

## SUMMER FAMILY FUN!

*Rebecca Recommends*  
Hotels and Services with Personality



My gorgeous five-year-old niece, Ophelia, loves toads, snakes and other creepy crawlies, and has a wonderful sense of fun and adventure. Rest assured Auntie Becca is already fantasizing about the dream trips we'll take when she and Orlando, my 18-month-old nephew, are a bit older.

From my own childhood travels to Menorca, Mallorca, France and America, I'm a firm believer that trips to exciting, interesting and adventurous destinations are one of the best ways parents can teach their children about the varied and magnificent world we live in.

One agent I know had a lovely booking from a family who had sponsored a child in Nepal, and wanted their daughter to meet her "sister" there. This is an inspiring example of how travel can enrich our lives and change the world.

I hope you will enjoy hearing about some of my favorite family travel places and programs available to your clients this summer. Please do not hesitate to get in touch for further details on any of our clients, or if there are any future travel arrangements with which we can assist you.

Very best wishes,

Rebecca

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### FAMILY TOGETHERNESS AT CALCOT MANOR IN THE COTSWOLDS



Set on 220 acres in the Cotswolds, [Calcot Manor](#) is more than family-friendly: it is fully geared up for smaller guests! The family rooms are large and many have children's separate bedrooms, like the charming princess-worthy one above.

It has an Ofsted-registered (and high-scoring crèche) called The Playzone, while The Mez has PlayStations, board games, books, movies and activities for those eight years or older. Add a mini-football pitch, assault course, woodland gymnasium, nature trail, pirate play ship, clay pigeon shooting, tennis, swimming and the opportunity for horseback riding, Segway rides and disc golf, and you have the perfect ingredients for a great family break.

Calcot Manor offers baby-listening services, or baby-sitters can be arranged. There are even dedicated times for younger guests in the heated indoor pool at [Calcot Spa](#). It encourages families to explore on its complimentary bikes or simply head off on foot, complete with packed lunch or snacks.

[Learn more about Calcot Manor.](#)

## MEET AN ELEPHANT NAMED MANIKA



Sri Lanka is a surprisingly family-friendly destination, with elephant safaris, ancient sites, beach destinations and fire-walking! [Ventours](#) can arrange an exhilarating itinerary for clients that includes special experiences like bathing an elephant named Manika. (She enjoys bananas after her bath.)

Any stay in Sri Lanka should include time at [Cape Weligama, a new property near Galle](#) that has taken the family suite to new levels.

Three two-story Cape Weligama Residences have fabulous ocean views on both levels. Downstairs is a massive bedroom, sitting room and bathroom large and luxurious enough for spa treatments.

Through a separate entrance is another bedroom and bathroom, and an eye-popping private swimming pool on the terrace.

Downstairs is a huge outdoor terrace so families can have dinner outside. Every residence comes with butler service, and the mini-bar is free! Twice a week Cape Weligama brings in Sri Lankan musicians for an outdoor Sri Lankan in a traditional setting, complete with kids' table.

Ventours can also create other unforgettable, exotic adventures to India, Nepal, Bhutan, Tibet and the Maldives.

[Learn more about Ventours](#) and [Cape Weligama](#).

## TRACK DOWN HARRY POTTER IN LONDON



As a **very** family-friendly team, [Original Travel UK](#) understands the pressure of keeping small people entertained while maintaining the integrity of the experience for the whole family.

Original Travel UK has huge experience in multi-generational travel. Its trips are tailor-made to suit specific interests and ages, ensuring that family holidays are as much fun for the parents as they are for the children. Some favorite child-friendly activities in London and around the UK and Ireland include:

**Feast for Families:** They can organize a private cookery class making a quintessentially British afternoon tea, complete with sweet treats, scones and cucumber sandwiches. For younger children, a cookie decorating class is a perfect way to spend an afternoon. Nature lovers can join special foraging walks where children learn about the flora and fauna of the local countryside.

**London Orientation:** The perfect program for first-timers! See the Changing of the Guard at Buckingham Palace with a former member of the Royal Scots Regiment Band who knows all the ins and outs of royal ceremony and can arrange try-ons of towering bearskin hats. During a city tour in a vintage Mini Cooper, customized stops to the filming locations of Diagon Alley and Platform 9 ¾ filming locations thrill Harry Potter buffs!

