

Hols for under...

£100: TRY two nights' B&B at the 4★ Delino Hotel in Venice, priced from just £89. Flights leave from a choice of UK airports on selected dates in September. For details, see blueseaholidays.co.uk.

£250: ENJOY three nights' B&B at the 2★ Hotel Fortuna West in Prague from £234. Leaves from East Midlands on July 24. See jet2citybreaks.com or call 0800 408 5594.

£500: SEVEN nights' B&B at the 4★ Agriturismo Piccolo Paradiso in Sorrento, Italy, is from £453. Leaves from Edinburgh on August 5. See easyjet.com/holidays or call 020 3499 5232.

OR take seven nights' half-board at the 4★ Nobel Hotel in Sunny Beach, Bulgaria, from £430. Leaves Gatwick on July 23. See onthebeach.co.uk or call 0871 474 3000.

£750: A TEN-night twin-centre trip to Thailand costs

from £749. There is three nights' room-only at the 4★ Century Park Hotel in Bangkok followed by eight nights' B&B at the 4★ Kata Beach Resort in Phuket. Leaves from Heathrow on September 9. Phone 01293 735 831 or see hayesandjarvis.com.

OR try three nights' room-only at the 4★ Warwick Allerton Hotel in Chicago from £739. Flights leave from Heathrow on selected dates from August 19 to September 24. See ba.com/Chicago.

£1000: GET seven nights' B&B at the 5★ Andaman resort in Langkawi, Malaysia, from £889. Flights leave from Heathrow on selected dates in November. Book by July 15. Phone 0844 811 4444 or see dialaflight.com.

OR seven nights' all-inclusive at the 4★ Marrakech La Palmerie resort costs from £949. Flights leave from Heathrow on July 18. See clubmed.co.uk.

THERE'S a famous saying in the motorbike world: "Sometimes you need a really bendy road to get your head straight".

It means there's nothing like being on the open highway with the wind in your face to make you forget your worries.

Motorbiking can be like therapy. Except we live in the UK, where congestion, road rage and 17-year-olds taking selfies while at the wheel combine to spoil the experience.

As someone who commutes 65 miles a day on a motorbike, I often turn up to work knotted with anger and frustration. But outside the UK, the romance of biking is alive and well, as I found by joining Harley-Davidson on one of its 180 motorcycle tours around the world.

GO: HARLEY

NICK'S tour cost £2,700, not including flights. Breakfast, dinner and accommodation are included but not lunch, alcohol and petrol. See authorizedtours.harley-davidson.co.uk.

Harley-Davidson runs 180 tours, including: **£375** – four-day battlefield tour in France. **£569** – two days exploring the Grand Canyon. **£695** – six days riding through The Ardennes and Mosel Valley, Germany. **£1,400** – Retracing route of the D-Day landing troops in France over nine days. **£1,795** – nine days in Picos and Northern Spain.

The trip I signed up to, with my girlfriend riding pillion, is the "Habsburg Empire". It is eight days of riding through Austria, Germany and the Czech Republic, starting and finishing in Vienna, plus two rest days. The House of Habsburg was one of

the longest-ruling royal families of Europe, from the 1100s, and the route goes through its old territories.

From Vienna, the road leads southwest to the city of Fohnsdorf, stopping to check out the Red Bull Ring racetrack. The opening day's riding incorporated some of the most stunning scenery I have ever seen.

Pristine slabs of tarmac corkscrew through Austrian mountains, ribboning through wilderness so breathtaking it almost looks artificial.

If you thought the backdrop to The Sound of Music looked gorgeous, try riding through it.

In the valleys we skirted emerald lakes topped with bobbing boats, stopping occasionally to drink in the view.

Then, as we wound upwards, the bends tightened up nicely, giving us the chance to test what the Harley was capable of. For the rider, this is bliss, but what they miss out on is the view below becoming wider and wider. But

your pillion passenger will talk you through it over a beer at the next stop-off point.

