the scent of herbs hung in the air. Cicadas chirped their evening songs.

The dusty church square slowly filled with music lovers. Flocks of swifts soared round our heads, swooping and screaming in a joyous mob. They were the guardians of this holy place, which had always been their summer home.

A young man arrived with a folding table and a box of tickets. We filed past him into the whitewashed sanctuary, taking our seats on hard wooden pews. In front of the altar were musical instruments, some familiar, others barely recognisable. With no introduction, the musicians walked in and began to play. Their voices blended in exquisite harmonies, swooping and soaring as effortlessly as the swifts. The audience sat transfixed, bursting into wild applause as the final notes of the encore died away.

We walked out of the Cathedral into the warm summer night. No one spoke, because no one wanted to break the spell. The sky glowed with countless stars and the world felt new again.

"I chose this because of the way it reaches so many senses, the hypnotic stillness of the setting, the imagined scents and entrancing Mediterranean feel. The music seemed to come alive, inviting the reader in; the response to it was both satisfying and gently restorative. A great travel writer is able to transport you and this is exactly what this piece does. I can tell the writer has really immersed themselves and the language is just beautiful. Congratulations and keep writing…" — Susan Lewis

You Said Forever by Susan Lewis will be out on sale 10 August 2017, published by Arrow, £7.99.

SNAP YOUR WAY TO A HOLIDAY

This year, we're inviting our guests to get creative and share their Simpson Travel holiday memories in our 2017 Photography Competition. The prize is a holiday for two at the lovely **Arosmari Village Hotel** in Crete – a tranquil Adult Only retreat with a small spa, Hammam and swimming pool, just a ten-minute drive from the beach.

What do you have to do?

During your time away, you might seek inspiration from the sea views, historical landmarks or friendly locals you meet along the way. Whatever memory you choose to capture, if it was on a Simpson Travel holiday, we'd love you to share it with us. Just remember, we can only accept one entry per person, so make sure you pick the photograph that captures the moment most perfectly.

Competition details

- Photos must be taken at one of our destinations
- Entrants must be 18 years or over
- Closing date: 31 October 2017
- Only one entry per person
- Email your photograph as a .JPEG or .TIFF file, at 300dpi high resolution to **moments@simpsontravel.com**, including your name and contact details
- The winning photograph will be featured in next year's *On Travel* magazine, and shared on our blog, website and on social media.

The prize

Seven nights for two at the Adult Only **Arosmari Village Hotel**, including breakfasts, return flights and car hire, staying in Basil, Bay, Fennel or Oregano Cottage.

*The competition is open to all UK residents with a permanent UK address, except employees or retirees of Simpson Travel and their subsidiaries, their families or anyone connected with the company. Only one entry is permitted per person. Entries will close on 31 October 2017. Simpson Travel reserves the right to alter the prize offered, provided the alternative prize is of an equivalent value. The judge's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into. The winner will be notified within seven days of the judging taking place. The holiday at the Arosmari Village Hotel must be taken on one of the following dates: 30 May, 13 June or 18 September 2018 and includes a stay in Basil, Bay, Fennel or Oregano Cottage. The prize includes a Group B hire car; return flights from London Gatwick to Chania with EasyJet and daily breakfasts.

SIMPSON SECRETS

Our hidden gems along the road less travelled

IMAGES: Clockwise from top left – *Simpson Secrets in Akyaka; East Crete; Epiros Coast; The Dordogne; Provence.*

WE ALL HAVE SECRETS

Unknown and undisclosed, these are the hidden places, the private spaces, the surprises. However, not everyone's secret comes with a secluded beach, sublime sea views, tranquil countryside or innovative interior design. Those are our kinds of secrets.

AND THE BEST PART?

For the adventurous at heart

Our Simpson Secrets are chosen for their unique locations and that elusive sense of privacy. You'll find them tucked away in small hamlets, surrounded by rolling hills or hidden on sun-kissed Mediterranean islands, full of the spirit of the great outdoors, and a little piece of paradise. They're romantic boltholes and family-friendly hideaways along the road less travelled that give you the chance to see a familiar destination in a new light. And wherever you go, there's magic to be found, often where you least expect it.

simpsontravel.com/simpson-secrets

5 OF THE BEST

SIMPSON SECRETS

If you're looking for a place to stay off the beaten track, these villas, by secluded beaches and hidden by forests, are the best place to start.

Lefkada

Greece, 2 bedrooms
*Prices from £771pp**

A taste of paradise on a secluded beach, and one of the latest additions to our Secrets Collection, has uninterrupted romance written all over it.

Anti-Paxos

Greece, 2 bedrooms
*Prices from £1,456pp**

Definitely a villa for the more adventurous at heart, the sublime sea views and complete privacy make the journey here worthwhile.

Crete

Greece, 2 bedrooms
*Prices from £713pp**

Surrounded by rolling hills and vineyards, this charming village house with its own pretty garden offers an open invitation to slow right down.

Akyaka

Turkey, 1 bedroom
*Prices from £675pp**

A wonderfully quirky forest hideaway that's also just five minutes from the picturesque Çinar beach – and the views from here are stunning.

Provence

France, 5 bedrooms
*Accom-only prices from £3,225**

A stylish, comfortable villa for up to ten guests, with 15 acres of grounds to explore, as well as a private swimming pool, sauna and Hammam.