**Scavenger Hunts:** Younger kids use all of their investigative skills to find hidden sweets, clues and gems at London Transport Museum. Older children decipher riddles using spy equipment to save the Rosetta Stone from the baddies hidden in the British Museum!

**Magic Garden:** Populated by mystical beasts, towers and a secret grotto, the brand new Magic Garden at Hampton Court Palace is open to clients for private tours. OTUK can even organise a private breakfast in the Banqueting House - perfect for any family celebration - or a game of tennis on the Royal Courts.

**Outdoors Adventures:** For active families, OTUK can organize a horse riding experience in the rugged

Dartmoor National Park, a cycling adventure in the Cotswolds, wildlife watching on the Isle of Skye, even an Irish Dance class with the cast of Riverdance!

[Learn more about OTUK.](#)

## CUDDLE SOME SHEEP AT THE GORING



As fourth generation hoteliers, [The Goring](#) never forgets the importance of families. Every care and attention is taken to provide guests with the ultimate five-star experience and this does not stop at the parents. All children staying at The Goring are given an exclusive V.I. (little) P. status to make sure their stay is unforgettable.

The beloved Goring cuddly 'Baaa-bara Sheep' and a 'For Kids' Eyes Only' pack await children on arrival. Little guests will discover a Goring Passport to keep a personal record of their London trip, handy for keeping a memento of a special trip to the nearby museums, exciting attractions and parks.

The hotel's award-winning pastry chefs even invite children down to the Goring Kitchen, getting them to don an apron and chef's hat to decorate delicious cakes and chocolate chip cookies, giving mum and dad a chance to relax over a glass of Bollinger in The Goring Bar or an [Afternoon Tea on the Veranda](#).

Guest who book to stay this summer between 17th July and 11th September enjoy 50% off the connecting room for children. Rates are inclusive of breakfast and an evening cocktail for parents.

[Learn more about The Goring.](#)

## DRESS LIKE ROYALS IN VERSAILLES



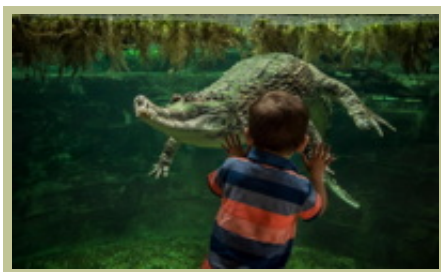
[Decouvertes](#) knows that the things that delight adults -- a shopping spree on the Champs Elysees, fine dining in a Parisian restaurant, strolling in Montmartre -- don't really do it for children.

So how about a treasure hunt in the Louvre? Or a trip to a candy shop where children learn about France through its many confections?

Decouvertes can even arrange some time at Chateau de Versailles where little girls turn into princesses, dressed up in period costumes for a ball. Back in Paris, enjoy brunch in a traditional Parisian restaurant where a magician goes from table to table.

[Learn more about Decouvertes.](#)

## VISIT AN ALLIGATOR IN CHESTER



What self-respecting child (or adult, for that matter) wouldn't be intrigued by the combination of ice cream and alligators? So [Apartments by Oddfellows in Chester](#) is offering a two-night [Islands & Ice Cream Package](#) from £320 for families of four.

The fun and quirky apartments near the hotel (and just steps from the River Dee) have two double bedrooms and bathrooms, fully kitted-out kitchens complete with ice cream and treats, spacious sitting rooms, super tellies, games galore...and a parking space right outside the door!

The package includes day tickets to the award-winning Chester Zoo and its newest attraction, Islands, which recreates the tropical environments of six Southeast Asian islands. On day two, Oddfellows suggests a tour of the city or a trip to the countryside to visit Cheshire Ice Cream Farm, with 50 flavors and places to picnic and play.

[Learn more about Apartments by Oddfellows.](#)

## HUNT FOR "NESSIE" AT ALDOURIE CASTLE

There is nowhere like [Aldourie Castle](#), where a family group can take over a medieval Scottish castle for a week or more. A vast array of activities for adults and children makes the decision to book a multi-generational holiday an easy one.



Surrounded by some of the finest distilleries in the Scottish Highlands, Aldourie can arrange tours close by or personal tastings at the Castle.

Loch Ness is an opportunity to experience endless adventure, from romantic boat rides to whizzing past the Castle in a speedboat to cruises with the whole family taking in the surrounding sights. And there's always a day trip on the Nessie Hunter to find the legendary Loch Ness Monster!

