

FOLLOW MINNIE TO MEMPHREMAGOG

DUSTIN HOFFMAN and Minnie Driver filmed Barney's Version in Montreal, Canada. Lake Memphremagog, close to the city, features in the movie, released on DVD on Monday.

STAY with the STARS

It's a fresh water glacial lake more than 27 miles long. Most of it is in Quebec but some of it borders Vermont in the United States.

You can rent a lodge there which sleeps 12 from £1,200 a week. It's the ideal place to lose yourself or to spend quality time with people.

Think Lake Windermere but on a much bigger scale. For lodges see holidayrentals.co.uk.

BA operate daily flights to Montreal from London Heathrow. Fares start from £460 return including taxes, fees and charges. See ba.com or call 0844 4930 787.

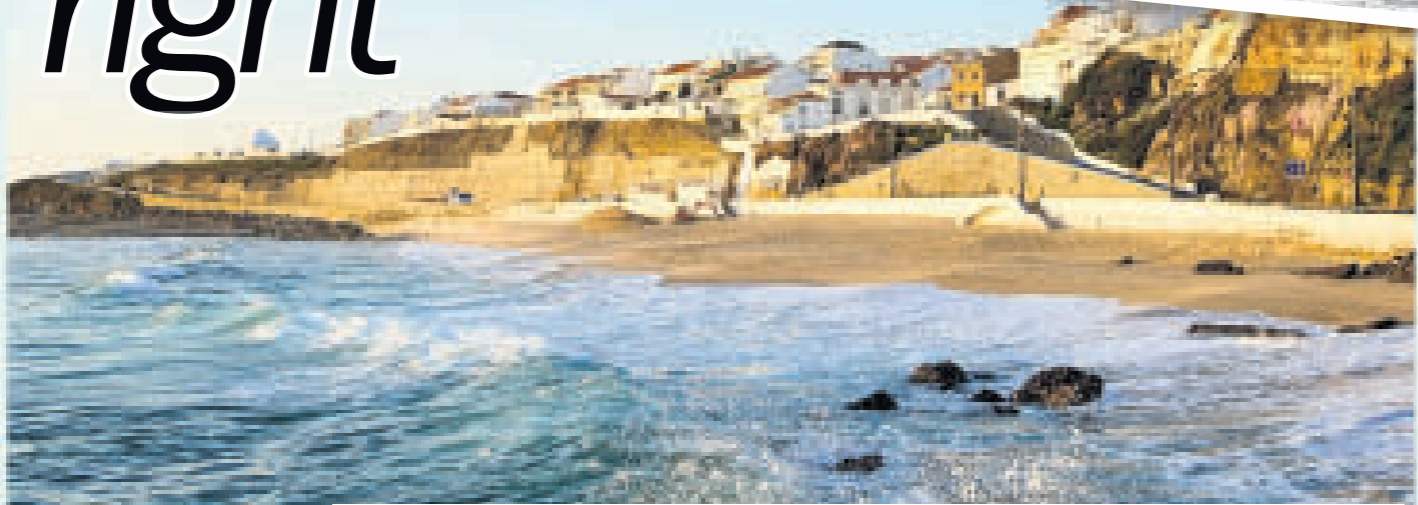
DIRECTFLIGHTS.COM have introduced a great new service for star stalkers – a celebrity globetrotters' section.

The site shows you where stars have been spotted and tells you how to get there.

Recent spots include Twilight heart-throb Robert Pattinson turning 25 in Toronto and Katy Perry, left, bungee jumping in Auckland, New Zealand. See directflights.com.



Surfs me right



PERFECT BED AND BOARD IN PORTUGAL

FOR most thirtysomething women a relaxing break usually involves sun and sea.

But I fancied a few more thrills and wanted to add in a little... **SURF!**

And while I could have spent hours sunbathing on the beautiful Atlantic beaches at Ericeira, a short drive from Portugal's capital Lisbon, a workout with the waves was the way to earn a lazy day.

We were here to learn to surf and had picked Ericeira from surfholidays.com because of the fun and funky sounding eco-lodges where we could chill out after a day riding the waves.

This green oasis was built just a few years ago to provide ultra-modern self-catering lodges for up to five people.

I could have spent hours in the hammock on the balcony.

But while the lodge's natural eco swimming pool was tempting and the BBQ a great place to knock up a sizzling snack, we were here to learn to surf.

Ericeira is a traditional small fishing village but with a big reputation for the sport.

The Portuguese town is renowned for some of the best surfing beaches in Europe and annually holds the ASP World Tour Championship.

With around 40 beaches in and around

the town for beginners and pros alike, it is the ideal place to get going. Feeling a little nervous, we headed down to Foz do Lizandro beach for our first lesson.