The first night is spent at a former castle, now owned by Red Bull due to its proximity to the track but a perfect resting point for dinner and drinks at the bar.

Day two presses on to Salzburg, the first rest day. Every third day is spent relaxing in a city.

Salzburg is one of Europe's most fascinating cities. If you want to keep it touristy, then hit the Mozart museum and head to the castle on the hill.

But you can easily fill the hours shopping and eating. You can even take the bikes out and visit the Eagle's Nest, over the border in Germany. This was Hitler's summer residence and offers amazing views of the surrounding countryside.

Day four, and you cross the German border properly. The

scenery is still great, but nothing comes close to that of Austria. The small city of Regensburg is the first overnight, with a chance to see the cathedral and mooch around.

The next day, Germany is done and you hit the Czech border, on your way to Prague.

The difference in each country is striking. Austria is beautiful terrain, Germany is slick and well kept. But the Czech Republic still bears the marks of communism, where poverty blights rural communities, and the roads become quiet and flat. It's fascinating how a line on a map can change everything around you.

Day five ends in Prague, with the prospect of a rest day enough to encourage you to soak up the bars and restaurants that night.

As with every overnight, the hotel is top spec, at least 4★. And in Prague everything is cheap. A beer

costs a euro, you can have a huge meal for a fiver, and it's all superb quality. A day in Prague isn't nearly enough to see all there is, but you enjoy a good taste of it.

With medieval churches, castles, bridges and museums, you're spoiled for choice. So plan what you want to do in the morning before leaving the hotel.

Day seven is spent riding to Brno. For me, this city beats Prague. It's just as beautiful, just as cheap, but without the hordes of tourists. The locals are friendly, the food is great, and with a massive student population, Brno feels full of fun and energy.

The last riding day takes you to Vienna and is the final chance to soak up a bit of culture.

Each day, the group aims to be on the road by 9am after an 8.30am briefing from two tour guides. They are both highly experienced riders who speak fluent German and English.

As well as being top chaps to have a beer with, our guides Marco and Ted are happy to fill you in on the local history, and also help out with translations of menus and dealing with hotel receptionists.

They took it in turn to lead the group on a bike, with the other driving the support truck to the next stop.

This means you can bring as much luggage as you like (within reason), and you don't have to squeeze ten days' worth of clothes on to a motorbike.

Bikers share the thrill of adventure

Our tour was subcontracted out to a company called Edelweiss Bike Travel, which runs tours on behalf of Harley. It offers other bikers' tours – you can check them out at edelweissbike.com.

Great riding aside, the beauty of a motorbike tour is the chance it gives you to meet like-minded folk.

The motorbike is more than just a vehicle. It is a way to connect with people and swap stories of travel and adventure.

Whether it is the element of danger riders share or the thrill of adventure, motorbike ownership is the world's biggest unofficial club.

When bikers pass each other on the road they always wave. You see them for a split second, then they're gone, yet you say hello. For that moment, they are your friend.

So imagine spending the entire day riding alongside those people, then sharing dinner, drinks and laughs in the evening while the bikes cool down outside.

You can see why they quickly become friends for life.

And there's no barrier. Age, sex, nationality – none of it matters.

Harley-Davidson is one of the world's best-loved brands.

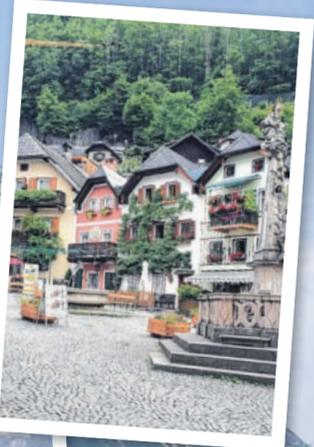
I arrived on this trip slightly baffled by people's love for such a cumbersome bike.

As an avid track and sports bike rider, I was slightly snobby. But for this sort of adventure, it is perfect. It is comfy, handles all the road throws at you and looks damn cool.