To book a Simpson Secret, get in touch with our travel experts on **020 8108 4545** or email **sales@simpsontravel.com**

*Prices are based on the lowest priced available dates as of 30 Jan 2017. Per person prices are based on maximum occupancy and include flights, seven nights' accommodation and car hire or transfers. Flight supplements may apply. Accommodation-only prices are for seven nights.

LUXURY

1. ***noun*** A state of great comfort or elegance.
Synonyms: sumptuousness, richness, grandeur, splendour, magnificence, lavishness, lap of luxury, bed of roses, milk and honey.

But luxury is more than just a noun – it's an experience that begins when you get in touch to book your villa from our Simpson Exclusive Collection. Luxury takes you on a journey and our seamless pre-departure services ensure that this journey begins effortlessly – chauffeur-driven comfort to the terminal or VIP parking at the airport; lounge access, extra luggage allowance and a fast-track through customs.

Nothing is too much trouble

When it comes to your villa, luxury means grand designs and matchless views; landscaped gardens, private swimming pools and contemporary polish. It includes discrete, personalised service that comes to you: private chefs, personal trainers and massage therapists, as well as a dedicated concierge to book, reserve, arrange, advise and assist in every way possible. It's your chance to dream with confidence and have the holiday you really want.

That's luxury the way we define it.

LES LOFTS DE PALOMBAGGIA

Porto Vecchio & Bonifacio, Corsica
4 bedrooms

*Prices from £1,135pp**

A stylish villa, light-filled, spacious and more reminiscent of city lofts, rather than the traditional architecture of the island. Situated within beautiful Palombaggia, relax beside your large heated swimming pool.

*Price is based on the lowest priced available date as of 30 Jan 2017, for maximum occupancy and includes flights, seven nights' accommodation and car hire. Flight supplements may apply.

VILLA OLIVETO

Corfu, Greece
4 bedrooms

*Prices from £1,407pp**

An inviting hillside property with elegant interiors, the perfect setting for relaxing and entaining. From the outdoor pool with wine fridge to the full-sized pool table, celebrate your time together with spectacular backdrops of the Ionian Sea.

*Price is based on the lowest priced available date as of 30 Jan 2017, for maximum occupancy and includes flights, seven nights' accommodation and car hire. Flight supplements may apply.

PLUMBAGO

Corfu, Greece
5 bedrooms
*Prices from £895pp**

Over two levels, this stunning house sits on the edge of the beautifully restored 200-year-old stone village, the Rou Estate. Surrounded by the magnificent panoramic views, bask in your private infinity pool hidden behind ancient olive trees.

*Price is based on the lowest priced available date as of 30 Jan 2017, for maximum occupancy and includes flights, seven nights' accommodation and car hire. Flight supplements may apply.

KIPOS HOUSE

Paxos, Greece
6 bedrooms

*Accom-only from £10,000**

This family house is 60 metres from the beach, offering stunning views as a backdrop for your time together and evenings filled with al fresco dining – but waterside Loggos' tavernas and shops are only a five-minute drive away.

*Price is based on the lowest priced available date as of 30 Jan 2017, on an accommodation-only basis, for seven nights.

SIMPSON
TRAVEL

We go the extra mile to offer a holiday experience that is far more than just a week or two away.

Service that exceeds expectations

From our experienced London-based Sales Team, who help you find the right holiday, to the Pre-departure Team who ensure you've got everything you need for the journey and beyond, we've got holidays covered, so you can just look forward to going away. Then our dedicated and friendly overseas representatives step in with help and advice whenever you need it.

Doing what we love – with passion

As well as bringing almost 40 years of travel-related know-how, our team spends months on the road, choosing only the hotels, villas and apartments we believe our guests will love – because we love them too. We know our destinations inside out and keep exploring, so if you can't decide where to go, just call us for a few well-informed suggestions.

We run on integrity

As a family-run business, we consider our guests to be a member of that family – and the values we reflect follow accordingly. Respect, honest advice and clear communication are at the basis of all the relationships we build, including our Simpson Travellers, but also within our own team, with villa owners and local businesses. And our holidays reflect a standard of accommodation you can trust.

Quality isn't about compromise

Our accommodation is the starting point for the holiday you've been imagining and we're proud of our handpicked villas, apartments and boutique hotels. Chosen for their stunning locations, most are exclusively ours and, thanks to a mixture of package and, in some destinations, accommodation-only options, our holidays come with flexibility too.

When the company was founded, we chose to follow the road less travelled, which for us represents an alternative attitude rather than an alternative destination. By continuing to take the harder path, we continue to offer a superior experience to all our guests.

Travel with confidence

We're ABTA and ATOL bonded and, with the knowledge and experience of our travel experts, you're in safe hands. We also listen to our guests' feedback and have won many awards as a result – and still we ask, what will make your holiday even better? And then we do that.

BRITISH AIRWAYS Appointed Operator

ABTA ABTA No.W5698

AITO Assured

When beautiful destinations meet our passion for service,
your holiday becomes unforgettable.

Where will 2017 take you?

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simpsontravel.com

SIMPSON
TRAVEL

Simpson Hotels: A truly unique collection

"Five-star hotels can rapidly lose their sparkle if the service is lacklustre. Yet the right location, superb attention to detail and hospitality from the heart can transform the simplest little hotel into somewhere very special."
– *Graham Simpson*

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