



Edited by  
**ELLA BUCHAN**



Lates  
'N'  
Breaks

**NEW YORK:** Pay from £819pp for three nights at the three-V Hudson Hotel, room only, with flights from Heathrow on October 21. See virginholidays.co.uk.  
**JAMAICA:** A fortnight all-inclusive at the four-T ClubHotel Riu Negril costs

from £1199pp, flying from Gatwick on September 11. See thomson.co.uk.  
**DEVON:** Pay £189 for a two-night weekend break from August 24, staying in a Bronze apartment sleeping four. See woolacombe.com/bp or call 0843 208 0368.

## Go wild in the woods at 'safari lodge' hotel

LIKE a cross between a giant treehouse and a luxury chalet, Marwell Hotel is unique.

Directly opposite the entrance to Marwell Wildlife zoological park in Colden Common, near Winchester, Hampshire, it is perfect for a family break.

Set in woodland and built on stilts, it is designed to look and feel like a safari lodge.

Penguins, giraffes, tigers and snow leopards, inset, are the big attractions at the 140-acre park.

I've always suspected our kids escaped from the zoo, so this was a chance to bring them home.

Built in the late 1980s, the 68 bedrooms are split between four lodges linked by glass-panelled walkways, giving you a brilliant view

by AMY BRATLEY

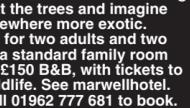
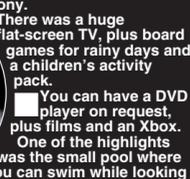
of the woodland. Our modern family room was well equipped with a double bed and bunk beds, plus a spotless bathroom and small balcony.

There was a huge flat-screen TV, plus board games for rainy days and a children's activity pack.

You can have a DVD player on request, plus films and an Xbox.

One of the highlights was the small pool where you can swim while looking out at the trees and imagine you're somewhere more exotic.

One night for two adults and two children in a standard family room costs from £150 B&B, with tickets to Marwell Wildlife. See marwellhotel.co.uk or call 01962 777 681 to book.



## Relaxation, tranquility and a touch

## of spa luxury in beautiful northern Greece



MAGICAL: Halkidiki's beach and, inset, Eagles Palace Hotel

**TO say Halkidiki is an oasis of tranquility is like saying Brazil is pretty good for football.**

Relaxing, magical and luxurious, this beautiful northern Greek peninsula deserves all the praise heaped upon it.

And five-star Eagles Palace Hotel and Spa, awarded the title "Best resort in Greece" and a member of Small Luxury Hotels of the World, also lives up to the hype.

This fantastic 165-room hotel in Ouranopolis has been run by husband-and-wife team Konstantinos and Lena Tornivoukas since 1999.

I just had time to take in the views of the crystal-blue Aegean Sea from my balcony before dinner at one of the hotel's three restaurants, the Vinum Kouziva.

Located in lush gardens overlooking the beach and pool, it serves up tasty food from an open kitchen.

Local specialities include chickpea kafe with tahini and coriander-flavoured mayonnaise, Arabic pies and chicken glazed with pomegranate.

After a sound night's sleep in my immaculate

by DOMINIK LEMANSKI

suite it was time to check out what is undoubtedly the jewel in Halkidiki's crown. The world heritage site of Mount Athos - dubbed the "Holy Mountain" due to its status as one of the most sacred places on Earth - is just a short hop away from the resort.

An Orthodox Christian spiritual centre since 1054, Athos is home to 2,500 monks. Women and children have been forbidden from setting foot on the autonomous enclave since the 11th Century while arrangements for male visitors can take months.

After a hearty breakfast in the hotel's Melathron restaurant we set out on a small boat to get as close as possible to the monastic republic.

We sailed out along the coast and moored just off Athos.

We escaped from the searing sun by jumping off the boat into the cool, soothing waters of the Aegean.

The next hour or so was spent snorkelling before we retired to our boat for a glass of local wine. Returning to Eagles Palace feeling a bit

sizzled, we settled down for a spot of late lunch at the Armyra restaurant.

The octopus with legume puree was delicious, while the ice cream served with fig preserve was well worth the extra calories.

After a late afternoon spot of sunbathing on the hotel's private beach we headed for cocktails and dinner at the Kamarea restaurant.

This is real event dining. Hours passed as we enjoyed seafood specialities including octopus carpaccio, grilled squid stuffed with Greek salad and fresh sea bass fillet served with spiny chichory and lime pesto.

The next day I booked in for a massage at the Eagles Spa by Elymis.

They call it "total wellness" and that's how I felt after my massage had thoroughly loosened the knots in my back and neck.

The spa also offers relaxation treatments including hot and cold water therapies.

By the time I had finished with the steam sauna, rasul (mud bath) and hot tub, I felt thoroughly unwind.

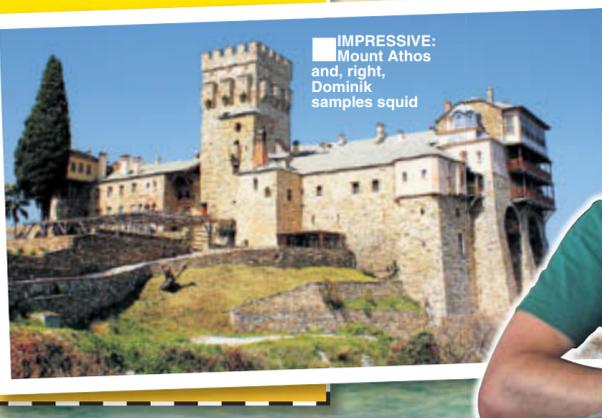
And that is the whole point of a visit to Halkidiki and the Eagles Resort in particular. Sit back, relax and let the magical aura of this fantastic place wash over you.



### FactFile

STANDARD rooms at Eagles Palace Hotel & Spa start at £266 per night. See eaglespalace.gr.  
EasyJet flies to Thessaloniki from London Gatwick from £53.99 one way, including taxes, based on two people on the same booking. See easyJet.com.

IMPRESSIVE: Mount Athos and, right, Dominik samples squid



# HEAVENLY HALKIDIKI

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