If a Harley on its own is an impressive sight, ten Harleys rolling into town really turn heads.

With the sound of the throbbing V-twin filling your ears and the heat of the engine keeping you warm, you'll feel like a film star.

NICK FRANCIS



JOY RIDE... Austria and, inset, Nick on his bike. From above, Hallstatt, on the road and Prague's Old Town

Sunshine Harleyday

app FINDERY (free, IOS and Play)

WANT the low-down on the best places to explore on your next trip? Check out Findery, the app that lets you find and leave notes anywhere in the world offering top tips on what to see and do. The app works on location so you can tag your own notes with pictures, advice or knowledge or search for others' notes on specific places, themes and more.

It is easy on the eye and simple to understand and there is the choice of finding out what is going on directly around you at any time – or searching farther afield for an upcoming trip.

You can then pin the notes you find, with advice or inspiration, on to a map to remember the places you have been to or want to visit.

Like many other social media tools, you can choose to follow particular Findery users and also share your own notes on Facebook and Twitter.



bargain THIS might not look cheap, but the Fusion Maia Da Nang spa resort in Vietnam is

ridiculously beautiful, impossible glamorous and amazingly relaxing. Get seven nights there from £1,498 per person, including ALL spa treatments. This is a saving of up to £645 per couple. The offer is valid for travel from now until September 30 and includes flights from Heathrow and transfers. To find out more call 01494 678400 or visit turquoiseholidays.co.uk.

gadGET LIFESYSTEMS ACTIVE SUN CREAM (£13.50 factor 25, £15.99 factor 40)

NOTHING puts a downer on a dip like a jellyfish sting, so keep this handy. The balmy spring brought a higher risk of jellyfish around Britain but they're always a possibility in the Med and even more likely in the tropics. Lifesystems use a plankton extract in their Active Sun Cream, plus a mix of mineral salts, protein and sugar, which combine to confuse jellyfish and stop them stinging. It comes in SPF 25 and 40, too.



SNAP TO IT FOR PHOTO COMPETITION

ADMIT it – you take far more pictures with your phone than any camera you've ever spent good money on.

And so do we, which is why we like the sound of Hotel Indigo's new smartphone photography masterclasses.

The Intercontinental brand is hosting sessions in London (July 14), York (September 3) and Glasgow (September 8).

Professional snapper Dan Rubin will show you how to get the most from your handset – and

he should know: He has 75,000 followers on Instagram. Post pics themed on your local neighbourhood, tagging @hotelindigo #Neighbourhood until September 20.

The winners' pics will be featured in the Sony World Photography Awards Exhibition at Somerset House in London.

Get tickets for the masterclasses from tinyurl.com/ge3pd6a.

● AIRPORT transfer company ResortHoppa has changed its

name to Hoppa – and is celebrating with an extra 20per cent off all bookings made at hoppa.com before the end of July. The company has more than 7,500 routes worldwide and you can choose from budget options like shared shuttles or taxis, private luxury vehicles and even helicopters. Prices start from £7.99per person for a shared shuttle from Palma de Majorca Airport to Palma Centre. To book, visit hoppa.com and use the code HELLO20.

ALL ABOARD FOR HORSE-DRAWN BUS TOUR

THE average speed of London traffic is 10mph – the same as 100 years ago when most was horse-drawn.

So a horse-drawn omnibus tour of the city should not cause congestion.

Which is good news, because Stanfords, the map and travel bookshop, is going to run one. It will take passengers on a

journey from Stanfords' home for 114 years, in London's Covent Garden, through the West End.

The omnibus is driven by Tim Wood, who has been raising and training horses for more than 25 years, and is manned by coachmen in period dress. The tour takes in streets packed with history, which the guide

will bring to life. Highlights include the Royal Opera House, Charing Cross station, Trafalgar Square, the Palace of Westminster, Piccadilly Circus and Covent Garden.

