

HOT TOPICS

ALL THE LATEST TRAVEL TITBITS

KEEPING UP WITH THE JONESES

Psst... want to know the latest must-visit destinations? Or the hotels everyone's talking about? We've burrowed deep into Thomson and First Choice's web stats to uncover the most searched for hotels and destinations on their websites*. Here are some of 2013's holiday buzzwords...

1. CAPE VERDE



2. RIU TOUAREG



3. SENSATORI RESORT SHARM EL SHEIKH



4. SENSATORI RESORT TENERIFE

- 5. TENERIFE 6. GREECE 7. ITALY
- 8. SPAIN 9. HOLIDAY VILLAGE SHARM EL SHEIKH 10. HOLIDAY VILLAGE COSTA DEL SOL

*Relates to period December 30th 2012 to February 2nd 2013



The whole point of a holiday is to ditch the 9 to 5, so that's exactly what Thomson and First Choice have done. They've got a dedicated team offering around-the-clock assistance via the Thomson and First Choice Twitter and Facebook pages. The team's available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week – so they're just a tweet away any time before, during or after your holiday.

Turning Heads

Thomson's a leading name in travel, but did you know it's got a foot in the fashion world, too? Leading hat designer, Philip Treacy – a man who counts Lady Gaga and Kate Middleton among his clientele – has teamed up with Thomson to celebrate the launch of Sensatori Resort Turkey. The milliner has created a collection of chic sunhats, plus his first ever range of headwear for kids, to mark the opening. Fashionistas can get their hands on the limited edition accessories – which have already graced the website of style bible, Vogue – at the resort, plus they'll be available to buy at selected Thomson travel shops, with all proceeds going to Great Ormond Street Hospital Children's Charity.

Treacy's also the brains behind the hotel's swanky new watering hole – The Butterfly Bar. Get a sneak peek on page 91.



Hat designed to the stars, Philip Treacy

WEBSITES IN NUMBERS

First Choice has an all-singing, all-dancing new website and Thomson is hot on its heels, with a new site due to launch later this year. They're both packed with glossy photos, videos, and insider info about hotels and destinations.

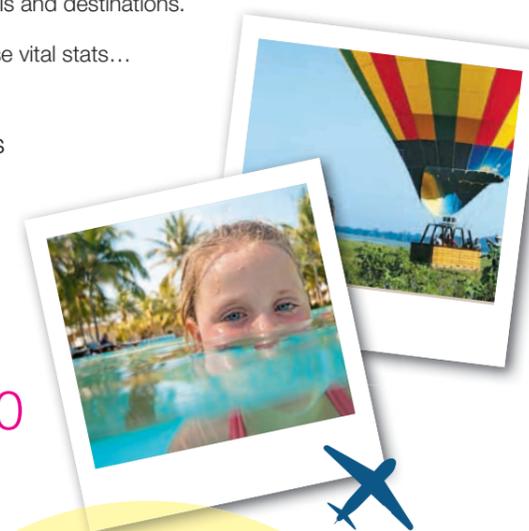
Check out these vital stats...

962 travel guides

2,276 excursions

2,281 hotels

29,350 pictures



FLIGHTS OF FANCY

If you can't treat yourself on holiday, when can you? Thomson Airways has introduced extra legroom seats on its short and mid-haul flights. They give you up to a 34-inch seat pitch and access to a Select Your Seat service. Anyone can book them, but there's only limited availability on each flight, so get in quick...

Double the fun

If the thought of waiting a full 12 months between holidays brings you out in a cold sweat, check out Skytours. Part of the Thomson family, this brand is all about great hotels in top locations at purse-friendly prices. And with thousands of holidays under £199 per person, they're perfect for a cheeky second holiday.



TRAVEL APPS

Smartphones can help out with just about anything these days – and holidays are no exception. Here's our pick of the best travel apps.

1

PACKING PRO

Packing is a pesky business, but this nifty app does the hard work for you. Tap in where you're going, how long for and who with, and it'll tell you exactly what should be in your case.

Available on iPhone for £1.99

2

WEATHERPRO

With detailed and highly accurate 7-day forecasts for 2 million locations, plus links to Facebook and Twitter, this app's ideal for smug temperature-related status updates.

Available on iPhone and Android for £2.49

3

TOUCHNOTE CARDS

If your mum harks on about emails wiping out 'proper' letters, get your hands on this app. It'll turn a smartphone holiday snap into a postcard and mail it to the folks at home for just £1.99.

Free on iPhone and Android

4

SUNSCREEN

Avoid the lobster look with this sun-safety app, which sounds an alarm whenever you're due a basting of sunscreen. Tap in your skin type and your lotion's SPF, and it thinks of everything else.

Free on iPhone

5

MY THOMSON EXCURSION APP

Get the lowdown on excursions and events in reach of your hotel. From booking a 4x4 jungle tour, to finding out when the local food market opens – it's all at your fingertips.

Free on iPhone and Android