

Client: Austrian National Tourist Office Yellow News
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top 5 travel

BABY COMES TOO



As the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge welcome their new addition, we offer some suggestions for their next break away...

Austria

The early days with a new baby can be stressful, even for a young duchess, with almost no time to yourself. So imagine a hotel where qualified, friendly staff will look after your child while you chill out in the spa or catch up on a snooze.

Kinderhotels are based mostly in Austria but are also in Italy, Croatia and Germany, in stunning mountain, lake and seaside locations.

All the hotels are geared towards families and some have a 'Baby Perfect' programme, with up to eight hours a day of childcare for five days a week.

You won't need to worry about juggling pushchairs, baby carriers and suitcases laden with baby food either – all are provided.

• **Prices** These vary. An overnight stay at the Babyhotel, Europe's first baby and child hotel, in Austria, costs from £81 per adult, £30 per child per night, including meals and childcare. **Info** www.kinderhotels.co.uk



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St Lucia

At Windjammer Landing, set beside one of the island's beaches, the Jacquot Fun Club for four- to twelve-year-olds is a hive of activity – from nature walks to water sports, visits to a mini zoo and lessons in the local patois, reggae dancing and limbo. It's even open in the evening, with themed movie, disco and pirate nights laid on so that you can enjoy dinners a deux.

A nanny service is available for babies and younger children and if you also have teenagers in tow, the Teen Club means they don't have to do anything so uncool as spend time with Mum and Dad.

- **Prices** Accommodation ranges from one-bedroom suites suitable for couples with a baby to four-bedroom villas with pools. A one-bedroom villa sleeping two adults and two children costs from around £205 per night, room only. All-inclusive packages are also available. **Info** www.windjammer-landing.com.

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Italy

Legions of fans return year after year to Villa Pia on the Tuscany/Umbria borders to enjoy a house party atmosphere, surrounded by hills, vineyards and olive groves.

Days can be whiled away around the two pools, stretching out with yoga or Pilates or having a relaxing massage or facial.

There's a babysitting service, so that and the occasional art and cookery classes for kids can mean

sunbathing and reading time for you. There's also a sand pit, trampoline, indoor soft play room, adventure play space and plenty more to keep them happy.

Early children's dinner is served, including fresh purée for babies. Then, when they're tucked up in bed, you can enjoy some grown-up conversation around the big dining table.

● **Prices** One week from £675 per adult, £320 per child aged two-12 (with a minimum children's room charge of £800 per week). Under-twos go free if sharing with parents. The price includes all meals and drinks, including wine and beer. **Info** www.villapia.com.



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England

It may look like a humble B&B but inside Number 29 in Yeovil, Somerset, is a wonderful retreat for tired new parents.

Owner Angela welcomes babes of any age and can provide much of the paraphernalia – from cots to baby monitors and sterilisers, books and toys. She'll do early dinner for toddlers and evening meals for adults if requested.

Her real *pièce de résistance*, though, is her daughter, Lucy, who is a qualified nanny and will look after your child while you hit the area's excellent restaurants and, even better, do the early morning wake-up while you enjoy a weekend lie-in.

Over the road there's a lovely park, and the town centre is just a three-minute stroll away.

The coast is not far, either – Weymouth and Lyme Regis are within a 30-minute drive.

● **Prices** Rooms from £99 per night, £599 per week, including breakfast. Evening meal and babysitting by arrangement. **Info** www.babyfriendlyboltholes.co.uk.



France

Châteaux and children *can* mix. Le Castel in Normandy, owned by Brit Jon Barnsley, throws open its grand doors to families of all ages.

Stay year round in its self catering gites, or go during school hols for an all-inclusive week. There's a delightfully laid-back attitude, with not so much as an eyebrow raised at sticky fingers on the furniture.

Organised play sessions are available most days in a giant marquee on the lawn (free ice cream and lollies should lure them in, if nothing else) and there's a play area, woodland den and outdoor pool.

● **Prices** £1350 for a family of four for one all-inclusive week in a two-bedroom suite, including breakfast, evening meals (lunches extra), organised play for three-12 year olds, or younger if they are happy to be left. Gite hire from £600 per week for four people.

Info www.le-castel-normandy.com.

Words: Emma O'Reilly. **Photos:** Rex, Thomas Hart Shelby