

Class Drop Out

Climbing in Mallorca, cooking in Thailand, sumoing in Japan – it's amazing what you can learn on holiday, says Jeremy Lazell

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Frankly, I blame the Reformation. Five hundred years ago, you could kick back on some palm-fringed idyll, stirring only to slaughter the odd smiling native before sipping piña coladas as the sun fell off the end of the earth, and not once would your inner Calvin pipe up about salvation through labour and the iniquity of poolside kips.

These days, however, the stain of self-improvement is everywhere. So, if you've ever gazed into a cobalt lagoon, stared blankly at the cocktail menu and wept with the vapid horror of it all, read on, as we round up the 20 best learning holidays on the planet.

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RIDING, South Africa

It's not every beginners' riding holiday that lets you canter with giraffes and zebras, or muster cattle, but then most don't take place on a 20,000-acre wildlife reserve. Right in the rugged, parched heart of the Limpopo region, bordering Botswana, Triple B Ranch has one of the finest riding stables in South Africa. Trips are tailored to individual needs, from short days allowing for swimming, tennis and G&Ts back at the colonial lodge to hardcore saddle assaults with overnight wilderness safaris. Equine Adventures (0845 130 6981, www.equineadventures.co.uk) has nine nights from £1,885pp, including most meals, all drinks, tuition, flights with South African Airways to Johannesburg and transfers.

Horizon Horseback Adventures and Safaris

Triple B Ranch

PO BOX 791

Vaalwater

0530

Tel: +27 (0)147554003