

# PRCO

100 holidays for 2025

Skip the crowds on holiday this year with Nicola Brady's list of destination

## 25 holiday



### Swap the Camino de Santiago for Italy's Via Francigena

The last 100km of the Camino can get particularly crowded – as routes converge for the final stretch into Santiago. For a walk with a difference, try the Via Francigena. The full route goes from Cambridge to Rome and leads through incredible scenery in France and Switzerland, but the final stretch from Viterbo to Rome is special. Follow the Camino has this section from €796pps. [More info: followthecamino.com](#)

### Swap (just) Vegas for Nevada

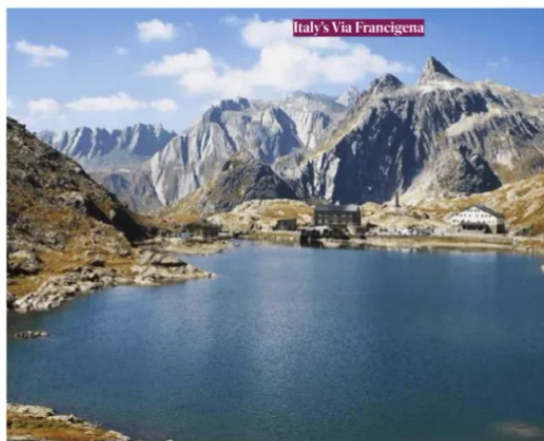
Las Vegas is now a direct flight away, thanks to Aer Lingus's new route from Dublin Airport, but don't just see the city and fly home. Make time to see Nevada, a state with jaw-dropping state parks, a 40-year-old National Cowboy Poetry Gathering and alien-themed road trips. Tour operators like American Holidays, Sunway and Tour America can package accommodation and experiences with flights. [More info: visitlasvegas.com, travelnevada.com](#)

### Swap Greek Islands for the Athens Riviera

Islands like Santorini and Mykonos are always going to be heaving in the summer, so why not follow the locals and head to the Athens Riviera instead? 91 Athens Riviera opened last July, with swish cabana-style accommodation (and air con), most with private plunge pools, as well as tennis, yoga and a spa. Cabana stays start from €432. [More info: domesresorts.com](#)

### Swap the Amalfi Coast for Puglia

The Amalfi coast is stunning, but Puglia gets a fraction of the footfall (in shoulder



seasons, anyway) and is just as pretty. Vista Ostuni is opening in early summer, and is set to be a beaut – the converted 19th-century palazzo has just 28 rooms and is steps from the sea. [More info: vistanalazzo.com](#)

### Swap Barcelona for Girona

Museums, galleries, tasty food and medieval streets. It's just 90 minutes from Barcelona, but Girona is often in the shadows of its busier sister city. Which is a shame, because it's a beaut. You can fly there direct with Ryanair, too. [More info: ryanair.com](#)

### Swap Tenerife for La Palma

It may have been damaged by a volcanic eruption in 2021, but the Canary Island of La Palma is very much open for business, and reopened hiking trails lead you right over the lava fields. The ferry from Tenerife takes two and a half hours (you can fly too). [More info: visitlapalma.es](#)

### Swap a big cruise ship for Cruise Croatia

Not a fan of monster cruises? Try the

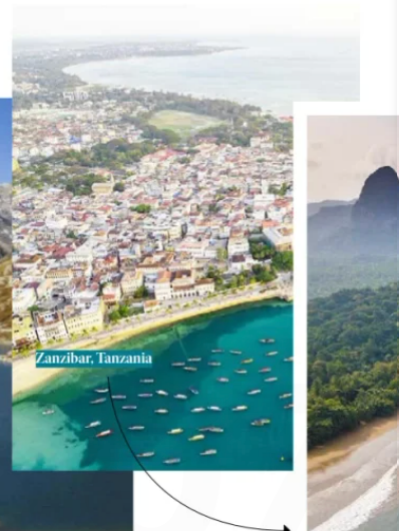
new ship from Cruise Croatia, MV Aretis, sailing from Dubrovnik to Split with just 36 passengers. It's an intimate trip with guided tours and stops for swims and kayaking. From €1,869pps. [More info: cruisecroatia.com](#)

### Swap Zanzibar for São Tomé and Príncipe

It's surprisingly easy to get to Africa's second smallest nation, just a six-and-a-half-hour flight from Lisbon. Add a 30-minute charter flight and you'll be on the stunning island of Príncipe, where the eco-luxury Bom Bom Resort has just reopened. Rainbow Tours has a nine-night trip from Dublin from €4,310pps. [More info: hbdprincipe.com/bom-bom, rainbowtours.co.uk](#)

### Swap Prague for Vilnius

If you're a Christmas market fan, skip the busy set-up in Prague and opt instead for Vilnius – it's been named the European Christmas Capital for 2025. The Lithuanian capital was also named Europe's cheapest city break in a survey last year, in a Post Office Money survey that averaged the cost of a cup of coffee at just €2.11. [More info: govilnius.lt](#)



### Swap the French Riviera for Ile de Ré

Don't fancy the summer heat of the riviera? Head to Ile de Ré – it's an easy bus ride from La Rochelle airport, and the island is serene and quaint, with seaside mussel shacks and bike paths galore. If it's good enough for Ronan O'Gara and family... [More info: holidays-iledere.co.uk](#)

### Swap Croatia for Albania

The TikTok crowd went bananas for Albania last year, so get in quick before others follow suit. We don't have a direct flight (yet), but Ryanair flies to the cool city of Tiranë from a few UK airports. Highlights include the Albanian Riviera with its stunning beaches, and the Unesco World Heritage Site of Berat. [More info: albania.at](#)

