

With business butlers and vacation PAs, why the Maldives is the ultimate work from hotel destination

Why more people are set to make exotic destinations their business base in 2021

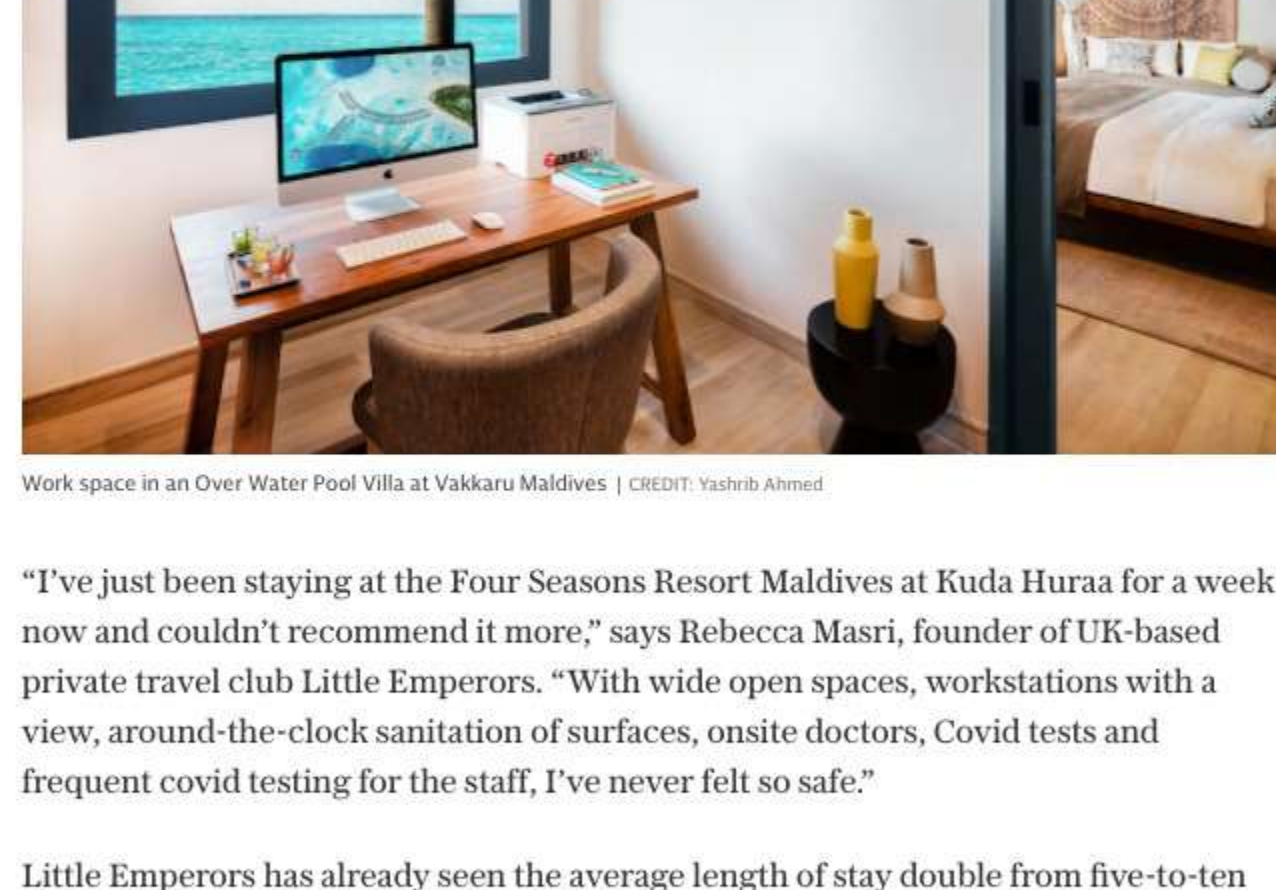
By Francesca Syz, CONSULTANT ULTRATRAVEL EDITOR
10 November 2020 - 7:00am



Anyone for a beach office in the Maldives? | CREDIT: Yasrifa Ahmed

As we all know, under the new rules of Lockdown 2.0, travelling for pleasure, whether to elsewhere in the UK or abroad, is not currently allowed. Travelling for work, however, still is. So it's timely that some of the world's most luxurious hotels and resorts are launching services that provide everything you need to carry on conducting business while away from home - and we don't just mean Zoom.