Children enjoy the estate as their own playground with water zorbing, clambering around the tree house, and playing hide-and-seek in the graveyard. Spa treatments for the ladies make for a luxurious experience from four-poster bedrooms, while clay pigeon shooting for the men is just one of the outdoor sporting options for a memorable holiday. Aldourie is all about getting together and having a good time.

[Learn more about Aldourie Castle](#)

## HAVE A PICNIC IN YORK



[Middlethorpe Hall and Spa](#), located just outside the City of York and easily accessible by trains or cars, is the perfect base to visit Yorkshire and its capital City York.

York offers many exciting attractions, including the Jorvik Viking Centre, the National Railway Museum, the Yorkshire Museum, and theme parks such as Flamingo Land or the York Maze. There are also many festivals all year round.

The hotel welcomes children over the age of six and offers accommodation for families such as the Garden

and Cottage Suites (families of three), or the new connecting rooms for four guests.

[Learn more about Middlethorpe Hall.](#)

## RIDE AT CASTLE LESLIE ESTATE IN IRELAND



[Castle Leslie Estate](#) in County Monaghan, Ireland is nestled on 1,000 acres of undulating Irish countryside, dotted with ancient woodland and glittering lakes. It is one of the last great Irish castle estates still in the hands of its founding family.

Following significant investment and a major restoration programme over the last decade, the beautiful Castle Leslie Estate is full of character and personality.

Experience its luxury home rental packages and self-catering breaks at the two-bedroomed Old Stable Mews and the four and five-bedroomed Village Cottages.

The luxurious home holiday package breaks are based on a bed and breakfast basis for between two and five night's accommodation.

Many of these packages include evening meals and home treats such as a welcome family basket, beer & wine, sweets, popcorn and snacks. Some packages even include spa treatments and equestrian activities!

A host of activities are on offer including pike fishing for the nature enthusiast, a private cinema for movie buffs, exceptional walking trails for those who want to breathe in fresh country air, kayaking and clay pigeon shooting for the more adventurous, hot air balloon rides for those looking for exhilaration, falconry for those wishing to experience nature up close, a fabulous spa for rejuvenation and of course the [famous world-class equestrian centre!](#)

Luxury Home Rental packages start from €700 for two nights. For a full list of offers, please visit [Castle Leslie](#).

## EXPLORE THE EAST COAST WITH NEW YORK AND BEYOND

[Discover New York and Beyond](#) creates custom itineraries that spark conversations between grandparent, parents and children, while exploring points of interest along the East Coast of the U.S.



Its itinerary design process uses the “must see/must do” list from each family member to create an itinerary that meets the family’s goals and budget. Since children’s ideas are incorporated into the design, they are excited about the planning process, and the trip is more fun for everyone.

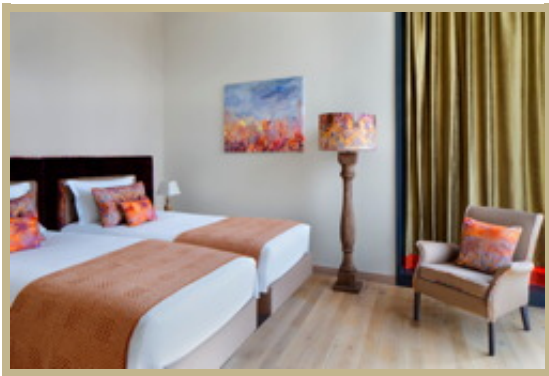
Expert educators bring experiences to life in fun and engaging ways, and have the flexibility to spend as much time as the family wishes on each activity.

Families can explore American Revolutionary History, Civil War History, Maritime History, Science, Art and Architecture, and of course, a variety of college visits in Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Washington D.C., Jamestown/Williamsburg/Norfolk, Charleston and Savannah.

Restaurants are selected to match the cuisines and food preferences. The hotel is determined once the program has been designed and approved so that the family can walk out of the door to the most locations, saving both time and money on unnecessary transportation. With great planning and the right partners, family vacations can be an enriching experience for everyone.

[Learn more about Discover New York and Beyond.](#)

## INVESTIGATE EDINBURGH FROM G&V ROYAL MILE HOTEL



[G&V Royal Mile Hotel, Edinburgh](#), the only five-star hotel on the historic Royal Mile, promises families an unforgettable stay. From welcome treats upon arrival to luxury amenities in the room, young guests at G&V are treated with the same respect and attention as adult guests. Nice for the adults: all children under 12 years stay free of charge when using existing beds.

