

# SAIL THE FAST LANE FROM NORTHERN IRELAND TO SCOTLAND

From **£94 each way** for a car + driver. On the fastest crossing from Larne to Cairnryan.

Book now at [poferries.com](http://poferries.com)  
0800 130 0030

**P&O**  
FERRIES



GET THAT  
**FERRY FEELING**

Fare shown is for a car plus driver and is subject to restricted space, sailings and dates. Fare correct at time of printing and subject to change. Subject to Promotional Conditions and P&O Ferries' Terms of Business, both available online at [poferries.com](http://poferries.com).

# TRAVEL

WONDERFRONT, is a new music and arts festival on San Diego's waterfront. Starting November 22, the three-day event will feature 70 different artists including Busta Rhymes, Dimitri Vegas & Like Mike, Tyga and MGMT. Visit [sandiego.org](http://sandiego.org).

## Late deals

BY PAUL McDAID



TUI has these late deals based on two people sharing departing Belfast International.

**COSTA** Del Sol 15 November 15 seven nights half board at the three-star Bali hotel, Benalmadena from £429pps.

**COSTA** Blanca November 30 seven nights self-catering at the three-star Terralta Apartments Benidorm from £399pps

**ALGARVE** November 28 seven nights bed and breakfast at the three-star Dom Jose Beach Hotel, Quarteira from £389pps.

To book visit [www.tui.co.uk](http://www.tui.co.uk).

First Choice has these late deals based on two people sharing departing Belfast International.

**COSTA** Blanca November 30 seven nights all-inclusive at the four-star RH Princesa, Benidorm, from £579pps.

**COSTA** Del Sol November 15 seven nights all-inclusive at the four-star Hotel Polynesia, Benalmadena from £579pps

**FUERTEVENTURA** November 30 four nights all-inclusive at the three-star Labranda Aloe Club, Corralejo from £469.

To book [www.firstchoice.co.uk](http://www.firstchoice.co.uk).

JET2.com has these late breaks departing Belfast Intl. They are based in two people sharing and include

22kg baggage allowance.

**ALICANTE**  
City  
December

13 three nights half board at the three-star Daniya Hotel £219.

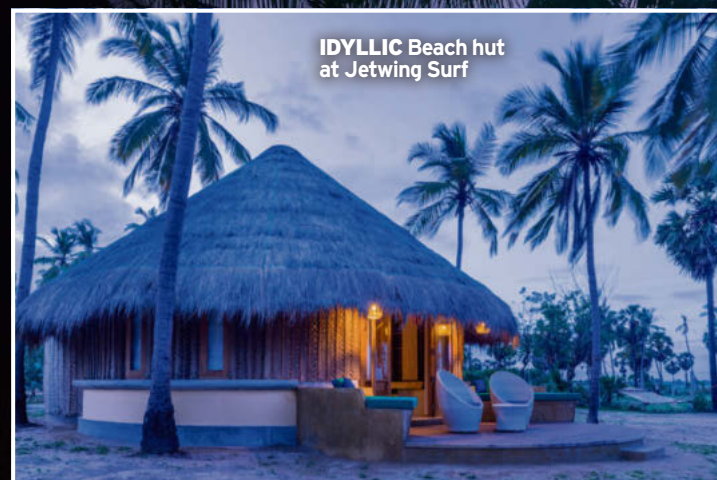
**COSTA** Blanca, November 29 seven nights bed and breakfast at the three-star Hotel La Estacion, Benidorm £249.

**CANARY** Islands December 7 seven nights self-catering at the three-star Oasis Papagayo Resort, Corralejo Fuerteventura £419.

**COSTA** Blanca, December 13 seven nights self-catering at the three-star La Manga Club - Villa Las Brisas Azul £369. Includes car hire.

To book [www.jet2holidays.com](http://www.jet2holidays.com).

A SEVEN-night stay in Kitzbühel, at the four-star Lisi Family Hotel, January 20 2020, is priced from £965 based on two people sharing a junior suite. Flights and transfers extra. [www.lisihotel.com](http://www.lisihotel.com)



IDYLIC Beach hut at Jetwing Surf



WILD SIDE Mirror man Paul on a tuk-tuk safari

## Paul McDaid discovers the sights and sounds of Sri Lanka with Jetwings Hotels & Resorts

**SRI Lanka has always been one of those countries I'd long wanted to visit but never thought I'd actually get to.**

Thankfully that changed last month when I toured the country with the Jetwings Hotel and the only regret I had was I didn't come here sooner.

