



# 10 HAPPY HOLIDAY SECRETS

From taking the stress out of packing to getting the most from your 'we-time', here's how to get the summer break you want – and deserve





TEN

## Hold on to that holiday feeling

Holidays are good for you – fact. They help you manage stress, improve sleep, reduce blood pressure and strengthen relationships. So it makes sense to try and replicate some of the wellbeing-boosting behaviours you adopt while away when you get back home.

‘When we’re on holiday, we experience each moment as it comes, lazily and luxuriously and, because everything is new, we’re more engaged with what’s going on around us,’ says Dr Lisa Wilson, psychologist at City Psychology Group. ‘Rather than thinking about what we’ve just done and all the things we have to do, we live in the present, which stills the mind and reduces anxiety. So try to bring this mindset home. Grab a coffee and people-watch or go for a walk and pay attention to the shops and cafés you normally rush past and the interactions going on,’ says Dr Wilson. ‘It’s about reconnecting with where you are right *now*.’

It’s also important to view what you enjoy doing on holiday as clues to what you need more of in your everyday life. ‘While they might get squeezed out by work or family pressures, these are the activities that restore us and remind us why we’re here,’ says Dr Wilson. So if you treasured your holiday morning swim, schedule in laps at your local pool. If you miss your lazy breakfast, get up early and start your day with a leisurely bite. Or if you love exploring, dedicate Sunday to discovering new places (Facebook app 101 Things To Do has lots of suggestions). ‘But you can’t wait for the space to appear,’ says Dr Wilson. ‘You have to make room in your routine.’

Finally, rather than wait for your one annual getaway, have ‘mini-holidays’ throughout the year. ‘Think of your emotional wellbeing as a bank balance – every time you take something out, you have to refill it,’ says Dr Wilson. ‘On holiday, we switch off from life. So pencil in two hours every week when you can’t be contacted and read a book or have a picnic.’ You don’t need to wait a year for your next happy holiday – start enjoying snatches of time away from it all today. →