

Family adventures

EDITED BY
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BEST FOR
GOLFING
BOYS



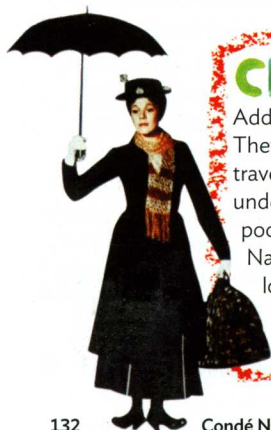
La Bergerie de Terre Blanche, Provence

THERE ARE HEAPS of dinky boutique boltholes in Provence, but are seven- or 17-year-olds with Hannah Montana and Xbox games on the brain really welcome? A big-gun hotel would be a much better bet, but what if you want privacy, too, and perhaps – every mother's dream – a private chef? And even some golf to keep the boys happy? This newly built thriller-villa, just a 40-minute hop from Nice airport, is of grandiose proportions, with a vast amount of space for kicking back. It's in the grounds of Terre Blanche hotel (formerly a Four Seasons), so you can expect full-throttle service and a flurry of add-ons: two pools, tennis courts, five restaurants, two challenging championship golf courses (grab a buggy and let the kids steer) with a mass of lakes and ponds, and a Sodashi spa. In other words, it's a villa with action on tap. And when you want to hunker down and hide, what a house: smart, swanky even, with

Expect great service and a flurry of add-ons at this villa with action on tap

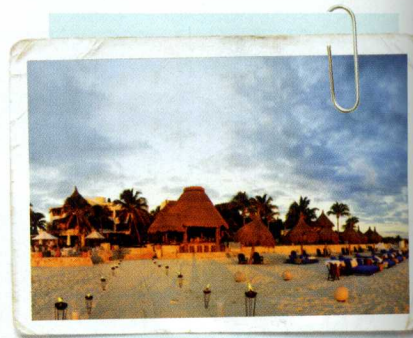
everything from Sonos music tricks (Coldplay can croon in the dining room while Hoodie Allen raps on the terrace – a relief with teenagers) to a private cinema and its own wine cellar. It's tastefully done, nothing too bling, with a laid-back atmosphere and a look that combines clean-cut contemporary sleekness with reclaimed furniture, pretty fabrics and French shades of grey and taupe. Three of the six en-suite rooms have balconies overlooking a lake with black (yes, black) swans, and there's a huge kitchen with the sort of mega-barbecue men can talk about for hours. The table is informally laid with beautiful artichokes, vine tomatoes and blood-red pomegranates. Local chef Helen Bate whips up roast chicken, salmon teriyaki, grilled prawns and the most sublime *tarte tartin*, while the two waiting staff, always at hand, will discreetly top up glasses. A sophisticated hideaway. **PETE WINTERBOTTOM**

SJ VILLAS (020 7589 4390; WWW.SJVILLAS.CO.UK) OFFERS A WEEK AT LA BERGERIE DE TERRE BLANCHE FROM ABOUT £1,760 PER PERSON, BASED ON 12 SHARING



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Beside the sea

From the new family pool and kids' menus to the introduction of cupcake-making classes and mini-Mayan yoga, children are extremely well looked after at Orient-Express's Maroma hotel in Mexico. It's an old-school spot that already had two winning elements for families: the fact that the property is smack bang on a white-sand beach (not always the case with Mexican Riviera hotels) and that the spa is very special indeed – do not miss the incredibly uplifting sweat lodge. While you're in there with the shaman, you can be safe in the knowledge that your offspring will be happily hunting for crabs and interesting-looking seaweed. www.maromahotel.com
Doubles from £300

