



Family-Style Fun

Spend quality time together at resorts that keep all ages in mind.

BY KELLY MAGYARICS

KID STUFF:

Atlantis Paradise Island Resort water slide (top); and (bottom left to right) Three Monkeys Kids Club and beach movie night at Karma Jimbaran, and Omni Amelia Island Plantation Resort mini golf

PHOTOS: © ATLANTIS PARADISE ISLAND RESORT, © KARMA JIMBARAN, JIMBARAN BAY, © OMNI AMELIA ISLAND PLANTATION RESORT

WHAT MAKES A GREAT resort for families? A killer beach and pool complex? Activities that keep the interest of everyone, from curious toddlers to been-there, done-that teens? Amenities that lend a home-away-from-home feel? These seven resorts boast all that and more. Get stirred to plan your next sojourn with the whole gang in tow.

ALL OF THE VILLAS at Karma Jimbaran, Bali's 5-star, family-friendly resort in Jimbaran Bay, include private pools so families can splash and play all day. Inside you'll find

the creature comforts of home including a modern gourmet kitchen, open-plan living area, en-suite bathrooms, satellite TV, home-theater system and free WiFi. The resort is situated on a slope in the southern peninsula amid lush tropical gardens; it's also adjacent to one of the area's best powdery white-sand beaches and calm waters, making it easy to switch from lounging poolside to searching for seashells. Kids aged 2 to 12 can partake in the activities of the Three Monkeys Kids Club such as Balinese dance lessons, a sandcastle competition and kite construction and flying.

THE SPRAWLING 404-ROOM Omni Amelia Island Plantation Resort, on 1,350 acres on a barrier island just off the northeast Florida coast, offers so much for families, starting with the largest poolscape in the northern part of the state. Overlooking the Atlantic Ocean and 3.5 miles of private beachfront, it boasts a 10,000-square-foot family-friendly pool, a children's splash park, two hot tubs and an infinity



adult swimming pool for parents who crave a little time alone. At Amelia's Wheels, parents and kids can rent bicycles, tag-along bikes, baby trailers, jogging strollers and Island Hoppers (golf carts), or sign up for a Segway tour. The Nature Center offers crabbing and tours of the region's indigenous plants and wildflowers as well as shell and shark tooth hunts and build-your-own-turtle stations. The resort's mascot, Tanner the Turtle, hosts dance parties on the pool deck, and everyone can tee off at a nautically themed miniature golf course or make s'mores by the fire pit at night.

AT THIS APTLY NAMED ocean-themed resort on a Bahamian island, it's all about the water and the marine life in it. The Atlantis Paradise Island Resort is built around 8 million gallons of freshwater and saltwater pools, lagoons and cascading waterfalls and the largest outdoor marine exhibit in the Caribbean. Aquaventure is a water park lover's dream — a 141-acre playground with 11 swimming pools, three beaches, a seven-acre snorkeling lagoon, 20 water slides and two river rides. At Dolphin Cay, parents and kids can interact with docile mammals rescued from Mississippi in 2005 after Hurricane Katrina. New programs include an early morning playtime with the resident bottlenose dolphins, watching them socialize and play from a clear-bottom kayak, and a snorkeling expedition that lets you swim alongside them to see how curious and smart they are. Families can get a taste of authentic Bahamian cuisine with dining concepts serving up a fish fry, mahi mahi and cracked conch along with island staples like peas and rice, mac 'n' cheese and fried plantains.



FAMILIES FIND THIS TOP-RATED hotel located along Dubai's golden shoreline exotic yet approachable. The JA Palm Tree Court's 200 suites overlook the gardens or half a mile of private beach; for more luxury, 14 villas in The Residence come with butler service and other premium benefits. Keep cool with three pools complete with swim-up bars for icy refreshment, along with two children's and toddlers' pools. The resort features three kids' clubs with age-appropriate activities: Crèche for ages 4 months to 4 years, Coolzone for those 4 to 12 years and the Chillzone for

ages 8 to 16. Take a horseback-riding lesson; try your hand at tennis, squash or badminton; play a rousing family game of beach volleyball; or challenge each other in mini golf. Book a scuba diving, snorkeling or other underwater excursion in the new diving center, or rent a fishing boat and guide at the 85-berth marina.

