



With the dreary winter months upon us, the chance to soak up the sun in luxurious surroundings has never been more alluring. So from the Maldives to Dubai, here are the trips that will leave you...

By Joe Minihane

**F**OR anyone with lockdown savings ready to be blown on a once-in-a-lifetime, scorching-hot holiday, the Maldives ticks all the right boxes.

Patina Maldives (patinahotels.com) is on the man-made Fari Islands archipelago on North Male Atoll and is home to 110 suites and villas, each designed to offer maximum privacy.

The resort has been developed with the aim of connecting with the natural landscape, where wood-clad villas and forests ensure a calm vibe.

Order a cocktail and take a dip in your private pool or the ever-present Indian Ocean, safe in the knowledge that the weather will always be glorious and the pace deliciously slow.

Seven nights from £6,170pp, including flights and transfers, based on two guests sharing (carrier.co.uk).

With plentiful flights, myriad hotel options and relentless desert sun, the **United Arab Emirates** is the ideal go-to for those in search of guaranteed hot weather.

Caesars Palace Dubai, part of the Bluewaters Island development, is the place to be for those who want to recharge without having to venture beyond their resort.

Its 12 dining options include Gordon Ramsay Hell's Kitchen, and guests will find pools galore and direct beach access, so once you arrive there's no need to move on. Keen explorers, however, can easily access the city via a new pedestrian bridge which stretches across the sparkling Arabian Sea to the iconic Jumeirah Beach Resort.

Rooms from £309 per night based on two adults sharing (caesars.com/dubai).

**A**LONG the coast in **Abu Dhabi**, Mandarin Oriental's opulent Emirates Palace is the ultimate spot for some seafront downtime. Tucked away in a natural bay with its own private marina, this waterside haven is decked out in classic Arabian style but with all the modern luxury touches you'd expect from a top-end hotel.

Infinity pools with private cabanas offer views across the ocean and make for a memorable place to sip on a cocktail as the sun goes down.

For those after a trip out, there's the option of kayaking around nearby mangroves or taking in history and culture at the Grand Mosque or Louvre Abu Dhabi.

Rooms from £370 per night (mandarinoriental.com).

Desert sun is also promised on the northern tip of **Qatar**, where Zual Wellness Resort is the ideal place to reset and recharge, with plenty of restorative indoor spaces for cooling off and chilling out.

Average temperatures in summer are a blistering 37C (98F), but they are a far more manageable 21C (70F) in January, meaning the resort's lagoon and beaches are ripe for



# Feeling HOT, HOT



**PACIFIC OCEAN VIEW:** Alila Marea Beach Resort near San Diego.  
Top left: Kumbura Villa in Sri Lanka

winter-sun-seekers. Two separate areas – the adults-only Zual Serenity and family-friendly Zual Discovery – both feature traditional Qatari spas and sleek rooms.

Throw in star-filled night skies and a trip to this under-visited corner of the Middle East promises a memorable break whatever time of year. From £768 per room, per night based on two sharing (zual.com)

Closer to home, a three-hour flight takes you to **Tunisia** and its picture-postcard beaches. Major tour operators and airlines have returned to the country in recent years, and Hammamet, at the south-eastern end of the Cap Bon peninsula, remains the

sun-lovers with the urge for a truly spectacular getaway should take a look at Lengishu, a private home in the Borana Conservancy, a rhino sanctuary in Laikipia, **northern Kenya**.

With space for 12 guests spread across the main house and four gorgeous cottages, it has sweeping views over some of eastern Africa's finest wilderness.

Without the constraints of other guests, you set the itinerary and choose when you go on inclusive game drives or horse rides through the bush. There's even the chance to track rhinos on foot.

A seven-night stay at Lengishu costs from £8,837pp based on 12 sharing. Prices include flights, transfers, full-board accommodation and safari (Abercrombie & Kent, 01242 386500).

**B**ACK on the travel map too is **Sri Lanka**, and its plentiful lush landscapes offer a wonderful escape. Kumbura, a recently restored and gorgeous villa, sleeps eight across four rooms. Set within verdant forest and paddy fields, it's just a few miles inland from the city of Galle and a world away from the rush of everyday life back home.

Its infinity pool looks out across wonderful scenery, while monkeys and peacocks roam the grounds.

Check out the local food scene or kick back and let the housekeeper tempt you with classic Sri Lankan dishes. Nightly rates start at £270 (edenvillas.com).

The Caribbean is an obvious option for anyone who craves heat no matter the time of year.

Away from the busier islands, Palm