



Travel with **children**



FAMILY-FRIENDLY TRAVEL WITHOUT THE FUSS

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INTRODUCTION

If you want to spend quality time with your children, help them learn, grow and gain a better understanding of the world and humanity, then travelling abroad is a great way to do it. So take the plunge and set off on an adventure with the family. Whether you're new to backpacking or a seasoned globetrotter, you shouldn't have to put away your passport just because you have started a family.

As a travelling family you'll talk and share experiences, which these days we often struggle to find time for in our busy lives. Babies, toddlers and teenagers may surprise you with their adaptability and affability when the hold of regular routines loosens. Watching your children engage with different surroundings can change your perspective and invigorate you with a renewed sense of wonder. As your children blossom before your eyes in response to new encounters and experiences, it's hard not to share their excitement. Their questions will reveal the depths of their intelligence and the scope of their understanding, which in turn will enrich your appreciation of your children. Their horizons quite literally expand as they realise that the world is bigger than your home town or city, and with it comes an appreciation of cultural diversity, the seeds of tolerance and empathy, which will stay with them for the rest of their lives.

Your trip will also be transformed: you will be given a warmer welcome, people will look on you more kindly, and will have more intimate encounters with locals, as parenting provides a strong common bond with people all over the world.

Anxieties may conspire to place obstacles in your path: which destination to choose and how to get there, what to pack for a change of climate, or fear of strange, 'exotic' diseases. Will the youngest scream all the way through a 24-hour flight? Will the eldest still be able to gorge herself on fruit and avoid a tummy bug? Will you be able to go diving if the kids are in tow? Stop worrying: nothing really stands in your way, even if dragging your brood to the other end of the world does involve a certain amount of know-how. The first part of this book will provide you with basic advice and tips to get to grips with travelling with the family while avoiding disaster.

A big part of getting the planning right comes from choosing a suitable holiday destination for your family. The second part of the book will help you make this decision by looking at a broad range of destinations. Specific activities, points of interest, comfort, health, what to watch out for and the best time to go: every country is carefully scrutinised so that you can be confident about your choice. As several days walking in Morocco is completely different to seeing dolphins in Florida or playing at explorers in the Amazon, this guide gives you a broad idea of where to start. It is then up to you to choose the country that will thrill the small boy who cannot sit still, the little girl who dreams of being a princess or the teenager who is mad about sport. Once you are there, the joy of watching them, wide-eyed in wonder, embarking on this amazing adventure will mean that any misgivings will soon be forgotten. While travelling with children might not be glamorous, relaxing or easy, what will stay with you is the joy of sharing those unforgettable experiences. Better than memories, you will pass on the taste for travel to your children. They will be eternally grateful.



DESTINATIONS BY THEME

Are you looking for active or more educational activities? Are your children history buffs or animal lovers? Here are some top places to visit arranged by theme to help you find the destination that will both satisfy and delight your children.

CHILDISH DELIGHTS



- » Dart amongst the fish in warm waters of Fiji. (p148)
- » Meet Father Christmas and visit the cave in Finland where his friends the elves prepare gingerbread. (p72)
- » Build sandcastles and snack on *churros* on beaches in Spain. (p110)
- » Spend time with the animals on a farmstay in Germany. (p76)
- » Admire the windmills from the comfort of a bike trailer in the Netherlands while mum and dad pedal. (p94)
- » Take a horse-and-carriage ride around the ramparts of Marrakesh, Morocco. (p196)

ACTIVE ENTERTAINMENT

- » Learn to ski or take to the slopes like a champion in the Swiss Alps. (p114)
- » Try sailing, water skiing and scuba diving in the Balearic Islands. (p54)
- » Enjoy water sports or lounge on some of the most beautiful beaches in the Mediterranean in Tunisia. (p208)
- » Speed along Belgium's beaches in a sand yacht. (p58)



- » Splash through New Zealand's rivers in a raft, canoe, kayak or jet boat. (p150)
- » Learn how to ride the waves in Sri Lanka. (p180)

BEING ROBINSON CRUSOE

- » Be a castaway on the islands of Thailand. (p182)
- » Become a pirate on the island of Santa Maria, on the east coast of Madagascar. (p192)



- » Gather coconuts on the beautiful beaches of the Seychelles. (p202)
- » Dip your toes in the sea from a bungalow on stilts in Tahiti. (p152)
- » Rent a cottage on a beach in Goa and live with the rise and fall of the sun. (p162)
- » Spend the night in a beach hut and wake to the spectacle of flying pelicans in Mexico. (p134)

