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The best holidays in 2018 for families with tweens and teenagers



The Peligoni Club in Zakynthos

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Cherish this time, when your children are robust enough to try out exciting activities but still young enough to want to spend time with you. It's a great time to experience new sports, explore unfamiliar areas as a family, or simply hang out and enjoy each other's company.

As they become teens, remember that it won't be long before your kids will be holidaying with their friends rather than with you, so this is the time to make your trips together really count. Whether your teenagers prefer to lounge on a beach or be sporty and active, these ideas should keep everyone happy.

1. Trapeze in Portugal

At Club Med, everything is included – even drinks – so the kids can order a mocktail or an ice cream whenever they feel like it without you having to worry about what it will mean for your holiday budget. The Da Balaia resort in Portugal has flexible multi-lingual kids' clubs for all ages running all day and into the evening, not to mention nightly shows and trapeze lessons for both adults and children. The food, which is served on a near-constant basis, is outstanding.

Club Med ([clubmed.co.uk](https://www.clubmed.co.uk/)) offers a seven-night all-inclusive stay at Da Balaia departing Aug 26 from £1,509 for adults and £894, including flights and transfers. Children under six stay free.

2. Water sports in Corsica

Sailing and windsurfing fans will love the very British San Lucianu resort, where you can take out any rig you want at any time and even have the enthusiastic staff sort out your sail for you. The kids' clubs are in very small age groups and most activities are outdoors, many on the water.

Mark Warner ([markwarner.co.uk](https://www.awin1.com/cread.php?awinmid=6146&awinaffid=314587&clickref=&p=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.markwarner.co.uk%2Fsun-holidays%2Fcorsica%2Fsan-lucianu-beach-resort%3Futm_source%3DAffiliateWindow%26utm_medium%3DAffiliate%26utm_term%3DS15W1415%26utm_campaign%3D%21%21%21sitenamecm%21%21%21)) offers one week at San Lucianu departing July 14 and staying in a family suite from £5,248 full board including flights, transfers and free kids' clubs for ages two and up.

The coastline of Corsica CREDIT: EVA VOLPATO

3. A helping hand on Elba

With traditional fishing villages and sandy beaches, the Tuscan island of Elba will delight the whole family. The operator Powder Byrne may be able to offer one-on-one care in kids' clubs for children with special educational needs and disability, providing you book ahead, so the whole family can enjoy the fun together and independently at the beautiful beachside Hermitage hotel.

A seven-night stay in a family room at The Hermitage between Aug 13 and 25, including half board, costs from £10,589 for a family of four. Children's programmes for age four months to teens, cost from £325 per child. Visit [powderbyrne.com](http://www.powderbyrne.com/) (<http://www.powderbyrne.com/>).

A beach in Elba CREDIT: ©TRAVELBOOK - STOCK.ADOBE.COM

4. Hit the road in America

Mini-James Bonds can enjoy a sleepover in Washington's International Spy Museum as part of an individually tailored trip exploring Washington DC, Maryland and Virginia. You can also enjoy four theme parks and some beach time.

Bon Voyage ([bon-voyage.co.uk](https://www.bon-voyage.co.uk/) (<https://www.bon-voyage.co.uk/>)) offers a 12-night Family Fun in the Capital Region trip from £1,995 per person in July and August including return flights to Washington, hotel accommodation and a family-sized car.

5. Dune-boarding in Namibia

As well as dune-boarding in Sossusvlei, excursions on this Namibian family safari include seal-watching by kayak or boat, spotting lizards and geckos in the desert and a final night spent in a fenced camp in the national park watching zebra, giraffe and rhinos at the floodlit waterhole. Some accommodation has pools, plus there's down-time on the beach, so you'll have an adventure and a break.

Audley ([audleytravel.com](https://www.audleytravel.com/) (<https://www.audleytravel.com/>)) offers a 15-day self-drive safari from £2,955 per person in July and August based on a family of five including flights, transfers, car hire, accommodation and some meals.

Fly down the world's biggest sand dunes

6. Calm in Crete

More temperate than in summer, May is the perfect time to visit the Greek islands, especially for younger children. The Domes of Elounda in Crete has a family plaza with a kids' pool, fountains, kids' club and creche, plus there are "mommy and me" spa treatments, children's menus in the restaurants and a fully serviced private beach. Rent a boat to explore nearby deserted coves or visit the Unesco-protected Spinalonga Island.

Carrier ([carrier.co.uk](https://www.carrier.co.uk/)) offers seven nights half board from £6,620 for a family of four sharing a seaview suite with outdoor jacuzzi. Price includes flights, transfers and daily ice cream "happy hour" for children departing May 26 on holidays booked before Feb 28.

