

WAITROSE
& PARTNERS



FOOD

DECEMBER 2019

Classic
Christmas pudding
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COMFORT & JOY

The turkey, the trimmings, the mistletoe and the magic...
let the festivities begin

PLUS NEW YEAR'S EVE WITH RICK STEIN
JEANETTE WINTERSON'S EXCLUSIVE STORY
THE MOST LUXURIOUS OF LEFTOVERS



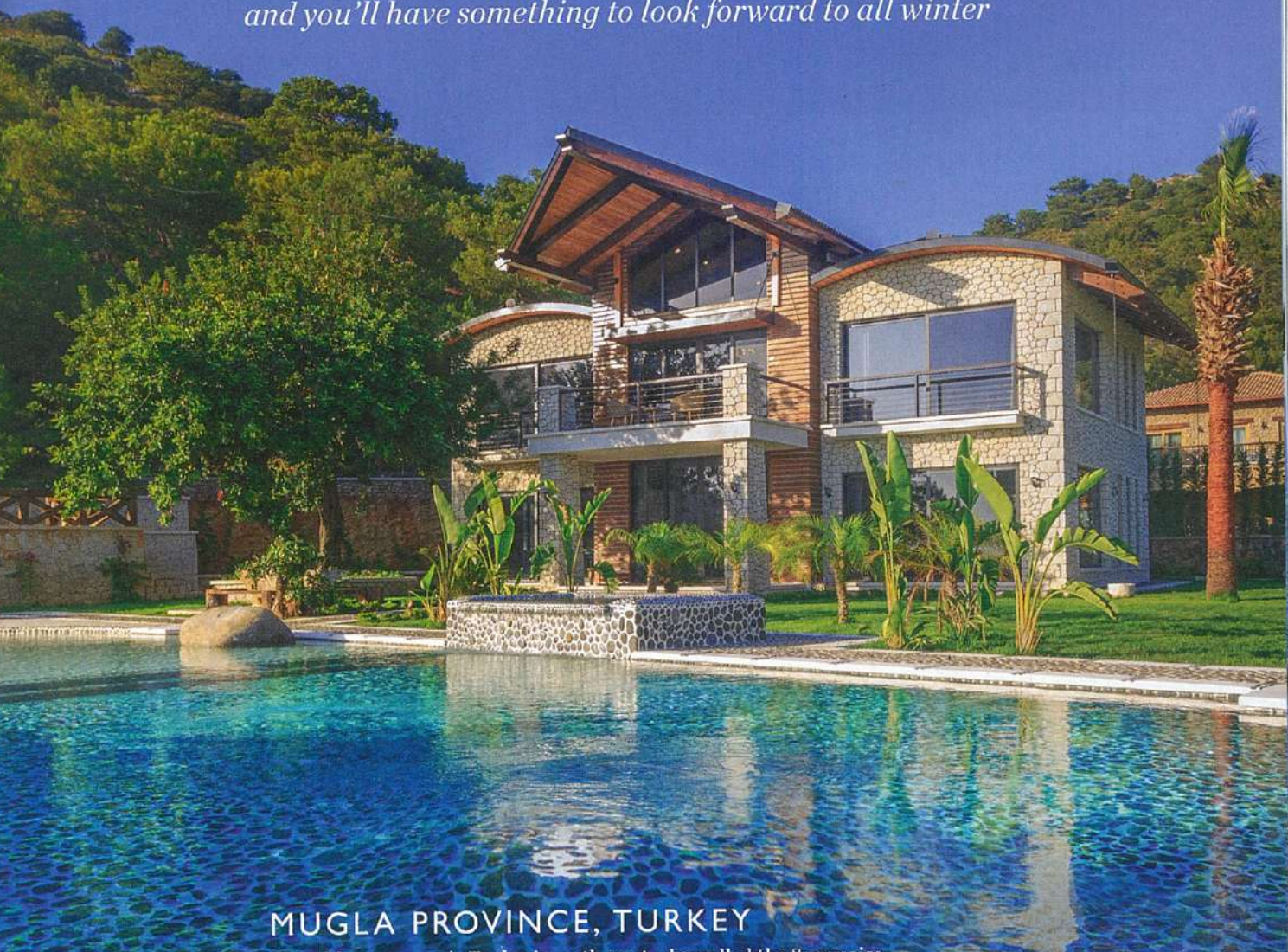
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LIGHT YEAR AHEAD

*Dreaming of sunshine? Book a springtime escape now
and you'll have something to look forward to all winter*



MUGLA PROVINCE, TURKEY

Not without reason is Turkey's south-west edge called the 'turquoise coast'. The clear waters stretch out from a mountainous, tree-covered shoreline, ranging from sapphire to cerulean. The home of the ancient Lycians, Pegasus and endless blue sky offers a perfect combination of historic landscapes, extraordinary Turkish hospitality, warm temperatures from early spring onwards and a revered cuisine. The result is an intoxicating holiday destination.