We were provided with the suitable attire (tip 1, make sure your wetsuit is the right way round and not inside out – a considerable amount of energy was spent on adjusting that problem) and carried our boards to the water.

After a quick safety lesson and several attempts at standing correctly on the board while on the beach, we were let loose into the waves of the Atlantic Ocean.

I should have listened a little more closely to the safety instructions and it wasn't too long before I got my first bruise (tip 2, when a big wave approaches don't hold your

board by your face). Straddling my board on the crest of a wave wasn't as easy as it was on dry land.

The object of the game is to go from lying to standing in three easy moves. I achieved the first move of lying on the board quite quickly but the next one was a little trickier.

After two hours and many attempts I finally got to my feet and rode the wave all the way to the beach.

My balance failed me at this point as I fell on top of my friend's board (tip 3, while it is enjoyable to chat with your friend during the lesson, close proximity to each other will cause a lot of bruising). Lesson over, we retired to the beach café for a spot of lunch and a guilt-free afternoon of lying in the sun with a novel.

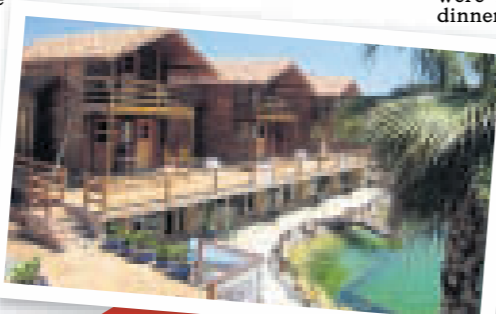
The morning's achievements were rewarded with a delicious dinner at Tik Tak, a traditional Portuguese restaurant.

Every calorie of which had already been burned off.

After dinner, there were plenty of bars at which to celebrate a successful, or not so successful, day's surfing with a few rounds of cocktails (tip 4, don't worry about the odd hangover, surfing soon sweeps those away).

Ericeira offers the perfect combination of sun, sea AND surf despite your age, gender... or ability to get in to a wetsuit.

KATE HOCKENHULL



GO: PORTUGAL

Easyjet offer flights to Lisbon from Bristol, Liverpool, Gatwick and Luton. Prices are from £62 return. See easyjet.com
A week self-catering in the Ecolodges in Ericeira in peak season including five days of lessons starts from £287. See surfholidays.com or call 020 8144 9950.

HUNT FOR ADVENTURE HEROES

NATIONAL Geographic Kids magazine are looking for the Young Adventurer Of The Year – and the winner gets a 13-day family trip to Nepal to see Kathmandu, the Himalayas and Chitwan wildlife reserve.

The magazine want entries from kids who have perhaps climbed a mountain for charity, overcome an illness to battle with a sporting challenge or lent a helping hand at a far-flung wildlife sanctuary.

Steve Backshall, presenter of CBBC's Deadly 60, is judging and will be looking out for a truly intrepid spirit. See ngkids.co.uk/adventure.

YOU don't have to go to India to suffer

from Delhi belly – you can get the travel trots just about anywhere.

Brits suffered 14million ruined days of holiday because of diarrhoea last year, according to research by Lloydspharmacy's Travel Clinic.

India WAS the top diarrhoea destination, with 54 per cent of travellers suffering. Egypt came second with 47 per cent.

The survey found diarrhoea was the biggest health worry for travellers, followed by sunburn, insect bites and tropical diseases.

Check out traveltrots.co.uk for information on the likelihood of getting the runs in different worldwide destinations and tips on how to avoid the horror.



IT'S 36°C in EGYPT – seven days' B&B at the 3★ Triton Empire Hotel, Hurghada, is from £364. Leaves Manchester on June 3. See onthebeach.co.uk or call 0871 911 0202.



IT'S 30°C in SRI LANKA – eight nights' B&B at the 4★ Vivanta by Taj Bentota is from £775. Leaves Heathrow on June 15. Call 0844 879 8014, see thomascooksignature.com or visit your nearest Thomas Cook or Going Places.

CRUISING AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

GILL'S Cruise Centre have just updated their iPhone app.

Now you can see deals as soon as they become available and browse according to what type of cruise you want.

The app also features deck plans of the ships so punters can familiarise themselves with their liner pre-cruise, or use it as a navigational aid once on board.

It works offline too so you can use it without WiFi access.

The app also features reviews and chat functions.

See gillscruise.com for details.

CRUISE NEWS

CARIBBEAN STAY AND CRUISE: A seven night Caribbean Stay & Cruise is from £799.

It includes four nights' room-only at the Quince Inn International, Orlando, and three nights on board Monarch Of The Seas, which leaves from Port Canaveral and calls at Nassau and Cococay. Flights to Florida leave Gatwick on June 13.