So what are the essentials? The bottom line is strong, reliable Wi-Fi and a spacious, comfortable and well-lit desk space, then, depending on what you need to get done, it could also be about anything from scanning and photocopying services to keeping your little ones happy and stimulated while you work. The Maldives seems to be leading the charge, with several of its top resorts launching enticing packages this autumn.

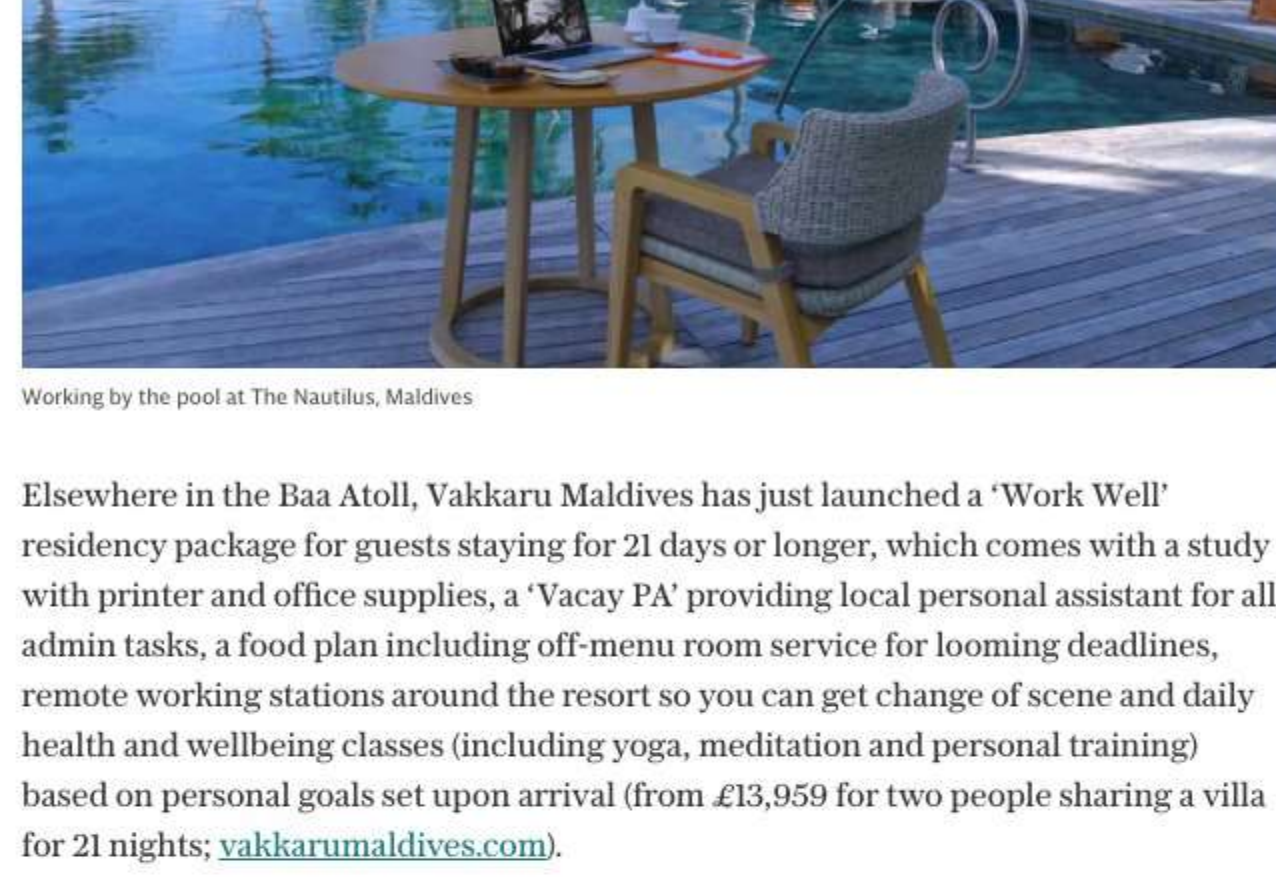


Work space in an Over Water Pool Villa at Vakkaru Maldives | CREDIT: Yasrifa Ahmed

"I've just been staying at the Four Seasons Resort Maldives at Kuda Huraa for a week now and couldn't recommend it more," says Rebecca Masri, founder of UK-based private travel club Little Emperors. "With wide open spaces, workstations with a view, around-the-clock sanitation of surfaces, onsite doctors, Covid tests and frequent covid testing for the staff, I've never felt so safe."

Little Emperors has already seen the average length of stay double from five-to-ten days over the last few months and also an increase in the number of bookings for month-long wellness and detox programmes. Resorts are responding to that by offering added incentives for longer stays. Four Seasons Kuda Huraa, for example, will provide a desk and the guarantee of stronger Wi-Fi to anyone staying longer than 21 days.

