



The doors are wide open, sunlight is bursting in and I have a reason to paint my toenails for the first time in months. Oh yes, I have my sandals on and I'm hoping that this is the 'real' start of Springtime!

Days like today remind me of why, although I have an addiction to exploring other countries, I also love England. Sunny, pleasantly warm and yet a cool breeze can be felt in the air and of course, on days like today I begin to ponder the fact that actually, a Staycation might be a very splendid idea.

We've all been there – you know, on a typical British seaside holiday. Sand blowing into your ice-cream, brolly at the ready, hoping that the cheese and cucumber sarnies aren't going to end up a soggy mess. But let's face it, when the sun DOES come out, you just can't beat it and I'm hedging my bets that June/July is as good a time as any to get a week or weekend away in good old Blighty. Of course, I'm no weather lady (are they ever right anyway?) but my daughter was born in March three years ago and I always remember when she was around 2-3 months the weather was glorious and every year since, it has not let me down.

So with this in mind I've tried to bring together a selection of UK-based holidays that might just have you out and exploring your homeland before jumping straight onto a plane and may I add that you are not confined to a seaside chalet. Oh no, England has so much to offer! From family cooking days, to beach yurts or why not take a luxuriously sophisticated lakeside break? We have a lot more going on than you might think so pack your brolly and wish for sunshine!

### Family Fundays at Lucy Cooks

If you are looking for something different to do with the family over the holidays then LucyCooks cookery school in the beautiful Lake District offers an exciting alternative to the usual holiday activities and will help to inspire young people to get busy in the kitchen. They offer a selection of Family Fundays, encouraging families to cook together, and you can expect to create a three-course meal and accompaniments. I think this could be a lot of fun and a great opportunity to really spend some quality time together. All ages are welcome... so Mums, Dads, sons, daughters, grandparents... why not try something different in the beautiful Cumbrian countryside?

NB: The minimum age for children attending the course is 7yrs and above.  
 Price: £110 for 2, 10am – 4pm, Thursday 29th July (many more courses available)  
 Telephone: 015394 32288  
 Website: www.lucycooks.co.uk

### Yurts at Perran Sands Holiday Park

Perran Sands beach family.jpg

Direct access to Cornwall's high dunes and Atlantic rollers attract serious surfers and paragliders to Haven's Perran Sands Park, so if you want a big bay, big sea experience, this is it. With surfing, adventure golf, fencing and a packed programme of entertainment from late morning to late evening, Perran Sands is an all-action family park with something for everyone. And for a truly outdoor experience, you can try their Yurt accommodation.

Price: Based on 9th July arrival you can book a 4 berth Yurt (larger yurts available) for 3 nights for £555. Book early to avoid disappointment.

Tel Perran Sands: 0871 231 0871  
 Tel Haven General: 0871 230 1900  
 Website: www.haven.com



## Travel Sense

Alice Griffin makes sense of Staycations...

### SnoozeShade

I can't believe this ingenious little product has never been thought of before... a blackout blind for prams and pushchairs. I for one have often struggled with draping coats and blankets over my daughter's pushchair in a vain attempt to continue with routine naps while out and about, but SnoozeShade makes this so much easier and also much more cosy for your baby. Suitable for use from birth, it moves easily from pram to pushchair as your child grows, is extremely compact folding into a small drawstring bag and with UPF50+ - can be used all-year-round.

Website: www.snoozeshade.com  
 Price: £19.99 plus £4.50 UK P&P.



## Rent a Stunning Cotswold Lake House

The Cotswold Lake Houses – five stunning architect-designed glass fronted lakeside homes set on a 500-acre nature reserve – attract many family groups due to the fact that they are gorgeous, situated in the heart of a safe and calm estate and sensibly equipped with travel cots, high chairs, games and DVDs. They are well positioned to be within a manageable drive of London – only a couple of hours, yet far enough away to really feel like you're on holiday. There are plenty of activities on offer for all ages including sailing, tennis, children's play areas, animal and bird-watching with waterskiing, wakeboarding and golf available in the surrounding area. Guests also have unlimited access to the exclusive world class ArtSpa, which offers a full range of fitness options as well as rejuvenating treatments. What are you waiting for?!

Price: For a short break between 4th June and 8th July, a lake house sleeping up to 10 people will cost you £950.

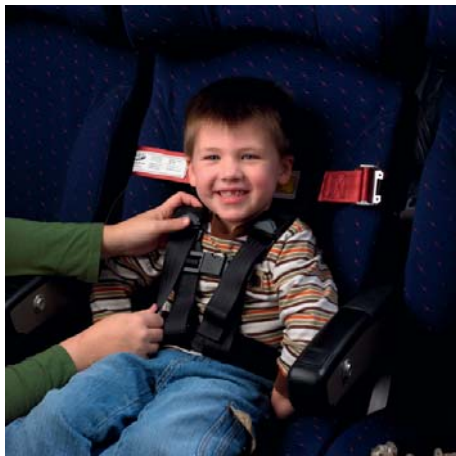
Telephone: 01285 860063

Website: [www.cotswoldlakehouses.com](http://www.cotswoldlakehouses.com)



### Snack and Play Tray for Car Seats

Having embarked on many road trips with my daughter, I can honestly say that I think this product is well worth having. No more balancing sandwiches on laps (making a mess in the process), useful pockets on either side for drinks and an adequate surface to accommodate colouring book and crayons. If you've ever been the passenger on long car journeys you'll know how annoying constantly turning round to wipe up and re-arrange toys, can be. Godsend!



### CARES harness

And for those who are still intent on flying away, you might want to consider packing this compact harness for peace of mind. Approved by the FAA (US) and the CAA (UK) the CARES (Child Aviation Restraint System) harness has been receiving a lot of attention in the travel world of late. As we know, once our babies reach 2 they are designated their own seat for plane travel, but the flimsy lap belt hardly seems sufficient to hold them securely in the event of a 'brace' situation. The CARES harness is designed specifically for children who fly approximately aged between 2 – 5 years and interfaces with the existing standard seat belt producing an easy, effective solution for improved child safety.

Website: [www.tinytottravellers.co.uk](http://www.tinytottravellers.co.uk)

Introductory Price: £55.99

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