THE ROAD TO ADVENTURE



- » Play at being a *gaucho* in the Pampas before admiring glaciers and icebergs in Argentina. (p118)
- » Visit the highest mountains in the world with an easy trek in Nepal. (p176)
- » Explore the forest canopy by suspension bridge, zip wire or train in Costa Rica. (p128)
- » Traverse the snowy Canadian landscape by dog sledge or snowmobile. (p124)
- » Roam the Australian outback as far as stunning Uluru, a sacred Aboriginal site. (p146)
- » Climb to the crater of Mt Etna and see the lava flows in Sicily. (p108)
- » Go on a camel safari in the dunes of the Thar desert in northern India. (p160)

TALKING TO THE ANIMALS

- » Observe orangutans in Malaysia. (p170)
- » Watch fish and stingrays from a glass-bottomed boat in Mauritius. (p194)
- » Climb into a jeep to see elephants, leopards and monkeys in the nature reserves of Sri Lanka. (p180)
- » Spot whales and rorquals in Iceland. (p82)
- » Tick off the 'Big Five' in the reserves of Kenya (p190), Tanzania (p206) or South Africa. (p204)



- » Track giant turtles, baby sea lions and penguins in the Galápagos. (p132)
- » Watch dolphins play around your boat in Tahiti. (p152)

KNIGHTS & PRINCESSES

- » Hunt ghosts in the castles of Scotland. (p106)
- » Visit the real Dracula's Castle in Romania. (p102)



- » Play Sleeping Beauty at Neuschwanstein Castle in Germany. (p76)
- » Contemplate the sea from the ramparts of a fort in Oman. (p218)
- » Act like a ninja or a samurai in a film studio in Japan. (p166)
- » Be a maharaja at the splendidly colourful Mysore Palace in South India. (p162)

TOP THEME PARKS

- » Take a tour of the theme parks in Orlando, in the eastern United States, from the not-to-be-missed Walt Disney World® to the Harry Potter Park at Universal. (p138)
- » Discover a complete world of Lego in Billund, Denmark. (p68)



- » Enjoy the amusement rides of the Prater, the largest park in the Austrian capital. (p52)
- » Play at cowboys in Sioux City, a Wild West town reconstructed in the Canaries. (p62)
- » Throw yourself down the aquatic slide at Wild Wadi Water Park in Dubai. (p212)
- » Relive the South African gold rush of the 1880s at Gold Reef City. (p204)

LOOKING FOR IDOLS



- » See the groups of *cosplay-zoku*, crazy looking young people straight out of a manga in Tokyo, Japan. (p166)
- » Visit villages and sets used during the filming of *Star Wars - The Phantom Menace* in Tunisia. (p208)
- » Follow in the footsteps of cowboys in the old Wild West in the western United States. (p140)
- » Wear a Brazilian football shirt and play *keepy uppy* on the beach like Ronaldo in Brazil. (p122)
- » Stock up on trendy London t-shirts featuring the likes of the Beatles or Pete Doherty in England. (p70)

GLADIATORS & ANCIENT GODS

- » Rub shoulders with the gods of Olympus in Greece and Crete. (p78)
- » Explore a Roman library in the ruins of Ephesus in Turkey. (p220)
- » Ride a Viking longship out into the fjords of Roskilde in Denmark. (p68)
- » Visit the pyramids and temples of Egypt and travel down the Nile on a felucca like the pharaohs did. (p188)



- » Walk in the emperors' footsteps at the Colosseum and the Forum in Rome or experience daily life of the ancient city of Pompeii, Italy. (p86)
- » Get lost in the maze of alleys in the Diocletian Palace in Split, Croatia. (p64)

IN SOMEONE ELSE'S SHOES

- » Take a djembe class on the beach and learn batik in little village in Senegal. (p200)
- » Sleep in the middle of the jungle in a lodge run by an Amazonian community in Ecuador. (p132)



- » Spend a night in a yurt in Mongolia. (p174)
- » Experience the lives of Native American Indians today and join in a powwow in Canada. (p124)
- » Meet the Sami people – the reindeer herders of Norway. (p96)

WONDERS OF THE WORLD



- » Take a train up the mountain to Macchu Picchu, the mysterious Inca city in Peru. (p136)
- » Walk along the Great Wall of China, the longest man-made structure in the world. (p158)
- » Discover the spectacular Taj Mahal and the glittering palaces of Rajasthan in North India. (p160)
- » Take a camel ride to the pyramids of Giza, just like one of the majestic pharaohs. (p188)
- » Climb the pyramids of the great Mayan and Aztec cities of Mexico and take in the jungle views. (p134)
- » Explore Petra, the Rose City, hidden in a canyon in the Jordanian mountains. (p216)
- » See the hundreds of temples of Angkor hidden in the Cambodian jungle. (p156)