Tours will run every Tuesday and Thursday at 3pm, 4.30pm and 6pm. Tickets are £30 for adults and £10 children. A family ticket for two adults and two children is £65. See stanfords.co.uk/tickets, or the Stanfords shop, for details.



MercuryHolidays



TENERIFE

A week Half Board with a 2nd week FREE from £349*

Agumarina Golf Apartments

These impressive apartments enjoy an excellent location in San Miguel on Tenerife's warm south coast, just 150 metres from the beach.

Plus:

- No supplement for single travellers on selected dates
- Upgrade your FREE 2nd week to Half Board from £11pp daily

Included in the price:

- A week Half Board with a 2nd week FREE on Bed & Breakfast
- Seaview air-conditioned one bedroom apartment with a balcony, kitchen and ensuite
- Return flights from London, regional airports are available at a supplement
- Transfers in Tenerife & rep. service
- FREE shuttle bus to Los Cristianos and Playa de las Americas^

2015-2016 Dates & Prices							
Half Board (2nd wk on B&B if FREE)	1 wk	10 nts	2nd wk	Half Board (2nd wk on B&B if FREE)	1 wk	10 nts	2nd wk
October	fr. £399	£439	FREE	March	fr. £399	£479	£200
November	fr. £349	£399	£120	April	fr. £369	£399	£195
December	fr. £329	£389	£150	May	fr. £349	£449	FREE
Jan/Feb	fr. £369	£399	£160	June	fr. £349	£499	FREE

For more information or to book call **0843 224 1474**

ABTA Travel with confidence

Calls will cost 7 pence per minute plus your telephone company's access charge

*From price applies to stays 07/17/2015 & 09/19/2015. Please note availability may be limited. All offers are subject to availability & can be withdrawn without notice. Terms and conditions apply. Prices are per person based on 2 adults sharing. An additional cost for hotel luggage will apply. Prices were correct on 06/07/15 & are subject to change since going to print. Wk-week, nts-nights & f-from. From aster hotel, Agumarina Golf at scheduled times.

Offer code: MCAN82

MercuryHolidays



MALTA

Escape for a month 4★ this winter from £299*

Canifor Hotel ★★★★★

Located just a few minutes from the attractive Qawra promenade, this popular hotel offers a high level of personalised service and comfort.

Plus:

- No supplement for single travellers applies 20/10/15-30/04/16
- Upgrade to All-Inclusive from just £9pp daily

Included in the price:

- A month = 2 weeks Half Board with a 3rd and 4th week FREE on B&B. Upgrade your FREE 3rd or 4th week to Half Board from £8pp daily
- Air-conditioned/heated room with en suite and a balcony. Upgrade to a superior room from just £3pp daily
- Return flights from London, other regional airports are available at a supplement
- Transfers in Malta & rep. service

2015-2016 Dates & Prices									
Half Board	1 wk	10 nts	2 wks	3 wks	HB (3rd & 4th wk on B&B if FREE)	1 wk	2 wks	3rd wk	4th wk
July*	fr. £569	£769	£949	£1315	Oct/Nov	fr. £249	£329	FREE	FREE
August	fr. £349	£399	£479	£615	December	fr. £229	£369	FREE	FREE
Sep	fr. £279	£349	£399	£479	Jan/Feb	fr. £199	£299	FREE	FREE

For more information or to book call **0843 357 5261**

ABTA Travel with confidence

Calls will cost 7 pence per minute plus your telephone company's access charge

*From price applies to departures 15/25/01/16 & 01/09/2016. 3rd & 4th week FREE on B&B applies to stays 20/10/15-30/04/16. Please note availability may be limited. All offers are subject to availability & can be withdrawn without notice. Terms and conditions apply. Prices are per person based on 2 adults sharing. An additional cost for hotel luggage will apply. Prices were correct on 06/07/15 and are subject to change since going to print. Wk=week(s) nts=nights, f-from & HB=Half Board. £4.99 prices are based on the 4★ Seashells Resort at Suncoast Hotel.