The Domes of Elounda in Crete CREDIT: VLADIMIR SKLYAROV

7. House party in Neverland

Reputed to be J M Barrie's inspiration for Peter Pan's Neverland, Eilean Shona is a private island off the west coast of Scotland without cars, television or flight paths. With no distractions you can spend your time crabbing, walking, kayaking and nature watching. There's a shop for basic provisions, plus table tennis and free internet access at the village hall.

Eilean Shona House (eileanshona.com (<http://eileanshona.com/>)) sleeps up to 20 and costs £12,000 for six nights (discounts for smaller groups), including transfer from Dorlin Pier. Fly to Glasgow or take the train to Fort William.

8. Alaskan animals

Ride all-terrain vehicles across mountain peaks, go dog-sledding on glaciers, raft down a glacial river and go sea-kayaking on this family trip to Alaska. If you're lucky, you'll see bald eagles and brown bears (sometimes even cubs), lynx, Arctic foxes and puffins, as well as humpback whales, sea otters and seals.

Steppes Travel ([steppestravel.com](https://www.steppestravel.com/) (<https://www.steppestravel.com/>)) offers an eight-night self-drive trip to Alaska from £3,595 per person in May, based on a family of four sharing. Price includes flights, boat transfers, accommodation with some meals, and activities.

Go wild in Alaska CREDIT: ALAMY

9. Yachting in the Ionian

Learn to sail with the help of a skipper if you'd like to, or simply sunbathe on deck. Yachts sleep from six to 10 people and come complete with a cook, as well as a speedboat, waterskis, paddle boards and snorkelling gear for tweens and teens who want to get active on the water.

Fleewinter ([fleewinter.com](https://www.fleewinter.com/)) offers seven nights in May half term from £1,490 per adult and £1,390 for under-16s, half board, excluding flights. Fly to Corfu.

The 20 destinations you must visit in 2018

10. Get active in Sardinia

On the Costa Smeralda, Hotel Romazzino has a private beach, pools and tennis courts, as well as golf, riding and a large range of water sports. There's an impressive kids' club for ages three to 12 with its own playground and pool – even a children-only restaurant. There are four restaurants and bars; villas with pools are available, as well as family rooms and suites.

Hotel Romazzino ([romazzinohotel.com](http://www.romazzinohotel.com/) (<http://www.romazzinohotel.com/>)) offers junior suites for four from £1,454 per room per night May 28 to June 3, B&B, based on a family of four sharing. Fly to Olbia.

II. Sail on the Lycian Coast

Set sail on a traditional Turkish gulet past forest-clad mountains. Visit traditional villages and markets while also exploring bays only accessible by boat. You can try your hand at the helm if you wish or simply sunbathe, windsurf, kayak or swim. On-board meals are fully catered and include plenty of fish and organic produce, plus there's a complimentary bar.

Fairlight Jones ([fairlightjones.com](http://www.fairlightjones.com/) (<http://www.fairlightjones.com/>)) offers seven nights full board on the six-cabin Seyhan Hanna from £1,575 per person in July and August, including flights and transfers, based on a party of 12.

Turkey's Lycian Coast CREDIT: NEJDETDUZEN

12. Whales and bears in Canada

This three-centre trip combines sightseeing in Vancouver with whale watching on a speedy Zodiac boat in Victoria (with the option of a more sedate, covered boat). The round trip covers more than 30 miles. You'll also spend a day watching bears from a boat travelling along the Tofino Coast before enjoying a scenic flight transfer back to Vancouver.

Canadian Sky's ([canadiansky.co.uk](https://www.canadiansky.co.uk/) (<https://www.canadiansky.co.uk/>)) Whales and Bears Family Adventure starts from £1,399pp in July B&B including flights, transfers and excursions.

A surfer at Tofino CREDIT: AP/FOTOLIA

13. Animal magic in Shropshire

Set in a Grade II-listed barn conversion with vaulted ceilings, exposed brickwork and wood-burning stoves on a 700-acre farm, the two-bedroom cottages of Spinney Retreats offer guests access to tennis courts, two games rooms and a private 1.5-mile (2.4km) woodland walk. Kids can feed the chickens and enjoy pony rides and there's an indoor pool that can be used at additional cost.

Sykes Cottages ([sykescottages.co.uk](https://www.sykescottages.co.uk/) (<https://www.sykescottages.co.uk/>)) offer Spinney Retreat Cottages from £675 per week in July and August.

14. Family cycling in Slovenia

Explore Lake Bled using pedal power on this flexible, eight-day, self-guided trip. Depending on how far you want to cycle, you could visit the medieval Bled Castle, take a traditional Pletna boat to Bled Island with its recognisable Church of the Assumption, ride a cable car up Mount Vogel or swim in thermal pools. You're based at the same hotel all week so you can do as much or as little cycling as you like.