Locally-owned and with a history going back more than 40 years, Jetwings is almost part of the fabric of the island and interests here go way beyond mere commercial considerations.

We first headed to Arugam Bay on the east coast and Jetwings Surf.

Opened just 18 months Jetwings Surf in Arugam Bay is easily one of the loveliest hotels I've ever stayed in.

Everything about this beachside property is new, fresh and vibrant.

Guests stay in one of 21 huts overlooking soft golden sands and an azure Indian Ocean.

I use the word "hut" loosely as they are all luxurious finished to the highest standards with high timber ceilings, huge four-poster bed and an unspeakably cool bathroom with an open-air shower. As the name

suggests, Jetwing Surf is a haven for surfers and with huge ocean breakers barreling in, the area is regarded as one of the best in the world for boarders.

That reputation was underlined earlier this year when the world championships were held in Arugam Bay.

As you might expect, the food is of the highest order.

The fabulous chef Palitha and his team serve a mixture of international favourites and local delicacies – don't dare leave without trying a Sri Lankan curry which was a million times better than anything I've had in any number of curry restaurants at home.

The restaurant's setting, with an endless soundtrack of waves lapping on the shore and palm trees gently swaying in a cool breeze, is just heavenly.

The beach, miles of soft golden sands which stretch away for miles on either side of Jetwings Surf, is a dream.

Tiny fragments of shell and grains of sand catch the light like a billion suns. Breakers crash dance to the frothy surf in an explosive oceanic tango that hasn't changed since time began. If you

*Waves lap on the shore and cool breeze sways the palms*



with PAUL McDAID



# IT'S SO SRI AND EASY



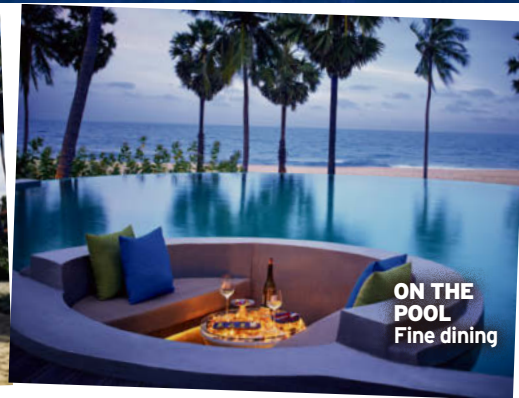
**LIFE'S A BEACH**  
Jetwings Surf is right on the Indian Ocean



**TRUNK CALL**  
Elephant grazing



**SAIL AWAY**  
Catamaran at Jetwings Surf beach



**ON THE POOL**  
Fine dining

want peace and quiet this is the place for you. I must've walked for three or four hours and the only company I had was the odd crab scrambling from its burrow back to the ocean. Just yards away the infinity pool is the ideal spot to lap up that fabulous Sri Lankan sunshine but while lounging about in sunny foreign climes can be an end in itself, I had an important board meeting to attend to at nearby Pottuvil Point. As a youngster in the 70s, I was a keen skateboarder and had, foolishly as it turned out, believed this might stand me in good stead if I ever tried surfing. But despite expert tuition, I was unable to execute the final critical moves to see me upright but managed to master the art of falling off the board whilst divesting myself

of all dignity. Still, the craic was good and the ocean felt like bath water. Another must-do when you're in Jetwings Surf is the tuk-tuk safari.

Part taxi service, part wildlife experts, the drivers' local knowledge is second to none.

In their surprisingly hardy two-stroke engine vehicles, they showed us the most incredible sights.

In a two-hour afternoon trip we saw a group of fearsome crocodiles basking on a sunny river bank, a komodo monitor lizard and a mongoose scuttling over some rocks.

There was also time to see a herd of elephants grazing beside paddy fields and a dizzying array of birds including a flock of kingfishers oblivious to us as they greedily gobbled down their quarry at a pond. As the sun slipped beyond Lake

*We saw crocodile, elephants and a komodo monitor lizard*

Rattya, a black-as-ink herd of water buffalo hove into view before they took a dip in the cool water.

