



5 STRETCH YOUR MIND ON A SPANISH MOUNTAIN TOP

Once we went on holiday just to take a break. Now you can sort out your whole life while slopping on the sun cream. In the Picos de Europa, northern Spain, Pura Aventura (0845 225 5058; www.pura-aventura.com) offers life-planning holidays in conjunction with The Big Stretch (www.thebigstretch.com). Available in May, June and September, they are aimed at 'busy achievers who need to step back'. Group size is limited to eight, combining intensive thinking sessions with uplifting mountain walks. An eight-day holiday costs from £2,150 including meals, transfers, activities and coaching. Flights are extra and couples are requested to book on separate weeks. A follow-up Keep Stretching programme of six one-hour sessions costs £600.

6 HIKE THE TOUGHEST TRAIL IN EUROPE

Crossing the rocky spine of Corsica from Calenzana to Conca, the GR20 is considered the most challenging long distance footpath in Europe. For most of the 170km trail you walk above 1,000m in pine forests, over rocky ridges, past glacial lakes amid mountain peaks. Walks Worldwide (01524 242000; www.walksworldwide.com) offers a 15-day guided group tour in June or July, from £1,250 including flights, transfers, meals on the trek and accommodation. To do it yourself (it's cheaper but you'll carry your own rucksack), buy a copy of *GR20 Corsica - The High Level Route* (Cicerone Guides, £14).



7 WRITE A BODICE-RIPPER IN A PINK SCOTTISH CASTLE

'Writing Romance' courses are run at the suitably pink Castle of Park near Aberdeen (01466 751111; www.castleofpark.net), which sits in secluded parkland and comes with a grand drawing room as well as inspirational four-poster beds and stags' heads on the walls. A six-night course led by Marina Oliver, author of more than 40 historical romances, costs from £575 including meals. In the west of Ireland, Dingle Writing Courses (00 353 66 915 9815; www.dinglewritingcourses.ie) take place on autumn weekends at a seaside retreat in Inch, overlooking Dingle Bay in Kerry, from €325 (£230) including accommodation and meals. For more options see www.author-network.com.

8 STRUT YOUR LATIN FUNKY STUFF

Combine tango and Spanish lessons in Buenos Aires with Caledonia Languages (0131 621 7721; www.caledonialanguages.co.uk). Language lessons in the morning are followed by dancefloor instruction at night. Based in the Barrio Norte district, the tango sessions include talks and videos explaining the nuances of this most passionate of dances, along with visits to *milongas* (tango gatherings). A package of 10 individual Spanish lessons, 10 group tango lessons and B&B in a single room costs from £270, flights extra. Similar holidays are available learning salsa in Cuba and Spain. Dance Holidays (0870 330 3135; www.danceholidays.com) has a week's line dancing on a Mediterranean cruise ship in June, from £599 per person including flights, meals and accommodation.

Main picture: strike a pose... Cuban folkloric dancers rehearse in a Trinidad courtyard. Left: a dizzying rope bridge on the GR20 trek in Corsica. Below: get things in perspective above the clouds in the Picos de Europa. Bottom: all dreamy and romantic in Kerry.



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