

## Great Days Out A to Z

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**Italian gem:** the secluded and luxurious Eco del Mare on the Ligurian coast

### E IS FOR ECO DEL MARE

When Italian Francesco Mozer sailed past a secluded cove in Lerici, on the Ligurian coast, he immediately knew this was a special spot. He bought the land and opened a friendly beach club, which ticked along happily for several decades. Realising the location had far greater potential, his daughter Francesca converted the club into an exclusive six-suite boutique lodging. Today, it remains a surprisingly undiscovered gem in this popular region of Italy. Arriving by a wooden staircase built into the cliff-side, visitors are greeted with delicious scents of

jasmine, which grows naturally from plateaus in the rocks. An inviting bar has been carved into the cliff, leading to rooms set directly on the beach. Francesca worked with interior designers and local artists to develop the property, which could happily find a home in the pages of Elle Decor. Seashore chic is the key inspiration, with washbasins carved from stone, delicate fabrics strewn across the bed like fishing nets, and muslin drapes billowing like sails from windows looking out to the pebbly beach. Each uniquely designed room is named after a song by Francesca's boyfriend, Italian singer Zucchero. A favourite is Diamonds, which features giant 'diamond' rings attached to the walls, each with a strip of spotlights set inside the band. Eco del Mare's restaurant serves excellent seafood and attracts visitors who come here just for the day to relax on beanbags strewn across the beach. Even in cloudy weather the water still dazzles emerald green, and you may even find yourself wishing it would rain – simply for an excuse to retreat indoors and enjoy the wonderful space. If you're seeking a place to hide from the world (and the Olympics), this is it.

#### SARAH MARSHALL

■ Suites cost from €390 per night, including breakfast. A day pass costs €110 in high season for a couple and includes umbrella and sunbeds, towels, use of shower, changing room and locker. To make a booking, visit [merrioncharles.com](http://merrioncharles.com)

■ easyjet flies from London to Pisa £67 return. Visit [easyjet.com](http://easyjet.com)

### F IS FOR FEAST

Ditch the glow sticks and soap on a string; today's festivals are far more civilised. Once upon a time, burger and chips would satisfy party animals, but now revellers have more discerning tastes. Once deemed an expensive inconvenience, eating is taking centre stage at festivals, with restaurants even replacing DJs and bands on line-ups. The latest culinary mash-up is Feast, created by the team responsible for last year's night food market The Long Table. Stars of the capital's dining scene will be gathering for three days of foodie frivolity (August 3 to 5) in a pretty south London Georgian Square outside Guy's Hospital, with the aim of serving restaurant food at affordable prices. José Pizzaro, Moro,



St John Bread and Wine, and The Wright Brothers are among those on the bill, along with supporting bands and DJs. Highlights include an excellent chicken fattee by Spanish/Middle Eastern restaurant Moro, and spicy chicharrones cooked a la plancha, by sister tapas bar Morito. Moro, which celebrates its 15th anniversary this year, will also be hosting a Bedouin food tent at arts, culture and music festival Wilderness in Oxfordshire which runs from August 10 to 12.

■ *The Quadrangle, Guy's Hospital, London Bridge, SE1. Tickets £6. Dishes from £3. Fri 6-11pm; Sat 12 noon-11pm; Sun 12 noon-10pm. Visit [wefeast.co.uk](http://wefeast.co.uk)*

■ *Wilderness Festival: tickets from £129. Visit [wildernessfestival.com](http://wildernessfestival.com)*

### G IS FOR GREEK GETAWAY

While all the Greek Islands are steeped in mythical status, there's



**Tasty treat:** if you like eating out, don't miss Feast, the latest culinary mash-up at Guy's Hospital, where you can enjoy quality dishes such as chicharrones (inset above) at affordable prices

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## A to Z Great Days Out



**Sunny days:** (left and above) escape to magical Santorini to enjoy sherbet orange sunsets and fantastic views of the Aegean Sea; (below) dance the night away at Hideaway – Streatham's very own jazz, swing and comedy club



something particularly magical about Santorini. Formed from a collapsed volcanic caldera, this crescent-shaped idyll in the Cyclades is set against a backdrop of deep blue seas and sherbet orange sunsets. It's the perfect antithesis, in fact, to the soggy grey streets of London. While we're already reaching for our winter wardrobe, residents of Santorini are basking in searing temperatures of 35°C. For an up-market experience of the island, The Grace Santorini is unbeatable. The whitewashed stone rooms are paeans to stylish minimalism, providing a welcome escape from cluttered lives and

minds. But what really makes The Grace stand apart is the view. Set in Imerovigli in the north west of the island, the property overlooks Santorini's famous volcano, now surrounded by silky sheets of Aegean Sea. Every morning, a daily-changing six-course champagne breakfast is served on the outdoor verandah, with dishes showcasing local cuisine. It's an epic affair and easily one of the best hotel breakfast experiences in Europe. Topped off with a dip in an infinity pool, it's hard to believe life gets much better than this. But it does. Earlier this summer, the hotel unveiled a new 400sqm

two-bedroom villa with its own mini spa (hamam, Jacuzzi and treatment room), pool, library, wine and fine cigar bar, and kitchen with private chef on request. The hotel can also arrange private boat tours of the island, where guests can swim in thermal springs, relax on a red sand beach, or simply admire the view.

**SARAH MARSHALL**

■ *Sovereign Luxury Travel is offering an online discount of seven nights at The Grace Santorini from £1,175 per person on a bed and breakfast basis, departing August 28. Price includes Thomson flights from London Gatwick and private transfers. Visit [sovereign.com](http://sovereign.com) or call 0844 415 1936*

### H IS FOR HIDEAWAY

If you're a firm believer that dancing should be an Olympic sport, you might feel a bit cheated by commentaries on the athletics or highlights of the hockey. But instead of grumbling, head to Streatham's very own jazz, swing and comedy club, Hideaway. Throughout the Games, the club has a stellar line-up of musicians performing, including soul singer Mica Paris on August 3. The Jive Aces, who gained fame on Britain's Got Talent, will also be playing on July 27. But this won't be a spectator sport. Guests will be encouraged to get up on the

dance floor and show their own swing moves. If your footwork is a little rusty, pop down on Monday nights for their weekly Cuban salsa club with DJ Rich playing the latest timba. But even if you have two left feet, there's still an opportunity to get involved with a jazz workshop sponsored by the Dordogne Jazz Summer School on July 30 – the same day Usain Bolt is expected to feature in the 100m final. Afterwards, aspiring musicians can take part in a jam session with drum kit, piano and PA system provided by the venue.

■ *2 Empire Mews, Stanthorpe Road, SW16. Costs vary depending on night. Visit [hideawaylive.co.uk](http://hideawaylive.co.uk)*

**10x7 advert**