Meanwhile, bohemian-chic The Nautilus Maldives in the Baa Atoll has launched a 'Workation Package' that can be booked for up to 21 days. Offering complete privacy, high-speed Wi-Fi and a dedicated personal assistant on hand 24-7, you'll also get an ocean-view desk and full work set up, including phone, scanner, wireless printer, personalised stationary, portable projector and screen plus daily yoga and refreshments on tap (from £17,990 for seven nights for two adults and two children in a Beach House; thenautilusmaldives.com).

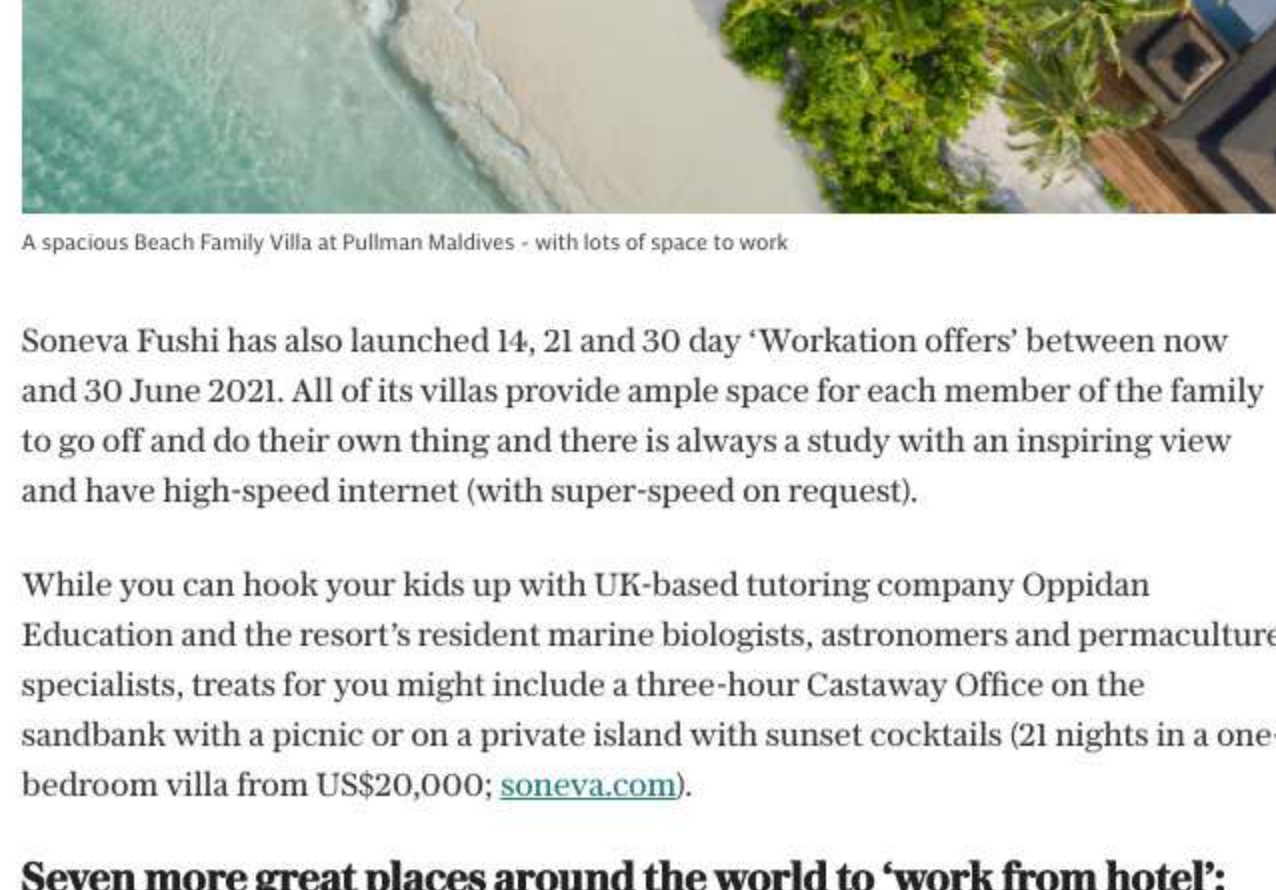


Working by the pool at The Nautilus, Maldives

Elsewhere in the Baa Atoll, Vakkaru Maldives has just launched a 'Work Well' residency package for guests staying for 21 days or longer, which comes with a study with printer and office supplies, a 'Vacay PA' providing local personal assistant for all admin tasks, a food plan including off-menu room service for looming deadlines, remote working stations around the resort so you can get change of scene and daily health and wellbeing classes (including yoga, meditation and personal training) based on personal goals set upon arrival (from £13,959 for two people sharing a villa for 21 nights; vakkarumaldives.com).