### Swap Tuscany for its coast

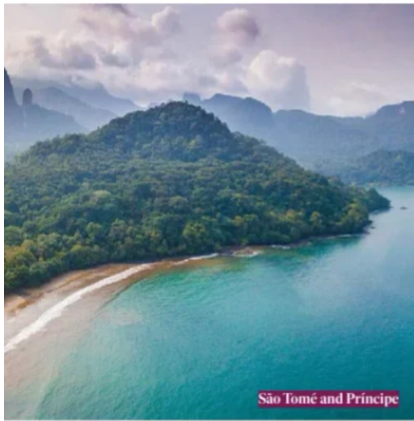
Yes, the Tuscan countryside is gorgeous. But so is its lesser-known coastline. The new boutique hotel La Roqqa is dreamy, set on Argentario Island with a rooftop bar overlooking Porto Ercole. Rates from €435 (fly to Rome). [More info: laroqqa.com](#)

# PRCO

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*dupes — locations with lower prices, fewer tourists and more bang for your buck*

## swaps



### Swap the Costa del Sol for Costa de la Luz.

Not quite as busy as Spain's Costa del Sol, its Costa de la Luz (roughly between Cadiz and the Portuguese border) is more chilled out and natural feeling, but with great beaches and plenty of sun. Click&Go has a week in a five-star from €549pp. **More info:** [clickandgo.com.spain.info](http://clickandgo.com.spain.info)

### Swap Nepal for Pakistan

Intrepid Travel's 2025 'Not Hot List' named the Gilgit-Baltistan region number one in the fight against overtourism, and it has launched a new trekking trip to explore this beautiful (and quiet) mountain range. From €2,980pps. **More info:** [intrepidtravel.com](http://intrepidtravel.com)

### Swap Lanzarote for Madeira

It's chilled out, subtropical, and full of cracking scenery — Madeira is well worth adding to your holiday list. Sunway has holidays from €659pps in May, and you can now fly from Shannon (in summer) as well as Dublin with Ryanair. Madeira's carnival kicks off on February 26. **More info:** [visitmadeira.com](http://visitmadeira.com)



### Swap Barbados for Puerto Rico

There are no direct flights from Ireland to the Caribbean, so transfer in New York to see the (far more interesting) island of Puerto Rico. Great beaches, food, music and art are just the start of its charms. New JetBlue flights to JFK airport, where you can connect, make it even easier. **More info:** [discoveruertorico.com](http://discoveruertorico.com), [jetblue.com](http://jetblue.com)

### Swap Lake Como for Lake Orta

Lake Como is a jewel, but a crowded one — especially in peak season. Italy's lesser-known Lake Orta is every bit as stunning, and the new hotel La Darbia is beautiful — there are 20 apartments, each with incredible views. Rooms from €310. **More info:** [ladarbia.com](http://ladarbia.com)

### Swap Provence for Languedoc

Provence is pretty but pricey, and rammed in the summer. Try Languedoc instead, and the Irish-run Chateau Capitul, where you can cycle through the vineyards and explore pretty villages. Rooms from €248; fly to Toulouse.



### Swap the Grand Canyon for Bryce Canyon

As someone who's seen both, I think Bryce Canyon is far more impressive than its more famous cousin. Head to Utah, see the Mighty Five (American Sky has a two-week trip from €1,899pps), but get to Bryce for sunrise — it's spectacular. Stay in the new OutpostX, an insane, movie-inspired property opening this year. **More info:** [visitutah.com.americansky.ie](http://visitutah.com.americansky.ie)

### Swap Venice for Annecy

Venice can be hideously overcrowded at busy times, last year trialling a €5 day fee for certain visitors. Annecy is a great alternative, with canals snaking through its old town. The bus from Geneva Airport takes just an hour. **More info:** [lac-annecy.com](http://lac-annecy.com)

### Swap Bali for Indonesia

Bali is no longer an undiscovered paradise, so set off to Indonesia for killer landscapes instead. Fancy a blowout? Silolona Sojourns offer high-end, bespoke charters on luxury boats inspired by traditional design. **More info:** [silolona.com](http://silolona.com)

### Swap Machu Picchu for Kuélap

Peru's star attraction is often crowded, but Kuélap, a walled settlement in the north, is blissfully serene — plus it's both older and higher than Machu Picchu, and easy to access via cable car. **More info:** [peru.travel](http://peru.travel)

**More info:** [chateaucapitul.com](http://chateaucapitul.com)

### Swap Val d'Isère for Slovenia

Skiing has become very pricey, but Slovenia has invested €80m in its ski resorts, and their ski passes are roughly 73pc cheaper than others in Europe. The only catch? There are no direct flights, but you can drive from Zagreb to Rogla or Kravave in under two and a half hours. **More info:** [slovenia.info](http://slovenia.info)

### Swap Budapest for Tallinn

This medieval city is cosy and charming in winter, and makes for a great pre-Christmas break. Its medieval old town, top-notch museums, festivals and Christmas markets are gorgeous. Blackpool Travel has three nights from €499pps. **More info:** [blackpooltravel.ie](http://blackpooltravel.ie), [visittallinn.ee](http://visittallinn.ee)

### Swap San Sebastián for Bilbao

Aer Lingus has a new direct route from Cork to Bilbao this summer, so instead of heading straight to San Sebastián, hang around in the city to see the Guggenheim Museum and eat pintxos. It's a potential Camino jumping-off point, too. **More info:** [spain.info](http://spain.info)