

he smiling coast



I never managed to make it to any of the nightclubs, with so much to explore by day I didn't need to, but if you do fancy finding your rhythm with the locals, the main clubs can be found in Kotu.

For me, the Gambia is the perfect choice if you want to go somewhere that's not going to give you a crippling plane journey, jet lag, where you can enjoy the beaches of Barbados, great all year round sunshine and an awesome culture.

It may be the smallest country in Africa, but the Gambia has certainly got a big personality.

» THE Gambia Experience is

the UK's only specialist and biggest tour operator to The Gambia. Reservations: Tel 0845 330 2087, or gambia.co.uk/travel. We stayed at the newly-opened five star Sheraton Gambia Hotel Resort & Spa. gambia.co.uk/hotels. B&B cost from £699 per person in a twin classic room. This price is inclusive of return flights, departing Manchester, as well as hotel transfers and airport taxes. Makasutu: Details of accommodation at the Mandina Lodges, consisting of the stilted lodge, floating and jungle lodges, can be found on gambia.co.uk/hotels.



GETAWAY GUIDE

■ **JERSEY:** Modern Hotels (01534 735 511) offers 'Winter Warmer' breaks of three nights' B&B at three-star hotel in St Helier for £149 per adult, £83 per child, for travel until Mar 31, excl Easter. Package incl return Condor Fast Cat foot passenger crossing ex-Weymouth or Poole, transfers. Add £56 to take own car.

■ **TUNISIA:** Wigmore (020 7836 4999) offers five nights breaks for price of four in five star The Residence in Cotes de Carthage or £820, ex-Heathrow by sched flights on Suns until April 3. Package incl private transfers, pocket-sized guide, pen and silver luggage tag.

■ **NEW YORK:** Hayes & Jarvis (0871 664 0246) offers three nights' room-only at three star Warwick Hotel, departing Good Fri on American Airlines, for £649. Optional add-on is Harlem Gospel Tour on Easter Sunday from £39, with walking tour of Harlem's heritage areas.

■ **ST MALO:** Condorbrea (0845 603 3118) offers four-night breaks from £129 until Mar 26, incl fast ferry crossings ex-Weymouth and Poole.

■ **MALTA:** Malta Direct (0845 604 0035) offers seven nights' B&B at four star hotel in St Paul's Bay for £279, ex-Gatwick April 2, incl transfers.

■ **BARBADOS:** Carrier (0161 491 7620) offers seven nights' B&B in garden view suite at Treasure Beach Hotel from £1,765 from Mar 15. Two children stay free on room-only basis when sharing with parents.

■ **CHINA TWO CENTRE:** Sanya China Travel (01256 863 060) offers eight-day twin centre stay in Beijing and Xi'an from £1,095, incl all flights, transfers, hotel accom, selected meals and sightseeing in Tian'anmen Square, Forbidden City, Peking opera, Great Wall, Ming Tombs, ancient city wall and Grand Temple in Xi'an.

■ **CUBA:** Directline (0208 239 3399) offers seven nights' all-inclusive from Mar 27 at three-star hotel on beaches of Guardalavaca for £704, incl transfers, with diving school, underwater caves and coral reefs to be explored.

■ **ULTIMATE SAFARI:** Kudu (01722 716 167) offers 14-day itinerary across Botswana from April 12, incl private game reserves and Kalahari Desert. Land-only package at £3,490 incl 13 nights' accom, all meals and wine/beer, private transport, private charter flights, flights, entrance fees, games drives and walks.

■ **MOROCCAN ADVENTURE:**

Adventure Co (0845 450 5311) offers eight-day Magical Morocco trip from Mar 22, incl city tour of Marrakesh, mule trek in Atlas Mountains, seaside town of Essaouira, for £719 per adult, £639 per child (min age 2), incl flights ex-Heathrow, all transportation, some meals and group leader. Regional deps available.

■ **ICELANDIC WONDERS:** Transocean (0845 430 0274) offers 12-night voyage ex-Tilbury June 27 on Marco Polo from £849 (inside) 'Land of Ice and Fire' via Orkney Islands, Grundarfjordur, Akureyri, Reykjavik, Faroe Islands and Shetlands

■ **ANTARCTIC DISCOVERY:** Hurtigruten (020 8846 2666) offers once-in-lifetime voyage in Nov/Dec from £1,795, saving £500 if booked by Mar 31, with eight nights on board after visits to Buenos Aires, Ushuaia before voyage through Drake Passage. Package incl flights, three nights' B&B in Santiago, transfers, in packages from Nov 26, Dec 4, 12, 20 and 28.

■ **BALTIC:** Holland America (0845 351 0557) offers 16-night fly-cruise on Midnight Sun Explorer, ex-London June 17 and sailing from Amsterdam through Kiel Canal to Warnemunde (for Berlin), Tallinn, St Petersburg and Helsinki, then Hudiksvall, Stockholm and Karlskrona in Sweden, followed by Copenhagen, Alborg (Denmark) and Oslo and return to Amsterdam. Package from £1,449 incl sched flights and transfers.

■ **POWYS:** Lake Vyrnwy Hotel (01691 870 692) offers three night breaks from £232.50 for Good Fri arrivals, incl full Welsh breakfast and dinner in Tower Restaurant. Add £20 at time of booking for day's use of hotel spa's thermal suite.

■ **AUSTRIA SKI:** Total Ski (0870 163 3633) offers seven nights' catered chalet accom in St Anton from Mar 23 with dinner and wine on six evenings for £644 (down from £839), with transfers and ski hostings.

■ **GOA:** Jewel In The Crown (0870 067 2352) offers 14-nights' B&B in Calangute for £479, ex-London and from £469 ex-Manchester. Optional extra is two-day Jungle Book excursion to wildlife sanctuary for £69.

■ **MONACO:** Directline (0208 239 3399) offers three nights' B&B in three star hotel from Mar 21 for £395, ex-Gatwick. Flights from regional airports also avail.

■ **ITALY:** Travel Counsellors (0800 195 8852) offers seven nights' half-board at three star hotel in Folgarida ex-Gatwick/Manchester Mar 15 from £419, incl transfers.