

# Travel



**'Albania is Europe's Outer Mongolia: a place almost nobody's been'**

Matthew Parris explores the Balkan country's peaks

The Romanos, in the Peloponnese (4); below, The Margi (3)



## 20 best resorts for early sun

From a family seaside hotel in Cyprus to a Tunisian retreat overlooking a Saharan oasis, **James Ellis** picks this spring's best short-haul hotspots

**Greece**  
April/May average 20-25C

### 1 Spirit of the Knights, Rhodes

Rhodes's southerly position means it gets more than 300 days of sunshine a year and temperatures begin to climb in April, which is when easyJet flights start from Gatwick. This hotel, tucked away on the cobbled streets of the Old Town, built by the Crusaders, has been re-imagined by the architect Anastasiadis Efthimios. The interior decor is a delight, with

exposed beams, hand-crafted furniture and furnishings from Turkey and the Middle East. **Details** B&B doubles from €145 a night (00 30 22 41 03 9765, rhodesluxuryhotel.com), easyJet (easyjet.com) offers return flights in April from £180

### 2 Melenos Lindos, Rhodes

Medieval Lindos — where an ancient acropolis tops a hill with a crescent beach at its foot — is one of Rhodes's



most beautiful towns and this is one of its best hotels. Set halfway up the hill, it has huge, tastefully decorated rooms that open out on to terraces with views over the town. The rooftop restaurant, shaded by Moorish-style tents, has some of the best food on the island and incredible views out to the Aegean.

**Details** B&B doubles start from €200 (i-escape.com)

### 3 The Margi, Vouliagmeni, Athenian peninsula

While the heat can be hellish in high summer, the shoulder seasons are perfect for visiting Athens. Head out of the city to stay in the southern suburbs where Immitos mountain provides a suntrap for resorts with beachside living and a good selection of bars and restaurants.

The Margi is a luxury hotel, stylishly decorated with billowing curtains, potted olive trees and a magnificent pool. Rooms are bright and airy.

**Details** B&B doubles are from €133 (00 30 21 08 92 9000, themargi.gr). British Airways (britishairways.com) offers return flights to Athens from £144

### 4 The Romanos, Costa Navarino, Peloponnese

If you're looking for clusters of low-rise villas and hotel rooms that blend into the natural landscape overlooking a one-kilometre sandy beach, Costa Navarino is the place. There's a thalassotherapy centre and spa, a golf course and bowling alley as well as a great kids club. Rooms start from £230 a night, though villas will cost a lot more.

**Details** Seven nights' B&B costs from £1,175pp staying in a room, with flights (01244 897516, elegantresorts.co.uk) ▶