Pullman Maldives Maamutaa, in the Gaafu Alifu Atoll, has just launched a 30-day 'Work and Play in Paradise' offer, which, in addition to being able to work in your own villa, will see various 'work stations' set up throughout the resort - by the pool, in the herb garden, in the overwater sunset bar, or in a beach villa with a private pool and outdoor sala.

You can also ask for a phone, wireless printer, scanner, projector and screen and any stationary to be provided. The package also includes time with a personal trainer, who will tailor your your own fitness programme (from £453 per night for two adults in a beach villa, based on a 30-day stay; pullmanmaldivesmaamutaa.com).



A spacious Beach Family Villa at Pullman Maldives - with lots of space to work

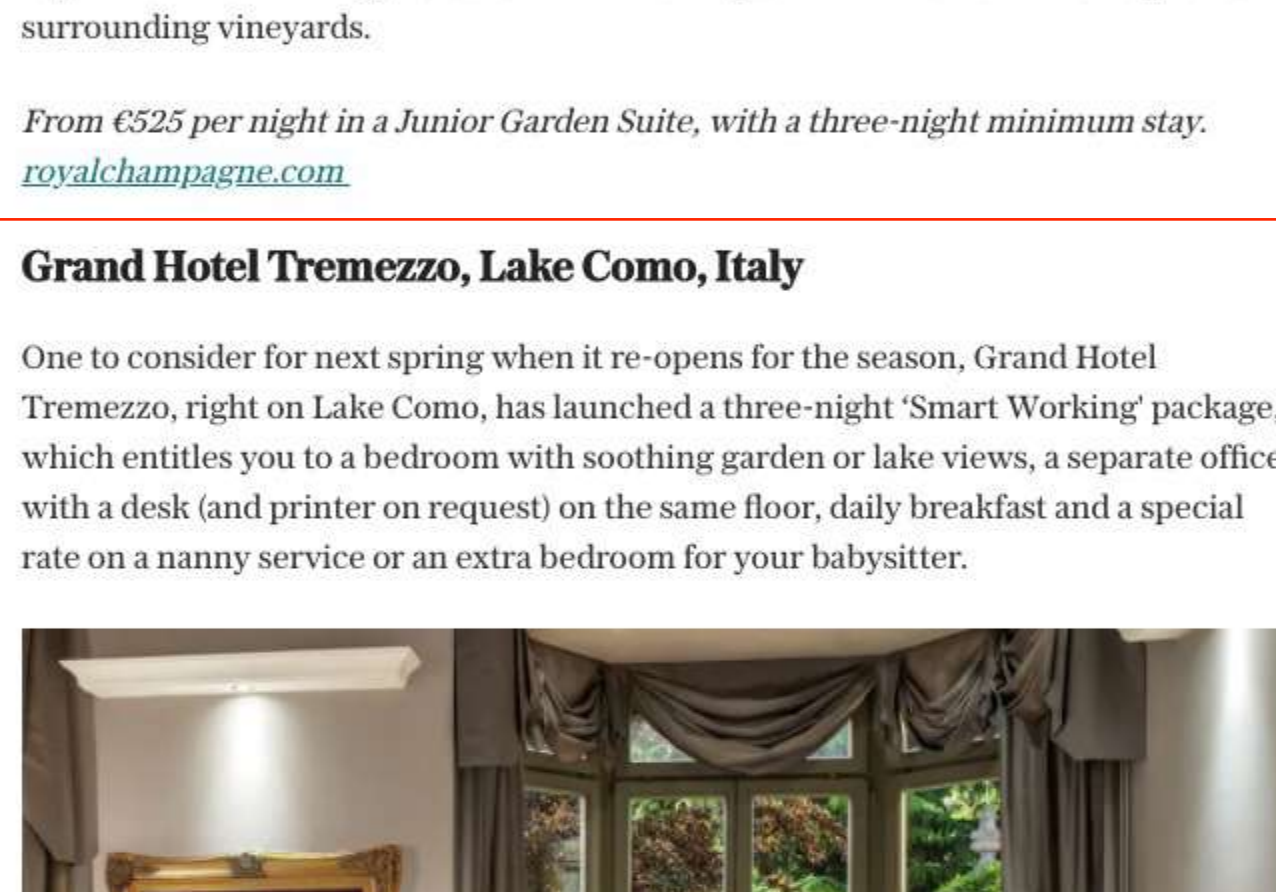
Soneva Fushi has also launched 14, 21 and 30 day 'Workation offers' between now and 30 June 2021. All of its villas provide ample space for each member of the family to go off and do their own thing and there is always a study with an inspiring view and have high-speed internet (with super-speed on request).

