

THE NICHE TRAVELLER

Venetia van Kuffeler says there's no better time to start planning chic family holidays for pioneering spirits

AFTER A YEAR OF LOCKDOWN, online travel platform The Niche Traveller has observed a strong increase in demand from families keen to travel again and plan trips to look forward to over the next 12 months and beyond. Founder and Managing Partner, Kerstin Bognár explains: "There's a demand for travel again – especially two or three families wanting to take a trip together, and also multigenerational family reunions, who are planning a special holiday. But people are unsure and require advice, especially when it comes to deciding where to go. And there are concerns over cancellation policies with the ongoing changes in government guidelines."



This is where The Niche Traveller can help. With its club membership and personalised service, the company is aimed at sophisticated, curious and busy families looking for sustainable, stylish escapes in Europe. Working closely with a collection of local insiders, The Niche Traveller prides itself on having deep insider knowledge of under the radar European destinations; from authentic Swiss mountain resorts such as Vals and Maloja, to Costa Vicentina, Folegandros and the Sicilian isles of Pantelleria and Egadi. The brand excels in its home country of Germany, showcasing wonderful destinations such as Glücksburg, Gelting Bay and the islands of Sylt and Rügen. The company's travel scouts personally visit each location, accommodation and activity, allowing the company to provide the most up to date, off-the-beaten-track information and ensuring a hand-picked collection of luxurious, yet laid-back boutique hotels, villas and experiences in select European destinations.

At the heart of The Niche Traveller, is Kerstin's experience, whose own energetic entourage of children means that she has done it all: road trips with baby twins, beach breaks with teenagers, and mammoth, multi-generational adventures. Kerstin quickly discovered that a successful family holiday boils down to a fabulous property, brilliant facilities for different ages, and local knowledge on the destination. She also has a fine eye for design, which is why the collection's hotels and holiday homes are stylish and boutique. Kerstin comments, "We live and breathe travel, but our ethos is to do so slowly, respectfully and sustainably. That means taking the train when we can, travelling for longer, and offsetting our flights. Most importantly, we value our kids' opinions – which is why we introduced Niche Junior, giving our little travellers a platform."

Club members begin their experience with a video call with a member of the team to explain what they are looking for. For an annual fee, travellers will unlock unlimited access to editorial content, including hotel recommendations and reviews, insider travel guides and tailor-made travel services. In addition are a host of benefits such as room upgrades, special offers, curated goody bags, and concierge services. The Niche Traveller is known for specialising in the fine print and are able to hold the client's hand in the case of any postponement or cancellation. "But ultimately," Kersten says, "Our expertise is working with families, who are looking for a stylish experience. Places where families are welcome and there is access to great food and facilities." The Niche Traveller can cherry pick the best of the beaten track boutique projects. Whether it's a sustainable, barefoot luxury beach hideout near Comporta, or horseback riding, cycling, wild picnics and wine tasting in Transylvania's Carpathian Mountains, or a historic nineteenth-century estate filled with antique frescoes in Sicily's Noto Valley, The Niche Traveller can organise trips for even the most difficult brief.

Kerstin believes that after our experiences of the health pandemic, "Spending time in a rural, off-the-beaten track environment has become key. The feeling of being away from it all, in a secluded location with truly authentic experiences, has become more important to our guests than the entertainment facilities and fancy restaurant scene. With an interesting new breed of hospitality projects in under-the-radar destinations for 2021, our portfolio is bursting with hidden gems for every requirement..."

It sounds like The Niche Traveller may be the solution to ALL our travel challenges this summer.

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