



THREE-IN-ONE holidays

Supercharge your summer break by combining experiences and making up for lost time, says Susan Ward Davies

This year, more than ever, we want to wring every last drop of sunshine and fun out of our travels by packing as much as possible into our long-awaited getaways. And while I've always been a fan of the two-centre or multi-experience break, the pandemic has heightened that. I want to be mountain biking one day and learning Turkish cookery the next, while also ticking off art galleries, museums and the best restaurants.

Tour operators have seen a huge surge in requests for more meaningful holidays as we rush to learn something new, do something different or enhance our experience; for many of us,

flying and flopping just doesn't seem the best use of time.

Noticing this trend for making every day count, luxury bespoke travel company Black Tomato has even come up with the concept of 'Field Trip' add-ons - fun, educational extras such as joining an archaeological dig in Egypt, going backstage at the Opéra Garnier in Paris or photographing wildlife in South Africa. But many travel firms offer cultural extensions, learning courses and twin- or triple-centre trips.

So, here's my selection of the best three-in-one breaks you can do this summer and beyond if you want to get more out of that annual holiday allowance...

Combine relaxing at Lefay Spa, sightseeing in the alpine resort of Madonna di Campiglio and a performance at the Verona Opera Festival



Learn how to cook a tapas feast

SPAIN Sunshine, nature walks and cooking

'Sherry educator' is a pretty cool job description, and an encyclopaedic knowledge of the local tipple is just one of cookery teacher Annie B's many talents. Originally from Scotland, and now based in Vejer de la Frontera, in the Andalusian province of Cádiz, Annie has been running her popular cookery school, Annie B's Spanish Kitchen, for years.

She has recently teamed up with local environmentalist and hiking guide Carlos Milburn Rodríguez. The idea is to combine five days of cooking with nature treks. You'll enjoy a tapas tour of Vejer, shop for fish in the local market and learn to cook Andalusian treats such as gambas ajillo (garlic shrimps). Carlos will then take you to the pine forest of La Breña, an 18th-century dovecote, and, if you're lucky, you'll spot griffon vultures. There's also plenty of time to enjoy the beaches (just 15 minutes away), potter around Vejer or enjoy an afternoon siesta.

You'll stay in Vejer's main plaza, at guesthouse-turned-boutique-hotel La Casa del Califa, with a Michelin-recommended restaurant, in case you haven't eaten enough!

GET THERE: Annie B's Spanish Kitchen (anniebspain.com) costs from £1,485pp, including five nights' B&B. Ryanair (ryanair.com) flies from London Stansted to Jerez de la Frontera (about 50 miles from Vejer) from £59pp each way.

ITALY Spa, mountains and opera

Most people come to the Dolomites in the winter, but summer in the mountains is magical, especially at the Lefay Resort & Spa Dolomiti, in the fashionable ski area of Madonna di Campiglio. Lefay is a stunningly designed alpine retreat with four floors dedicated to wellness that include a magnesium whirlpool, indoor/outdoor pool, salt grotto, ice room, saunas and steam room, and a saltwater lake. Tempting though it is to languish here all day, the great outdoors awaits, and **Lefay** has a packed programme of summer activities such as hiking, mountain biking and horse riding on offer. Climb up to the pretty church of Santo Stefano yourselves, or book a guided foraging tour, hiking past icy green glacial streams, through forests of larch trees (spot the bear warning signs), and learn about edible plants and mushrooms on the way.

You could easily spend one or even two weeks here, but I'd suggest mixing it up with three nights in Verona, the setting for *Romeo And Juliet*. Its medieval piazzas and churches are beautiful and there's a magnificent arena where you can catch spectacular performances during the Opera Festival (arena.it) between June and early September.

GET THERE: Healing Holidays (healingholidays.com) offers a seven-night Verona and Dolomites trip, with three nights' B&B at the Hotel Accademia Verona and four nights' B&B at Lefay Resort & Spa Dolomiti, from £1,465pp, based on two sharing, including flights and all transfers.