

## Where to book a luxurious UK family getaway this October Half Term

From football training with ex-Premier League players to watching lions on safari, there is plenty on offer this autumn half-term break

By Francesca Syz, CONSULTANT ULTRATRAVEL EDITOR  
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Watching lions from Lion Lodge at Port Lympne in Kent

You don't have to go abroad this half-term to show your kids a good time. There are still lots of great options to be enjoyed right here at home.

As luck would have it, [Carn Mar](#), a glorious holiday rental in Polzeath on the north Cornwall coast, has just become available over half-term week (Friday 23 – Friday 30, £5,350 per week) and it's a brilliant base for families with active kids.

Voted Best Self-Catering Cottage in Cornwall in the Cornwall Tourism Awards last year, it's incredibly family friendly with a four-bed bunk room for the kids and Polzeath Beach at the foot of the garden. At the other end of the beach is George's Surf School (voted one of the top ten in the world), where your kids can have everything from private one-on-one surf lessons (a two-hour session costs £95) to entire immersive courses.



The first floor study at Carn Mar in Polzeath

Alternatively, your young can come face to face with lions, howl along with Grey Wolves and meet Rothschild Giraffes and Western lowland gorillas at conservation-driven [Port Lympne Hotel & Reserve](#) near Ashford in Kent. There's a whole range of accommodation on offer, from a treehouse hotel to safari-style lodges and although pickings will be slim over October half-term, there is still some availability (from £409 per night).

For a hotel break that will keep everyone happy, not least your budding football pro, why not book [Football Escapes'](#) October Half-Term Staycation at The Grove (28 – 30 October; from £1,340 per family based on two adults and one child attending the football camp).



Interacting with giraffes at Port Lympne in Kent

Founded by Rio Ferdinand, Bobby Zamora (ex-Bristol Rovers) and football coach Sam Hubert, every Football Escape is run by a former premier league player (the name for this break is yet to be confirmed) and combines intensive daily training and meet-and-greet sessions with players. Meanwhile you can get more beauty sleep, head to the spa or read the papers by the fire.



Football Escape at The Grove

Up in the Scottish Highlands, [The Gleneagles Hotel](#) is always great value for families and its sensory adventure programme, which focuses on encouraging children to roam wild, scamper, climb trees and re-connect with the great outdoors, can't be beat. During a short stay, you can also encourage your kids to master a new skill like fishing, golfing, archery, falconry or horse riding. The popular 'Own a pony' session (120 minutes, £95) sees groups of up to four children learn to care for, groom and ride a pony.

You could make this the holiday you finally cave in to all that badgering to go to Legoland. Make it work for all concerned by checking into the elegant Royal Warrant Holder Suite at [Castle Hotel Windsor](#), which sits right on the high street in Windsor, a ten-minute drive from Legoland. The hotel is offering a night in this regal suite over half term for a family of four and tickets to Legoland for all on both days for £573.



Gleneagles' Own a Pony experience

Some of our favourite country house hotels are also adding family-friendly attractions this half-term. Set in the Surrey Hills just 20 miles from London, historic and glamorous [Beaverbrook](#) is the perfect place for you to settle in to a sofa in the drawing room with a cocktail while your kids head off to the Sharky & George-run kid's club.

During half-term, its programme really comes into its own, focusing on high-octane woodland adventure, treasure hunts and fire building, all from a base in a vast, hidden tree house. A one-night 'Family Escape' package, based on two adults and one child sharing a room and full access to the Sharky & George activities and spa, costs from £513 per night.

Others that should appeal include [Ellenborough Park](#), which sits in 90 acres just outside Cheltenham, where kids stay and eat for free over half term, there's a fenced outdoor heated pool, family treasure hunts and Halloween colouring competitions.

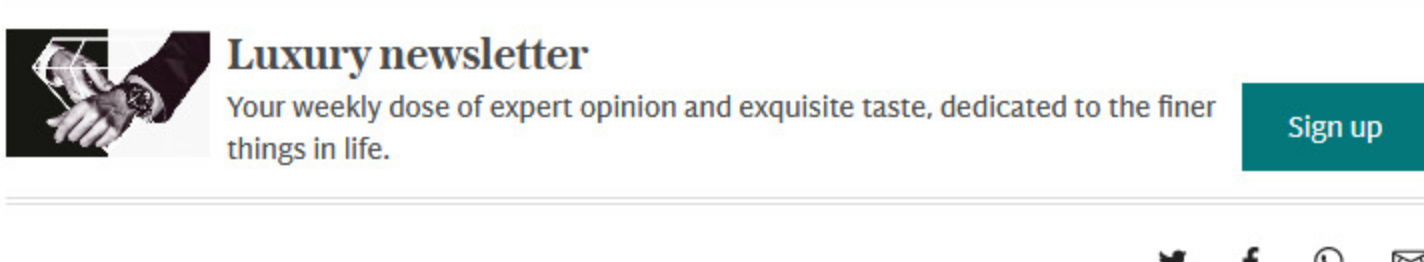


The Original Sweetshop Afternoon Tea at the Chesterfield in Mayfair

Over at [Gidleigh Park](#) on the northern edge of Dartmoor (book the Family Loft Suite from £580 per night), there's a brand new all-day healthy Garden Menu for VILPs (very important little people) available every day until 7pm and new hampers of food available for breakfast, lunch and dinner can be enjoyed outdoors, in-room, or in one of the many public spaces.

Or for the ultimate quick fix, book The Original Suite Shop Afternoon Tea at the [Chesterfield Hotel](#) in Mayfair (from £40 per adult, including a glass of champagne and £21.50 per child), in partnership with Hardy's Sweet Shop – a traditional afternoon tea, except it's completely geared towards children, who are offered a choice of milkshake on arrival, followed by sandwiches, traditional scones and the most extraordinary selection of sweet-inspired cakes. And if that isn't enough excitement, each person is then given a red candy-striped paper bag to fill with their favourites from a trolley laden with old fashioned jars of sweets.

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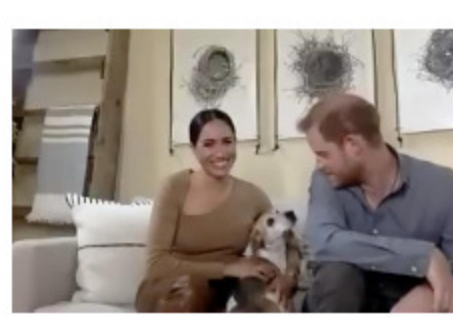
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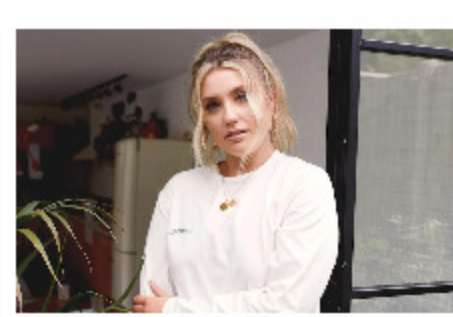
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