

How to get your Olympics hit on a sporty holiday this summer

Luxury sports breaks around the world you can book right now

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Natural climbing wall at Anantara Al Jabal Al Akhdar in Oman | CREDIT: Udaya Munasinghe

Anyone with even a fleeting interest in the Olympics will know that Tokyo 2020 was supposed to begin this Friday. All being well, it will take place this time next year. But in the meantime, we'll have to get our sporty hit elsewhere.

The good news is there are lots of places you can go to channel your inner Usain Bolt this summer and, looking on the bright side, you now have an extra year to brush up on some of those sports that are going to be in the Olympics for the first time, for example, climbing, surfing and skateboarding.

If you're the complete decathlete all-rounder, you can keep your options open at [Quinta do Lago Resort](#) on the Algarve, which recently launched The Campus, a multi-sports hub specialising in training, recovery and rehabilitation for professional athletes (Rio Ferdinand, Judy Murray and Brian O'Driscoll have all had their twinges attended to here). It also offers sports packages for the rest of us, ranging from 'Body fitness for all' (€288pp) to 'Elite Triathlon' (€465pp), offering tailored combinations of yagalates, boxfit, tennis, cycling, swimming and running.



Swim training at The Campus at Quinta do Lago | CREDIT: Rodrigo Bimering

Similarly, family-friendly boutique hotel [Almyra](#) in Cyprus, which has a great spa, a bike centre and extensive fitness programmes, offers year-round seven-day Triathlon training camps (from £1,240pp, excluding flights) run by an ex-champion triathlete and a triathlon coach, which can be built around your holiday with daily activities such as open-water swimming, pool diagnostic sessions and road cycling routes on varied gradients.

If you're more of the laser-focused type looking to hone one particular skill, the most talked-about new event at the Olympics is Sports Climbing. An amazing place to get a taste for it is canyon-top [Anantara Al Jabal Al Akhdar](#) in Oman, home to the Jabal Activity Wall (120-minute sessions from about £83pp), which is one of the highest climbing walls in a natural setting in the Middle East, manned by a team of highly qualified instructors.

The resort also has the more challenging Ultimate Jabal Activity Wall and is about to launch the Extreme Jabal Activity Wall, an even more challenging 200-metre stretch of via ferrata, snaking across a vertical rock face, as well as Oman's first mountain zip-lines. All levels of age and experience are catered for, from six-year-olds up.



Cycling as part of triathlon training at Almyra

If you're the next Kelly Slater, [La Sultana Oualidia](#), half way between Marrakech and Casablanca in Morocco, is the one for you. It sits on the edge of the sheltered Oualidia Lagoon (great for beginners). Outside the lagoon is the Atlantic and a stretch of coast considered one of the world's finest surfing spots for pros. The hotel has teamed up with the excellent Surfland Surfcamp to offer surfing lessons to guests of all levels of experience (from £21pp).

To win serious brownie points with your offspring, why not take the family to stay at the gorgeous Palladian Villa Zambonina just outside Verona (sleeps 20, from £5,431 per week) and then pack the teenagers off to skateboarding school in town. Surely the most hipster sport of all time, skateboarding will debut in the Olympics in 2021.

Villa rental company [Tuscany Now & More](#) has teamed up with concierge company The Art of Leisure to offer lessons at Scuola Italiana Skateboard (€60 for a two-hour session, including skateboard rental), Italy's original skateboard school.



Villa Zambonina outside Verona

As for the rest of us, some of Europe's best resorts regularly attract top talent to run their sporting academies. [Sani Resort](#) in Greece has its Rafa Nadal Tennis Academy and Chelsea FC Football Academy. [L'Andana](#) in Tuscany's activities include academies in swimming (run by Aglaia Pezzato), cycling (Mario Cipollini) and football (Gianluca Zambrotta).

[Forte Village](#) in Sardinia's tennis academy is run by Pat Cash's trainer Rocco Roccisano and there's one for budding Rocky Balboas with British champion Frank Bugliani, among others on offer there. [Verdura Resort](#) in Sicily also offers a huge range of academies, including one in karate, another newly introduced Olympic sport.

Alternatively, there are those hotels that just happen to have world-class athletes among their staff. My favourite is [Hotel de Russie](#) in Rome, where Italian triathlon legend Danilo Palmucci has been in charge of its fitness programmes for ten years and offers one-on-one early morning sightseeing or runs through Rome (one-hour 'Art Running' sessions with Palmucci cost from €120; two-hour 'Art Biking' sessions from €180) – a totally inspired way to see the city.

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