While you can hook your kids up with UK-based tutoring company Oppidan Education and the resort's resident marine biologists, astronomers and permaculture specialists, treats for you might include a three-hour Castaway Office on the sandbank with a picnic or on a private island with sunset cocktails (21 nights in a one-bedroom villa from US\$20,000; soneva.com).

Seven more great places around the world to 'work from hotel':

Royal Champagne Hotel & Spa, France

The hotel's new 'Move your office to the countryside' package is ideal for those wanting to stay in the lavish surroundings of a five star rural resort and still get some work done. Every Junior Garden Suite comes with a desk area, has a TV you can connect to your devices and high-speed Wi-Fi and you can also book any of the hotel's three intimate salon rooms for private meetings or Zooms.



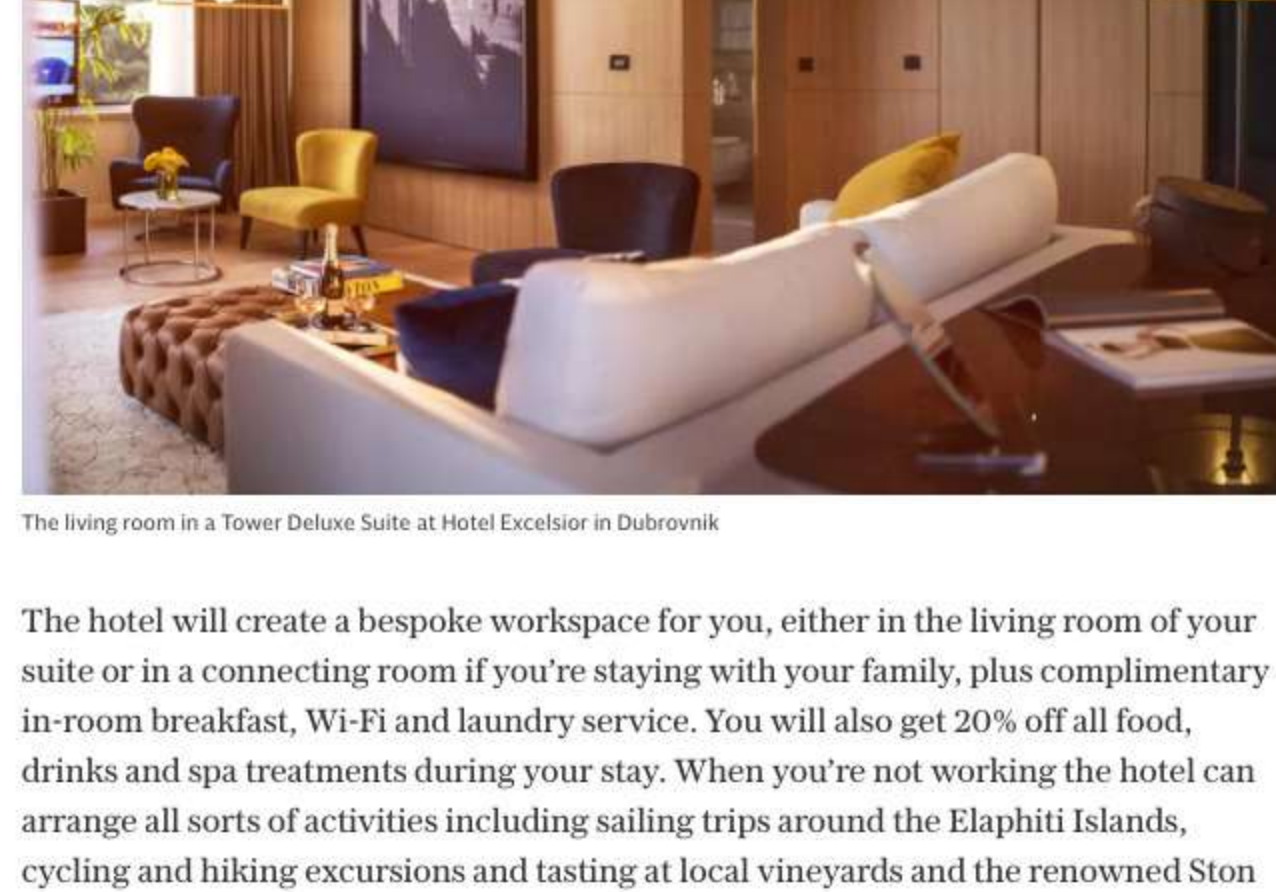
At Royal Champagne Hotel & Spa you can start your working day with a swim overlooking the vineyards