To experience the best of the region away from the crowds, try Gökçe Gemile, a cluster of three luxury eco villas nestled into the hillside of the Gemile peninsula. Despite its proximity to lively Fethiye, a narrow »



strip of land guards this stretch of protected coastline so you will hardly see a single boat from its pristine shores. The villas' creator has taken the utmost care here: no stone was mined (all repurposed), water is sourced from natural wells, and everything from the dining tables to the mosaic floors was created by local craftspeople.

Breakfast is a feast – a daily changing array of cheese-stuffed pastries, omelette, honey and preserves, tomatoes, olives and cucumber – all home-made or locally grown. Enjoy it in the 'beach club', a bijoux haven for guests reached by a private funicular lift, then swim among the silvery fish or make use of the paddleboards and kayaks. Light lunches and evening feasts (to order) offer delicious home-made food if you don't fancy cooking in your beautifully kitted-out kitchen.

Despite no real incentive to leave this enclave, there are other culinary finds to discover. In nearby Kayaköy (*below*), try Incir (incirkayakoy.com; cold mezze from £2), an outstanding restaurant making historic dishes from the wider region using the most local of ingredients (fresh plum juice comes from fruit trees next door) and serving them with charm in a tree-filled garden. Or stop for lunch at one of the simple roadside restaurants where Turkish mamas prepare traditional gözleme (wafer-thin flatbreads filled with lamb or cheese). Visit Fethiye to explore the city's vibrant fish market, choosing your catch from the market before asking one of the surrounding restaurants to cook it for you. Then head back to your private pool and let the sun work its magic.

Gökçe Gemile (gokcegemile.com) offers seven nights' b&b at *The Houses of Gökçe Gemile* from £3,500 based on two sharing, including transfers from Dalaman



PAPHOS, CYPRUS

With its picturesque beaches, glittering bright blue sea and 300 days of sun a year, Cyprus has been infatuating travellers for centuries. Aphrodite, the Greek goddess of love, is said to have been born here; Mark Antony gifted it to Cleopatra, while Richard the Lionheart spontaneously decided to conquer the island for England.

Many tourists head to lively Limassol and Larnaca, but the harbour city of Paphos in the south-west has long been popular with Brits. Those in the know avoid the height of summer and visit in April or May, when breezes ruffle the spring flowers tumbling over villa walls, and the mercury hasn't quite tipped into the 30s.

At the airy Almyra Hotel (almyra.com) you can hear the crashing waves from your room. Foodies can request the hotel's 'culinary delight' package, which includes classes to help you master local specialities including koupepia (stuffed vine leaves) and trips to artisan suppliers such as Katsouras (katsouras.com), a family-owned firm which specialises in the jelly-like sweet sioutzioukos – strings of nuts coated in a thickened grape juice.

For an authentic taste of island life, far away from seafront cafés offering English breakfasts, head inland to explore fragrant pine forests and mountain villages. At Vouni Panayia Winery (vounipanayia.winery.com), a 25-hectare vineyard 1,000m above sea level, the Kyriakides family uses

indigenous grapes to make boutique wines. After a tasting, eat at its taverna-style restaurant where traditional Cypriot mezze such as halloumi and 'village salad', dotted with feta and burst-in-your-mouth



tomatoes, are followed by a bunch of grapes, plucked from the vines (lunch £17.60).

A stroll down Paphos's harbour promenade takes you to Paphos Archaeological Park (*left*, open daily; visitcyprus.com), where the sun beats down on a ruined city founded in the 4th century BC. Many of the spectacularly preserved mosaic floors depict Dionysus, the god of wine and merry-making: clearly, even Cyprus's oldest inhabitants knew that this was a place where good times rolled.

Destinology offers three nights at *Almyra Hotel* from £259pp based on two sharing on a b&b basis, including return Ryanair flights from Stansted and private car airport transfers; destinology.co.uk/hotels/cyprus »

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