Saddle Skedaddle ([skedaddle.co.uk](https://www.skedaddle.co.uk/) (<https://www.skedaddle.co.uk/>)) offers seven nights in Slovenia from £645 to £685 per adult and £323 to £342 per child B&B in July and August. Bike hire £105 per adult and £100 per child. Fly to Ljubljana.

Lake Bled CREDIT: PETER ZELEI IMAGES

15. Party in the Cotswolds

With a heated swimming pool, cinema room, music room, treehouse and in-ground trampoline, there's something to keep almost everyone happy at Georgian manor Sheepscombe House in Gloucestershire. The house sleeps up to 11, and outside there's a wood-fired pizza oven and barbecue for lazy summer nights.

Luxury Cotswold Rentals (luxurycotswoldrentals.co.uk) offer Sheepscombe House from £8,000 per week in July and August.

16. Go snorkelling in Mexico

Enjoy an underwater adventure without actually diving, exploring the reefs of the Yucatán Peninsula, swimming with turtles and eagle rays. This is followed by a day snorkelling in the cenotes (natural sinkholes in the limestone) where you might even see some (plankton-eating) whale sharks. Back on land, you can discover the Mayan ruins at Chichen Itza or Tulum.

Dive Worldwide ([diveworldwide.com](http://www.diveworldwide.com/)) offers seven nights self-catering including flights, transfers and three snorkelling trips from £2,045 for adults and £1,095 per child under 12.

Tulum CREDIT: XABI_KLS - FOTOLIA

17. Get out on the water in Greece

Set on a long, sandy beach on Lesbos, Greece's third-largest island, windsurfing, stand-up paddle boarding and kayaking are all included at the laid-back Aeolian Village Beachclub resort where you can do as much or as little as you like. Tennis, fitness classes and mountain-biking are also on offer, plus there are kids' clubs for ages two to 17 and two pools.

Neilson ([neilson.co.uk](https://www.neilson.co.uk/)) (<https://www.neilson.co.uk/>) offers seven nights at Aeolian Village Beachclub from £1,369pp departing July 28 based on a family of four sharing a room including flights, transfers, breakfast and lunch every day, four evening meals and most activities.

18. Out and about in Croatia

Go rafting, kayaking, canoeing and swimming at the Mreznica river in Croatia in this multi-activity holiday, which also offers hiking and cycling through the beautiful forests of the Plitvice Lakes National Park. You'll stay at the family-run Hotel Zeleni Kut on the banks of the river and all equipment, ground transportation and the services of a local guide are included.

Zenith Holidays ([zenitholidays.co.uk](http://www.zenitholidays.co.uk/)) (<http://www.zenitholidays.co.uk/>) offers a seven-night multi-activity trip from £685 per person half-board departing Aug 11, based on a family of four sharing two rooms. Fly to Zagreb.

25 places in Eastern Europe you must see in your lifetime

19. Herd cattle on working ranch

Live out your cowboy fantasies at Wyoming's Vee Bar Guest Ranch where kids and adults can help the wranglers move cattle and herd sheep. You'll also enjoy a camp-out night in a tepee roasting s'mores and playing camp fire games. Other activities include hiking, hay rides, trap shooting, trout fishing and river-tubing. Yee-haw!

Ranch Rider (ranchrider.com (<http://ranchrider.com/>)) offers six nights flying between Aug 12 and Sept 1 from £1,930pp for adults and £1,730pp, based on a family of four in two rooms, including meals and most activities. Car hire and flights not included. Fly to Denver.

The Teton Range

20. Luxury in the Peloponnese

Costa Navarino has almost everything you could possibly want, whether you would rather laze on a lounge by the fabulous pools or keep yourselves busy. There's a water park, spa, two golf courses, water sports and cycling centres, plus a fine choice of excellent and varied restaurants. For the kids, Scott Dunn's teens' club Crew offers a relaxed approach to some fantastic activities such as diving, wakeboarding and more, without a fixed timetable.

Scott Dunn ([scottdunn.co.uk](https://www.scottdunn.com/) (<https://www.scottdunn.com/>)) offers seven nights at Costa Navarino from £1,800 B&B in July and August based on a family of four sharing a family suite including flights, transfers and Crew club activities.

21. Active independence in Greece

For parents seeking a bit of time of their own, and teens keen to design their own schedule on holidays, the dip in, dip out style of the Sani Dunes resort at Halkidiki in Greece works well. Exclusively for couples and families with children aged 12 and older, this sophisticated new resort has the teen clubhouse Ozone in the buzzing Sani Marina, where the youngsters can hang out and have fun away from their parents.