With its world-class spa, you can start the day with a swim in the glass of Leclerc Briant champagne. The package will also come with a room service lunch delivered to their desk every day and an unlimited supply of pastries and hot beverages throughout the day. When not working you can unwind in the spa or borrow an e-bike to explore the surrounding vineyards.

From €525 per night in a Junior Garden Suite, with a three-night minimum stay. royalchampagne.com

Grand Hotel Tremezzo, Lake Como, Italy

One to consider for next spring when it re-opens for the season, Grand Hotel Tremezzo, right on Lake Como, has launched a three-night 'Smart Working' package, which entitles you to a bedroom with soothing garden or lake views, a separate office with a desk (and printer on request) on the same floor, daily breakfast and a special rate on a nanny service or an extra bedroom for your babysitter.



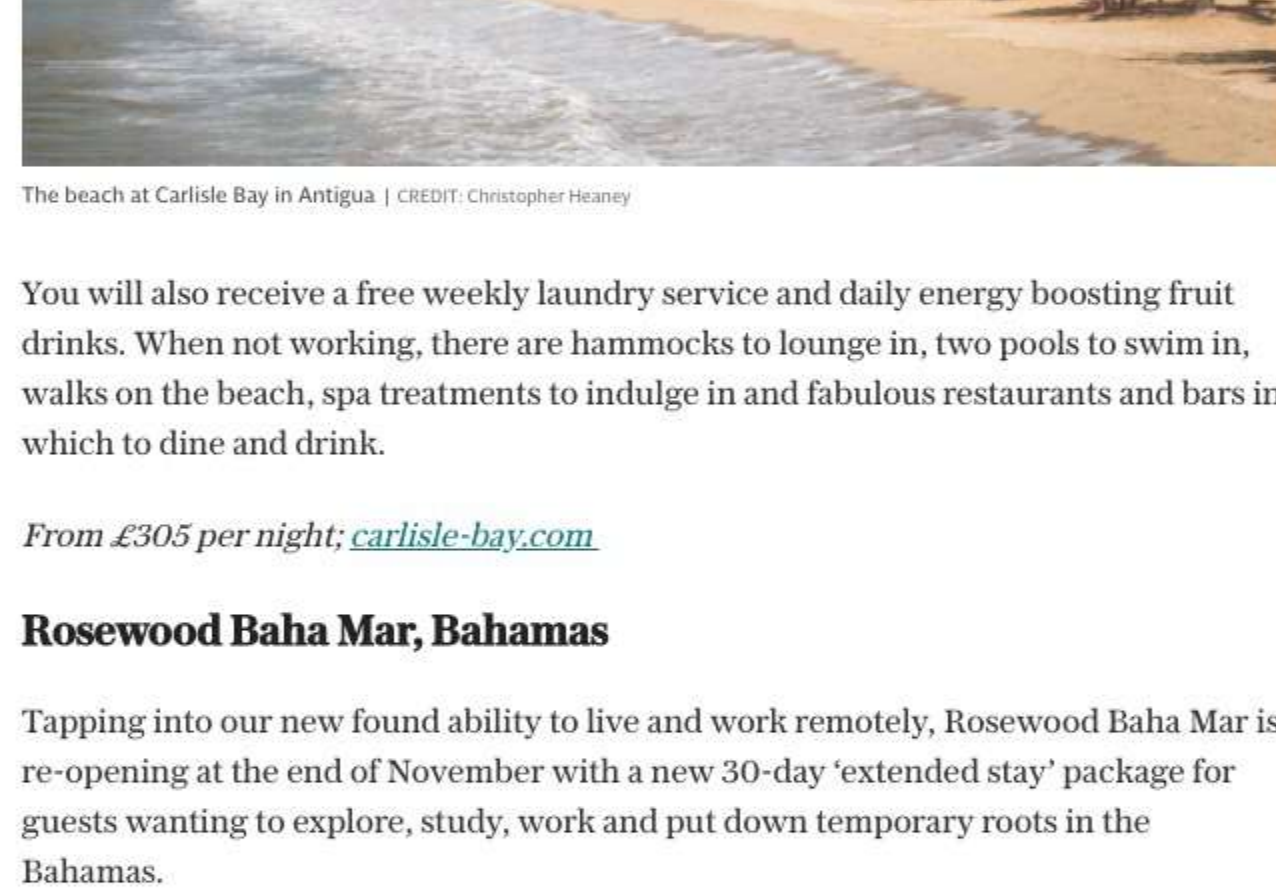
A Smart Working space at Grand Hotel Tremezzo on Lake Como | CREDIT: Alessia Graziano

