

TOP FIVE... SUMMER HOLIDAYS

You deserve a break, so let **Anne Giacomantonio** talk you through some of the best options

We know how you feel: you need a holiday. Summer is fast approaching, beckoning you to make some plans. With your brains bursting from A-level swot and your budget practically non-existent, we have five great ideas for a super summer. Whether you want to leave the UK as far behind as possible or savour the delights that our fair shores have to offer, there should be something to inspire you.

PEMBROKESHIRE, WALES

Originality?

People have been surfing in this area for years now, so why not think about

starting your very own annual road trip get-away? Perfect! **Ease of arrival/departure?** Although the easiest way of navigating the coast is with your own vehicle, there are bus routes that travel between the beaches, with ample storage for your surfboards.

When shall I go?

Head to the Pembrokeshire National Park from June to August for highest temperatures and the lowest rainfall, although keep in mind that the weather is always changeable!

Cool factor?

A solid 8 out of 10.

Will it keep me busy?

The aim of this holiday is to chill out and hang on the beach so yes, in a manner of speaking!

www.visitwales.co.uk/active



BERLIN, GERMANY

Originality?

There are hundreds of crazy and wonderful things to discover in this city.

Ease of arrival/departure?

Easyjet fly daily from airports all over the UK, and Berlin airport has cheap and simple connections into the city centre.

When shall I go?

Enjoy the makeshift outdoor clubs and beach bars along the River Spree, which appear between May and September.

Cool factor

This place definitely has "it": 9 out of 10.

Will it keep me busy?

The nightlife in Berlin is a major plus, but don't forget to check out the culture too!

www.visitberlin.de

AMSTERDAM, NETHERLANDS

Originality?

Score extra points for environmental friendliness, what with the city's preference for bicycles over cars.

Ease of arrival/departure?

Set out from St Pancras International Station in London and within five-and-a-half hours you'll be there.

When shall I go?

Tourism peaks in July and August.



When shall I go?

10-13 July ideally, otherwise you won't see much...

Cool factor?

Exit is the height of cool this summer: a storming 10 out of 10.

Will it keep me busy?

So far, the confirmed acts are: Billy Idol, Beastie Boys, Franz Ferdinand, Fatboy Slim, Morrissey, Groove Armada, Massive Attack, Snoop Dogg, The Prodigy, Scissor Sisters, Underworld and The White Stripes. Will that do for starters?

www.exitfest.org

HIGHLANDS, SCOTLAND

Originality?

Depends - the higher up you decide to go, the fewer people are likely to join you!

Ease of arrival/departure?

From Glasgow or Edinburgh you can connect with coach or train transfers into the Highlands.

When shall I go?

With temperature highs of 19 degrees celsius in summer, don't go expecting to get a tan. Also, be warned that midges and tourists converge on this area between late June and August.

Cool factor?

This holiday is great for active types or those who want to try something new: 8 out of 10.

Will it keep me busy?

Most hikes involve around five hours walking per day, so when you're not eating to keep your energy levels up you'll probably be asleep!

<http://walking.visitscotland.com>



Cool factor

This city rates pretty highly in the cool stakes: 8 out of 10.

Will it keep me busy?

Stroll the markets, cruise the canal loop or have a peep at the Van Gogh Museum before you hit the clubs.

www.eurostar.com

EXIT FESTIVAL, SERBIA

Originality?

Skip the expensive, mud-infested UK festivals with a £72, four-day festival pass for this excellent festival, but be warned: it's very popular, so get your tickets early.

Ease of arrival/departure?

Exit isn't the easiest of holiday destinations to get to, but neither is it impossible. Head to the Exit website for detailed and helpful information.



Something different: (from top) the Scottish Highlands; The Hives, just one of the many fine bands playing the Exit festival in Serbia; the canals of Amsterdam

Tripping out: Tenby's North Beach in Pembrokeshire (right); and Berlin's Brandenburg Gate (above right)