Sani Resort ([sani-resort.com](http://www.sani-resort.com/) (<http://www.sani-resort.com/>); 0800 949 6809) offers nightly rates at Sani Dunes from €134 (£118) per room on a half-board basis.

Secret Greece: 18 hidden gems you'd never thought to visit (but really should)

22. On your bike in Morzine

In the heart of Portes du Soleil with more than 400 miles (650km) of trails, 82 downhill tracks and 22 chairlifts, Morzine is one of Europe's biggest mountain-biking centres as well as being a pretty Alpine resort with plenty of other activities on offer. There are several hire shops in the village, and you can also try out an electric mountain bike.

VIP Ski ([vip-chalets.com](https://www.vip-chalets.com/) (<https://www.vip-chalets.com/>)) offers seven nights in the self-catering Valdez Suite (sleeps four) with sauna and hot tub

23. Wakeboarding in Turkey

The Hillside Beach Club, a luxurious all-inclusive resort on the Turquoise Coast, has plenty to keep energetic teens busy, including waterskiing, wakeboarding and speedboat tours as well as cycling, dance classes and more. The resort also has three private beaches (one is no-phones and adults only), three restaurants and two spas.

Classic Collection ([classic-collection.co.uk](https://www.classic-collection.co.uk/) (<https://www.classic-collection.co.uk/>)) offers seven nights full board in August in a Superior Family Sea View Room from £7,299 for a family of four including flights and transfers.

24. Exploring in Sicily

Close to the lively beach resort of Cefalù, the quirky five-bedroom Villa Arte Mare Blue is sure to appeal to teenagers. Sculptures are scattered around the extensive gardens, an infinity pool overlooks the coast, and for the independent-minded (or perhaps grandparents), there is a bedroom and bathroom in its own separate little house. Days out could include a street food tour in Palermo or quad biking in the local hills.

Wish Sicily ([wishsicily.com](https://www.wishsicily.com/) (<https://www.wishsicily.com/>)) offers Villa Mare Blue for up to eight guests from £3,879 in July. Fly to Palermo.

Cefalu

25. Chocolate fix in Switzerland

Visit two chocolate factories on this loop cycle trip starting and finishing in Zurich. You'll learn the secrets of Swiss chocolate production and even get to create your own bar. You'll also explore picturesque towns along the way and take a boat trip on Lake Lucerne. Accommodation is in three-star hotels and your luggage is transferred every day.

UTRacks ([utracks.com](http://www.utracks.com/) (<http://www.utracks.com/>)) offers a seven-night trip from £925 per adult and £600 per child in July and August B&B, including two chocolate factory tours and a lake boat trip, excluding flights. Fly to Zurich.

26. Family fun in Costa Rica

Float down jungle canals watching howler monkeys swing through the trees, search for tarantulas and watch sea turtles laying eggs in the sands of the Pacific on this self-guide holiday starting in San José. You'll also stay in a private reserve at Guanacaste for zip-lining and mountain biking, before heading to the beach at Ostional for snorkelling and stand-up paddle boarding.

Pura Aventura ([pura-aventura.com](https://www.pura-aventura.com/) (<https://www.pura-aventura.com/>)) offers a 14-night trip from £2,445pp B&B in July and August for a family of four including four-wheel drive hire and some meals. Fly to San José.

See sloths and howler monkeys in Costa Rica CREDIT: GETTY

27. Digital detox in Thailand

Phi Phi Island Village Beach Resort offers an impressive line-up of activities designed to get teens away from their smartphones, including a mini-triathlon, Thai boxing, long-tail boat tours and beach boot camps. The two-bedroom Thai-style bungalows are designed with families in mind and some have private pools.

Destinology ([destinology.co.uk](https://www.destinology.co.uk/) (<https://www.destinology.co.uk/>)) offers seven nights in July at Phi Phi Island Village Beach Resort from £4,147 based on a family of four in a deluxe bungalow. Includes return Emirates flights.

28. Downtime in the Dordogne

Set in eight acres of grounds between two villages, Les Combettes is a newly renovated stone house sleeping up to 10 people. As well as a tennis court, pool with large terrace, summer kitchen and outdoor jacuzzi, there's an annexe with its own bedroom, kitchen and bathroom – ideal for grandparents or older teens. Nearby there's golf, kayaking, fishing and horse-riding, plus caves to explore.

Simply Perigord ([simply-perigord.com](http://www.simply-perigord.com/) (<http://www.simply-perigord.com/>)) offers one week's rental of Les Combettes from €2,800 (£2,490) in August.