You can also enjoy the hotel's five bars and restaurants (including gourmet La Terrazza Gualtiero Marchesi), its three swimming pools, one of which is actually suspended over the lake, treatments by Florentine brand Santa Maria Novella at the T Spa, cooking classes and forays out onto the lake in one of the hotel's vintage boats.

From €720-VAT per night; grandhoteltremezzo.com

Hotel Excelsior, Dubrovnik, Croatia

In response to the Croatian government launching its new Digital Nomad Visa scheme, Hotel Excelsior, which overlooks Dubrovnik's UNESCO World Heritage Old Town, is launching a series of 21-day 'Feel at home' extended stay packages, to help you strike the perfect work-life balance.



The living room in a Tower Deluxe Suite at Hotel Excelsior in Dubrovnik

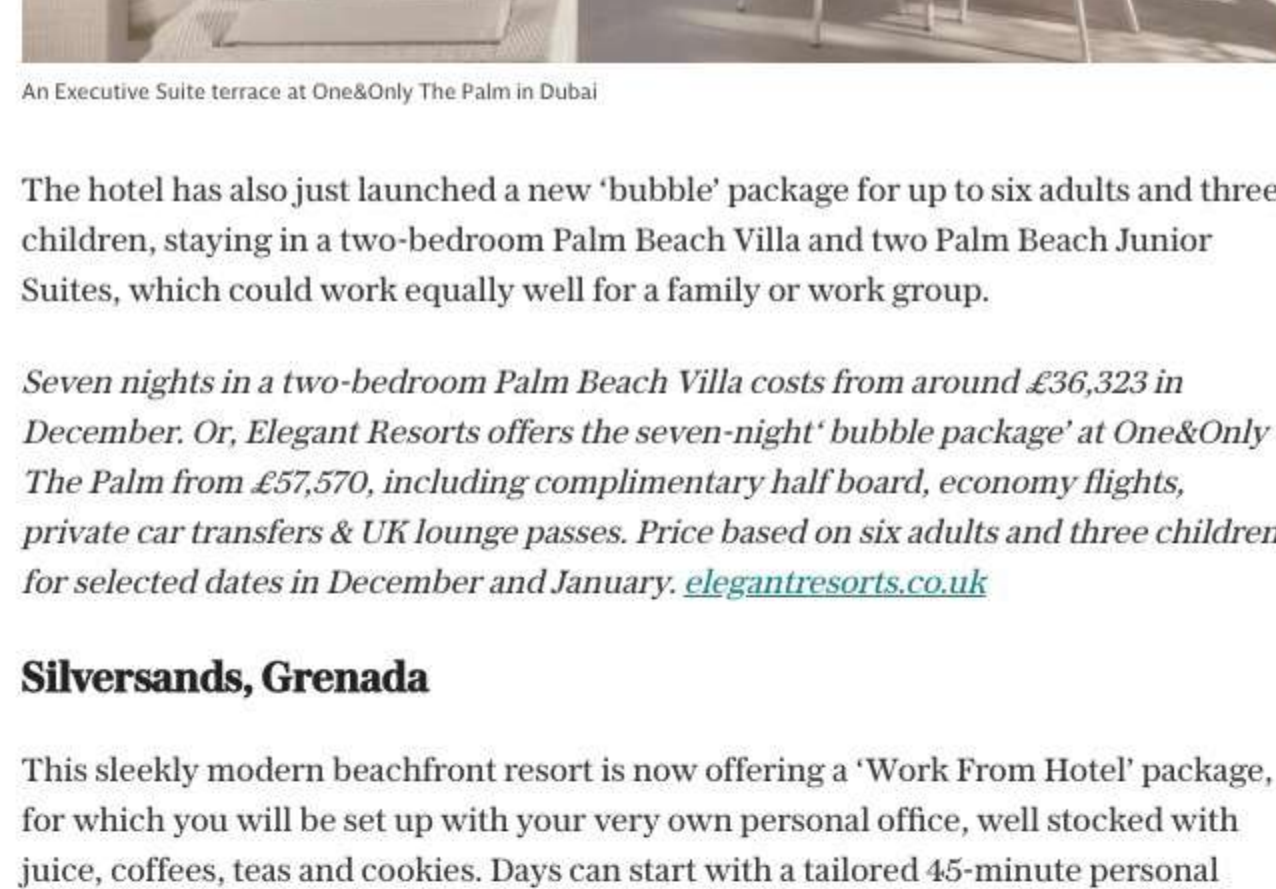
The hotel will create a bespoke workspace for you, either in the living room of your suite or in a connecting room if you're staying with your family, plus complimentary in-room breakfast, Wi-Fi and laundry service. You will also get 20% off all food, drinks and spa treatments during your stay. When you're not working the hotel can arrange all sorts of activities including sailing trips around the Elaphiti Islands, cycling and hiking excursions and tasting at local vineyards and the renowned Ston Oyster farm nearby.

