



Here's 5 things to do with your Easter break

Go on an egg hunt



Gili Lankanfushi hotel in the Maldives, where Easter dreams come true

But not any old egg hunt. Go on an egg hunt in the Maldives. The **Gili Lankanfushi** hotel in the Maldives has a frankly *this close* to being to-die-for Easter experience that involves an egg hunt with a marine biologist on a reef, as well as a wine and chocolate tasting for the big children. Oh go on then, book us in.

Closer to home there's an egg-citing Easter celebration at **Marwell Zoo**, where the Wild Egg Hunt, held on 25, 26, 27 and 28 March, will involve meeting a real Easter bunny in his burrow while following a trail with the end reward of a chocolate egg.

There's also a Big Bird Bonanza on the same weekend – with 'egg-tastic' fun including penguin talks, bird meet-and-greets and bird feeder making sessions – and Easter face painting (which is for the kids, m'kay?).

Marwell Zoo admission: Adults £19; children £15; infants free.

Or maybe an egg hunt at **Lullingstone castle**, with the rather attractive 1497 manor house as backdrop. The castle, dating from 1497, has remained in the same family since it was built – and both Henry VIII and Queen Anne went there on the reg. There's a 15 acre lake too, which is quite an impressive sight in the grounds.

Lullingstone castle admission: Adults £8; children £4; SC £6.50; Family of 4 (2 adults, 2 children, 1 adults 3 children) £18.

Visit one of the UK's incredible castles, like Corfe Castle in Dorset:



You could do worse things at Easter than visit Corfe Castle in Dorset (Picture: Getty)

Corfe Castle is one of the UK's most outstanding medieval castles. Heavily involved in Tudor history, Elizabeth I sold this to Sir Christopher Hatton in 1572.

Corfe Castle was under siege in the 16th and 17th centuries thanks to its location on the English Channel.

Amazingly, much of its wall structure remains.

You could also visit one of these 15 other extraordinary castles in the UK... or stay in your very own castle (for the weekend).

Explore England



Who wouldn't want to go to the New Forest at Easter, frankly? (Picture: Getty)

Book one of these short weekend breaks from the **top 11 places to visit in England**, including breaks in Nottingham, Brighton, Lake District, Stratford-Upon-Avon, Portsmouth, New Forest, Manchester, Windsor, Hastings, London and the Isle of Wight. There's something for everyone, whether it's wild walks you want or a citybreak.

Go somewhere with a kids' club and chill the hell out

If you've got kids, the Holy Grail is a stylish hotel that has food you actually want to eat, drinks you actually want to drink, beaches that are attractive and not too crowded and a pool area that makes you not want to just float out to sea on your lilo to escape.

You cannot go wrong AT ALL with the **Forte Village In Sardinia**. Set in acres of landscaped gardens with palm trees and pools at every turn, the Forte Village hotel is a temple to family-friendly holidays.



Bring your family here if you genuinely want an Easter break (Picture: Forte Village)

There's a children's village with its own pool and slide, kids' club and teen club. There's a train that will take kids off to a special restaurant where they can make and eat their own supper.

The restaurant is buffet style and opens at 7pm, so you can eat early with the kids – who will no doubt gravitate towards the pasta and pudding selection, but will also be tempted by the daily changing grills (local fish and meat), the seafood and the seemingly limitless cheese and ham selection, freshly cut at the counter.

The actually limitless prosecco at breakfast buffet is all yours, however.

Visit the *Eleganzia Forte Village website* for more details and to book.

Or **The Almyra**, a very stylish, white, clean-lined hotel in Paphos, Cyprus, that is ultra child-friendly despite being totally tasteful.



Om.... (Picture: Almyra)

Yes, the two can co-exist.



Paradise with a kids club chaser (Picture: Almyra)

The beachfront property has a pool, spa with elegant infinity pool and treatment rooms as well as a holistic menu and enormous wine list (enough said, almost).

But it also has a shaded (if it's hot enough) children's pool, indoor playroom, outdoor adventure garden and a 'baby go lightly' baby pre-order menu so you don't have to lug all your equipment overseas (buggies, bottles, sterilisers, baby gyms and walkers – you name it, they pretty much have it). They also have appealing (ie not just burger and chips) children's menus in all the restaurants.

A week at the hotel at Easter for two adults and two/three children in interconnecting rooms currently starts from 1,882 Euros for 7 nights.

Skiing in Bad Gastein, Austria



The Gruner Baum Hotel Village is a picturesque place to stay near a beautiful spa town with a whole heap of fun to offer that isn't necessarily just skiing (Picture: Hoteldorf Gruner Baum)

You might have considered skiing at Easter to be a) too expensive. b) too crowded. c) too close to the end of the season for snow.

But actually, Easter can be the perfect time to ski – particularly in the less commercial resorts, of which Bad Gastein is one.

If the weather's warming up, it makes sense to choose a resort with plenty going on beyond just pistebashing, just in case the snow isn't as good as you might like (having said that, the end of the season in Bad Gastein last year saw a massive dump making late spring skiing a joy – loads of snow, empty slopes – while conversely the early season in many popular resorts this year has been poor).



The Belle Epoque town of Bad Gastein, Salzburg, Austria (Picture: Metro)

Bad Gastein in Austria is a picturesque Belle Epoque spa town in Salzburg, in the St Johann im Pongau district.

There, along with an extensive and varied ski terrain, you'll find beautiful forested walks, miles and miles of mountain trails to hike and plenty of extra-curricular activities, including pony treks, night-time torchlit walks, ice skating, cross-country skiing, husky dog rides and a VERY unusual **healing caves spa experience** that takes place in the natural heat deep inside the mountain range.

The resort is wonderfully quiet towards the end of the season – you will never have to queue at a lift (compare that to France, where 30 minute queues can be the norm during school holidays) and you will frequently find you have the slopes to yourself.

If you're taking children with you, the kids ski school in Angertal is impeccable – fun animal characters to keep them interested, lots of easy-to-use lifts and plenty of activities.

If you're not, the nightlife in Bad Gastein is almost too much fun. Try to peel yourself away from the outdoor apres-ski at the **Silver Bullet bar**, where they regularly have live music in the streets, or the club nights, which will have you using your last shred of willpower to turn down the jager shot and leave the dancefloor.

Stay at the **Hoteldorf Gruner Baum**, available to book through **Crystal Ski Holidays**, for a four-star hotel with spa, swimming pool, fireside bar, certified organic restaurant (even the wines are 100% organic and the beer is from the local Gusswerk brewery) and kids club – and activities galore.

The hotel, a family-run, 80-room place that used to be a hunting lodge – will organise all the activities mentioned above and will arrange pick-up and drop-off.

The nearest lift is 2.4km away and there's a free hotel bus at multiple points during the day.

The perfect Easter break.

7 nights half board at the **Hoteldorf Gruner Baum** is currently approx £749 per person, including flights from London Gatwick, based on two adults and two children.