



ON THE TRAVEL RADAR

« The UK's first LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender) tailor-made luxury travel company, Out of Office, has got off to a cracking start since its launch earlier this year. And everybody loves it: a third of its clients are straight couples.

outoffice.com

« If you fancy the idea of a relaxed, meet-the-locals walking holiday in France, Spain, Italy or England, look no further than delightful James and Diana Tamlyn's Walking Party.

thewalkingparty.co.uk

The Hotel Wizard

Fiona Duncan is having a Lisbon love-in

ROCK & ROAM

If you are lucky enough to live in the New Forest, check out new pop-up social club Rock & Roam; if you don't, worry not: it may be in your area soon. Hosting imaginative, boho-chic tastings, workshops and supper clubs, Rock & Roam works with the best local and London chefs, distillers, explorers and specialists. Next up: a Gin Infusion Workshop hosted by The Gin Garden (*gingarden.com*), who've worked with the likes of Jimmy Choo and Hoxton Hotel, at, appropriately, beautiful Gins Barn (*ginsbarn.uk*) in Beaulieu on 14 July.

rock-and-roam.com



LISBON BY SIDECAR

There are several novel ways of seeing hilly Lisbon without footslog, including by tuktuk, segway, tram tour or mini yellow self-drives called GoCars. Best of all, though, is to book Daniel Coelho's brilliant Sidecar Tour of the city. Two passengers can ride with him, one as pillion on his vintage Russian motorbike, and one snuggled into its sidecar. In a fun-packed three-hour trip, he'll introduce you to gems such as the arty LX Factory and the central market as well as the charming neighbourhoods of Belém and Alfama. You will learn a lot, including the precise impact of the 1755 earthquake.

Highly recommended. *bikemyside.com*



TEN REASONS WHY I LOVE

PESTANA PALACE, LISBON

1 The bust of the Marquis de Valle Flôre... a kindly, avuncular man whose spirit lives on in his exquisite, harmonious Edwardian palace...

2 ... inlaid with gilt, stucco and trompe-l'oeil and beautifully furnished with European antiques.

3 The series of ravishing reception rooms that lead to a balcony overlooking the family chapel... just the place for a wedding in lovely Lisbon.

4 Authentic touches in this National Monument-turned-hotel: the city's first lift; the original kitchens; the family portraits.

5 The corridors... at double height, the height of luxury.

6 The simple gauze curtains employed throughout by the interior designers (the palace opened as a hotel in 2001), which set off rather than compete with the beauty and intricacy of the decoration.

7 The four magnificent suites in the palace itself (from £1,150)...

8 ... or, failing them, a Garden View room in the modern wing (from £180): you still have the run of the palace.

9 The lush garden with its hidden lake-turned-swimming pool.

10 The sheer treat of staying somewhere quite so beautiful, authentic and mercifully unspoilt.

Doubles from £158 (*pestana.com*). TAP Portugal flies daily from London and Manchester to Lisbon from £124 return (*flytap.com*)

