

Getting the flavour of...



A phone-free holiday in France

Life with my screen-addicted teenage daughter is sometimes blighted by “battles over technology” – but an outdoorsy holiday in the French Alps proved the perfect antidote, says David Byers in *The Sunday Times*. We chose a two-day trip with the tour operator [Summer France](#), staying in Vaujany, a village perched at an altitude of 1,250 metres near the Alpe d’Huez ski area. There, a crowing cockerel (mistaken by my slumbering daughter for Alexa) woke us up each morning, leaving plenty of time for our programme of activities. Grace hadn’t much liked the look of these, but ended up enjoying them all hugely. First came a hike around the Alpette (a lake-strewn plateau with “Edenic” scenery), then a three-hour e-bike lesson. But it was the whitewater rafting we enjoyed the most, along with the river swimming – “an electric physical experience to cure a racing mind”. *A seven-night trip costs from £541pp (summerfrance.co.uk).*

The “boho” Miami the locals know

Locals will tell you that Miami’s best-known beachfront neighbourhoods are now overpriced and, in parts, alarmingly “tacky”. So my advice is to stay in Coconut Grove instead, says Susan d’Arcy in *The Times*. The city’s oldest district, this “boho backwater” is where “people who actually live in Miami spend their free time”. With its Gilded Age mansions and its boardwalks around Biscayne Bay, it has plenty of “yesteryear charm”, as well as a farmers’ market, “laid-back” cafés, “friendly” dive bars, good restaurants (I can recommend Los Félix), and a large and very noisy population of free-roaming peafowl. There are Roman statues, Renaissance tapestries and more to enjoy at the Vizcaya Museum and Gardens (a good picnic spot), and a fabulous hotel – Mayfair House – that is one of only four in Miami to have garnered Michelin’s “coveted” two-key rating.

A charming holiday let in Somerset

The Craftsman’s Cabin (pictured) is so called for a reason, says Jane Dunford in *The Guardian*. Set in its own peaceful meadow near the village of Kingsbury Episcopi, on the edge of the Somerset Levels, this attractive two-bedroom wooden house is a great place to unwind, with a wood-burner, an outdoor fire pit and a wide verandah with rocking chairs and a roll-top bath. It’s also a showcase for the area’s “makers”, as it is entirely furnished with their creations, from the tables and ceramics to the soap. Its owner and creator, interior designer Decca Lang, can arrange studio visits and classes in stone carving, pottery, and so on – and there’s plenty to do nearby, including visits to local RSPB sites known for starling murmurations. *From £170 per night (craftsmanscabin.co.uk).*