FUN FOR ALL:
Atlantis Sea Squirts
(top), paddle
boarding with
dolphins (middle),
and JA Palm Tree
Court horses and
Coolzone for kids
(bottom)

PHOTOS: © ATLANTIS
PARADISE ISLAND RESORT,
© JA PALM TREE COURT





OUTDOOR CHALLENGE: *Meliá Braco Village Adventure Park* agility course (top left), and rock climbing wall (top right) and cooking fresh oysters at *The Tides Inn* (below)

PHOTOS: © MELIÁ BRACO VILLAGE, © THE TIDES INN

LEARN ABOUT VIRGINIA'S aquaculture at The Tides Inn (the resort sits in the heart of the state's Oyster Trail in Irvington) while enjoying views of Carters Creek, the Rappahannock River and Chesapeake Bay. Named one of the best resorts for families, this 106-room seasonal property on the Northern Neck region has been around for 70 years. Crab Net Kids is a supervised program for children aged 4 to 12 with outdoor activities like crabbing, and the on-site Premier Sailing School inspires would-be sailors aged 6 and up. Guests can also learn to balance on a paddle board, explore the water in a canoe or ocean kayak, cast their lines for freshwater fishing, or pedal around the cute town of Irvington on a single or family bicycle. There are tennis and golf camps for kids and teens. In the evening, make s'mores on a campfire on the terrace or the beach, or get a little friendly family competition going in the View Room with classic board games like pirate bingo or horse racing.



FOR ANOTHER ISLAND OPTION, head to Meliá Braco Village in Rio Bueno, Jamaica. Colonial Georgian-style architecture designed to resemble the nearby town of Falmouth, local culture incorporated into activities and programming, and Jamaican cuisine at its restaurants give this all-inclusive resort on the island's north coast an authentic, welcoming vibe. Its 232 rooms and suites with garden, beachfront or oceanfront views are located either on the Colonial side or The Level side. Those on The Level all tout ocean views and private balconies and patios, as well as a private beach, pool and restaurant and concierge service. In 2017 the Meliá introduced its on-property Adventure Park with a strength and agility obstacle course; zip line over tropical forests; a four-lane, 35-foot rock wall; and four bungee trampolines — all perfect for family fun. Its Kids & Co. concept offers activities for children ages 5 to 12. Once a week the resort transforms into a Jamaican village, with a buffet dinner of Jamaican favorites and local artisans selling homemade crafts, jewelry and souvenirs. Every day, the smell of jerk chicken grilled on an oil barrel wafts to the pool and beach; along with meat patties

and coconut water sipped right from a freshly cut coconut from a cart, it provides an ideal casual, waterside lunch.

THE POOL IS A SHOWSTOPPER at Majestic Colonial Punta Cana, a 658-room, all-inclusive resort in the Dominican Republic. "Pool" is actually an underwhelming misnomer; it's actually a 1,312-foot-long, river-style attraction that runs perpendicular all the way to the beach, meaning the deck never feels crowded and families of any size can spread out on lounge chairs and soak up the sun. To really take advantage of all that water, book a swim-up suite featuring an indoor Jacuzzi tub and another on the spacious patio. Stare at (or swim in) the Caribbean from a shady palapa, or grab some snorkeling gear, an ocean kayak or a catamaran and head out to the water. There are several impressive dining concepts, and the buffet is a big draw morning, noon or night with an international and local selection of cuisine for even the pickiest eater. Kids also get a kick out of trying to catch stir-fried shrimp in their mouths at a teppanyaki table at Ma+Suri.