Amenities include:

- \* Children’s check-in with candy
- \* Children’s book “Have you seen Pippin” written exclusively for the hotel
- \* Colouring-in book

- \* Children’s bathrobes (on request)
- \* Children’s afternoon tea (on request)
- \* Game consoles (on request)

The hotel is minutes from Edinburgh Castle and close to other popular attractions such as Edinburgh Zoo, Our Dynamic Earth, National Museum of Scotland, Camera Obscura and Edinburgh Dungeon.

[Learn more about G&V Royal Mile Hotel, Edinburgh.](#)

## ENJOY THE GREAT OUTDOORS AT GREAT FOSTERS



Set amongst 50 acres of stunning gardens and parkland in Egham, Surrey, [Great Fosters](#) is a stately historic monument with an enviable location near Heathrow, the M25 and M4 and near Windsor.

The outdoor heated swimming pool, which features listed 1920s bathing boxes, is open until the end of September. The hotel also has an outdoor tennis court and offers croquet on the lawn - the perfect pre-dinner activity after a day exploring Windsor Castle.

Other kid-pleasing adventures include visits to Legoland, Windsor, the Lookout Discovery Centre in Bracknell, or Go Ape in Swinley Forest, Bracknell. There’s the adrenaline-pumping rides at Thorpe Park, or quieter pursuits liking feeding the ducks at Virginia Water Lake or a trip to Windsor Castle for the Changing of the Guard.

[Learn more about Great Fosters.](#)

## SPEND TIME ON THE BEACH IN CORNWALL

[The Nare](#) is Cornwall’s top luxury hotel, ideal for quiet family holidays and perfect for gatherings of several generations. It offers seclusion away from the busy resorts, with more than enough to do to satisfy all members of the family.

The sandy Carne Beach is a child’s paradise and has acres of space for building sandcastles and games of beach volleyball or cricket, and the sheltered bay is perfect for safe swimming.

The outdoor swimming pool is heated from May to mid September and the indoor pool is always warm. The tennis court is a great attraction, and the croquet lawn is an opportunity for all ages to have fun.



Children's early dinner is served on the The Quarterdeck since young guests are not expected in the Dining Room in the evenings. For families with young who all wish to dine together The Quarterdeck Restaurant is a popular proposition.

Several of the suites and rooms at The Nare are specially designed to accommodate families and baby-sitting can be arranged with Reception.

[Learn more about The Nare.](#)

## SET YOUR SIGHTS ON SCOTLAND



[The Torridon](#) is an independent family-run luxury hotel in a spectacular and idyllic location on the western coast of Scotland in the Highlands. Family activities are free as part of its daily activity program, with morning and afternoon sessions that might include archery, gorge scrambling, canoeing, sea kayaking, rock climbing and guided walks.

No experience is necessary to try any of these activities (though minimum ages apply) and specially licensed instructors ensure that all adventures are conducted safely. If you prefer the the idea of a luxurious self-catering holiday for all the family, consider [The Boat House](#). [The Torridon Inn](#) also provides accommodation for families.

[Learn more about The Torridon.](#)

## SEE WHERE LORD OF THE RINGS WAS FILMED



Set on Lake Wakatipu in New Zealand, [Blanket Bay Lodge](#) accommodates children ten and over in its main lodge. But if your clients have children under 10, the luxurious new Owner's Residence is perfect for multi-generational families who desire both togetherness and privacy.

It has four bedrooms with en-suite bathrooms in two different buildings, separated by a gorgeous courtyard. The main building, which has a master bedroom with its own fireplace, also has a living area with a large stone fireplace for cozy winter gatherings (starting June 27th as the seasons are opposite). A rustic country

kitchen overlooks the courtyard, and guests can enjoy a meal prepared by their private chef.

What to do? Heli-flightseeing to Milford Sound, jet-boating the Dart River or hiking in the scenic Mount Aspiring National Park, where Lord of the Rings filming took place, are a few of the possibilities, along with fly-fishing, horseback riding, mountain biking and championship golf in a world-class setting.

[Learn more about Blanket Bay Lodge.](#)

If you would like any further information on any of the hotels, residences or services listed above, please visit [www.rebecca-recommends.com](http://www.rebecca-recommends.com) or email me on [VIP@r-recommends.com](mailto:VIP@r-recommends.com)

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