From €7,600 for the full 21 days; adriaticluxuryhotels.com

Carlisle Bay, Antigua

On a secluded beach on Antigua's south coast, backed by lush tropical forest, Carlisle Bay offers the perfect blend of laid-back luxury. Those booking a minimum of ten nights in a Garden View Suite can enjoy its 'Send a wave from work' package.

This includes a complimentary room upgrade to an Ocean View Suite when available and a work space kitted out for you with all the essentials including a desk, office stationary, complimentary Wi-Fi and secretarial assistance on request.



The beach at Carlisle Bay in Antigua | CREDIT: Christopher Heaney

You will also receive a free weekly laundry service and daily energy boosting fruit drinks. When not working, there are hammocks to lounge in, two pools to swim in, walks on the beach, spa treatments to indulge in and fabulous restaurants and bars in which to dine and drink.

From £305 per night; carlisle-bay.com

Rosewood Baha Mar, Bahamas

Tapping into our new found ability to live and work remotely, Rosewood Baha Mar is re-opening at the end of November with a new 30-day 'extended stay' package for guests wanting to explore, study, work and put down temporary roots in the Bahamas.

With super-fast Wi-Fi throughout the resort, you can work from your room, by one of the many pools or anywhere else that takes your fancy and even send your kids to a school set up for children 'remote schooling' from the resort. You also get complimentary personal training sessions, babysitting, a poolside cabana, cooking lessons with the chef and generous savings at all the restaurants and bars, the spa and watersports centre.

A Resort View King costs from US\$395 on the extended stay rate; rosewoodhotels.com/en/baha-mar

One&Only The Palm, Dubai

While One&Only The Palm doesn't have any specific 'work-from-hotel' packages, its Two Bedroom Palm Beach Villas are perfect for those wishing to combine a holiday with work, with the second bedroom easily transformed into a home office. All rooms come with super-fast Wi-Fi as do the public areas, including around the pool.

An Executive Suite terrace at One&Only The Palm in Dubai

The hotel has also just launched a new 'bubble' package for up to six adults and three children, staying in a two-bedroom Palm Beach Villa and two Palm Beach Junior Suites, which could work equally well for a family or work group.

Seven nights in a two-bedroom Palm Beach Villa costs from around £36,323 in December. Or, Elegant Resorts offers the seven-night 'bubble package' at One&Only The Palm from £57,570, including complimentary half board, economy flights, private car transfers & UK lounge passes. Price based on six adults and three children for selected dates in December and January. elegantresorts.co.uk

Silversands, Grenada

This sleekly modern beachfront resort is now offering a 'Work From Hotel' package, for which you will be set up with your very own personal office, well stocked with juice, coffees, teas and cookies. Days can start with a tailored 45-minute personal training session, which could be yoga or a more high-octane workout, before you retreat to your personalised office (with high-speed internet) for the morning.

The indoor-outdoor Penthouse suite at Silversands in Grenada | CREDIT: Magda Bessiat

There's also a delicious healthy lunch in-villa or in one of the restaurants if you need a change of scene, twice-weekly soothing, stress-releasing massages in the spa and the longest pool in the Caribbean to splash in. You can also head out to explore the island - from rum distillery tours to chocolate making tours to waterfall hikes and scuba diving.

The 'Work From Hotel' package is based on stays of 14 days or longer in a suite or villa. It includes breakfast, a 45-minute daily personal workout session, a bi-weekly Silversands Signature Massage, a one-course lunch with fresh juice every day and daily coffee, tea and cookies.

Rates start from \$800 (currently approx. £611) per night based on two sharing. silversandsgrenada.com

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