It's a scene that's been repeated throughout the aeons and one I'll remember for a very long time.

While many hotels talk blithely about their "green" credentials, Jetwings matches words with deeds.

Its progressive policies include zero plastic, producing its own gas supplies with a bio-mass boiler, recycling shower water for the gardens where much of its agriculture needs are met.

Jetwings has also pioneered an outreach programme with young disadvantaged Sri Lankans that provides education, training and valuable job opportunities. Apart from making environmental sense the business case is undeniable.

Sri Lanka is a bewitchingly beautiful country that is teeming with colour and life and Jetwings

know this is the real product. Sri Lankans are some of the sunniest and friendliest people I've ever met.

Like the Irish, they expect things will get better, despite enduring some crushing blows.

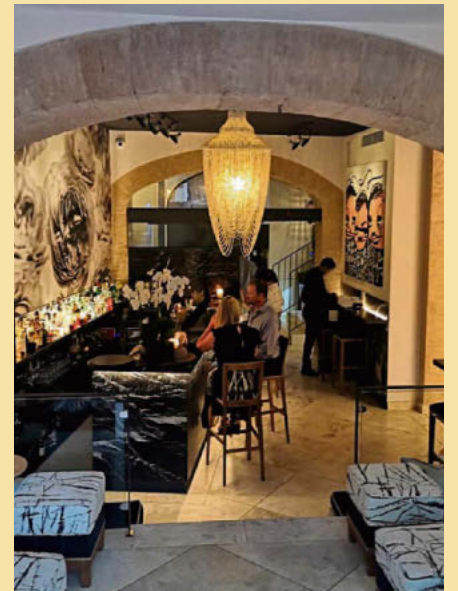
The country lost 50,000 people in the 2004 tsunami - more per capita than any other country while the murderous attacks in Colombo on Easter Sunday dealt another crushing blow to the tourist industry.

The tourists are coming back but it's been a hard road. But do they give up? Not likely. They have one of the world's most beautiful countries with something for everyone.

Someone said Sri Lanka, which means sacred island, looks like a tear falling from the sub-continent. After this short trip I felt a tinge of sadness to be leaving. I can't wait to go back.

■ **To stay in Jetwings Surf or any of its properties in Sri Lanka visit [www.jetwinghotels.com](http://www.jetwinghotels.com).**

■ **Sri Lankan Airlines flies from Dublin to Colombo. visit [www.srilankan.com](http://www.srilankan.com).**



**CHIC** Fera is one of Palma's best-loved eateries

## We're going Fera meal to remember

MAJORCA is an enduringly popular destination for Irish tourists but while many people will head to the island's many coastal resorts, I've always enjoyed the bustling atmosphere of the capital Palma.

One reason for spending a few nights in this fantastically atmospheric city by the sea is its exceptional restaurant scene and one of the latest - and maybe even one of the best is Fera - the latest project from celebrated chef Simon Petutschnig.

Located in the lively shopping mile of Jaime III in Palma's city centre, it's the perfect place for a relaxed lunch, a gourmet dinner or simply a cocktail and tapas at its floral bar.

Stylish and chic, Fera is housed in a beautifully restored old town palace steeped in history and tradition. The Circulo Mallorquin is the island's oldest and most distinguished social club.

Simon has worked in some of Spain's finest kitchens including the two Michelin starred Miramar.

At Fera Asian flavours such as ginger, nori and yuzua are combined with traditional Mediterranean ingredients creating something unique.

There are signature dishes but the tuna carpaccio will live long in the memory as will the Majorcan suckling pig and shiitake dim sum, or the Simmentaler beef with crispy nori, truffle and olive oil.

Fera has a specially-curated and hand-picked selection of 60 wines, some of which are totally exclusive to the restaurant.

Dining at Fera is feast, not only for the palate, but for the eyes both the eclectic decor and the especially-curated art works by Aba Art Lab, are worth a visit.

The artworks exhibited showcase modern sculpture, photography and painting.

So the next time you're in Palma, dinner is sorted.

■ [www.ferapalma.com](http://www.ferapalma.com).



**DISH IS IT** Carpaccio of tuna is a Fera trademark