Call 0871 781 9893, see virginholidayscruises.co.uk or visit one of Virgin Holidays' outlets located in Debenhams and House Of Fraser stores nationwide.

ALL ABOARD FOR THE FJORDS: An 18-night fjord cruise aboard P&O's Oriana costs from £999.

It leaves Southampton on July 6 and calls at Cork, Dublin, Greenland's Julianehab and Nuuk – the northernmost capital in Europe – Icelandic cities Reykjavik and Akureyri and Alesund, Bergen and Geiranger in Norway.

Call 0845 460 6050 to book or see gillscruise.com.

MEDITERRANEAN MAGIC: A nine-night Med cruise on the Monte Carlo, Livorno, Rome, Naples, Sicily, Messina, Majorca and Marseilles.

Flights leave from Heathrow on October 7.

See carnivalcruise.co.uk, call 0845 351 0556 or visit your local travel agent.

TRAIN TO BE A GLADIATOR LIKE SPARTACUS IN ROME



Fights included



ETERNAL CITY... ruins of Coliseum, main picture, Vatican, top, and training to be a modern gladiator

TV GLADIATOR thriller Spartacus: Blood And Sand is out now on DVD. We sent TOM MITCHELSON to Rome to become a real king of the Coliseum...

NOTHING concentrates the mind better than a Roman warrior swinging an iron sword at your neck.

The sun is beating down, the sand is burning underfoot and my shield is dragging on my arm.

This is gladiator school in Rome and I've been picking up some tips before I head for the Coliseum.

It's all part of an Italian weekend mini-break with a difference.

Giusto is my instructor. His job is to give me the experience to the Roman stay alive in a sword fight. But he's a bit doubtful. "I try

not to kill you. But I promise nothing," he says. Each blow, whether I give or receive it, sends a judder up my arm. But I have to concentrate. These weapons are sharp and we're not wearing protective clothing.

Gladiators live or die by their skills and I've got a return ticket on the bus. Giusto aims a low blow at my legs and I just manage to block it with my shield. He changes direction, spinning his body 360° and his target is, once more, my neck.

I take the blow on my short sword and counter with a series of cutting blows aimed at Giusto's skull. He bats them away.

My training complete, Giusto makes a short speech in Latin and presents me with a certificate which declares me to be a citizen of the Roman Empire.

But I can't just wield a scimitar the whole time so I go in search of the

answer to the age-old question: What did the Romans ever do for us? It turns out they gave us a great weekend mini-break. I head to the Forum, where senators debated the running of the Empire. It's a ruin after a couple of thousand years but still thrilling.

It sits comfortably alongside modern buildings. In fact, throughout Rome there's a great mix of ancient and modern.

A short Vespa ride away is the Pantheon. Except I decline the Vespa. Watching this city's traffic I realise the descendants of the gladiators have found new ways, outside the stadium, to risk their lives.

I opt for a gentle stroll in the afternoon sunshine.

The Pantheon is the best preserved building from ancient Rome, a stunning temple

built by Hadrian. Heading on to the Coliseum it is time to enter the gladiators' spiritual home. It was here hardened warriors fought each other, wolves, elephants, tigers and crocodiles, as Emperors tried to buy the affection of their public.

As I climb the stairs, there seems to be a chill in the air despite the Rome sunshine, as if the ghosts of the gladiators still inhabit these ancient stones.

● Spartacus: Blood And Sand – The Complete First Series is available now on DVD and Blu-ray from Anchor Bay Home Entertainment.



GO: ROME

GETTING/STAYING THERE: Three nights room-only at the 4★ Hotel Area in the heart of Rome is from £262 per person, based on two adults sharing and includes return flights from Manchester on May 28. See Lastminute.com or phone 0871 222 5969.

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*Supplements applicable for certain regional stations. Prices based on two people sharing a twin room. Single rooms available at a supplement. Travel insurance is not included but is strongly recommended. This holiday is operated by Riviera Travel, ABTA V1744 ATOL 3430 protected, a company independent of News Group Newspapers Limited. Subject to availability. For further information please write to Riviera Travel, New Manor, 328 Wetmore Road, Burton upon Trent, Staffs, DE14 1SP quoting The Sun QB181.

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*Cut out this voucher and hand to a team member at your local Toby Carvery upon ordering. Voucher should be retained by the team member. One voucher required per 2 guests. This offer is available in all Toby Carveries. Purchase 2 carvery meals from the Daytime Menu and you will get them both for £10. The offer is valid Monday – Saturday until 7pm from Tuesday 3rd May until Thursday June 30th 2011 excluding Bank Holidays & Sundays. This offer is not valid in conjunction with any other offer and is subject to availability. You must produce a 2 for £10 voucher to receive the offer. Sign up at tobycarvery.co.uk for more vouchers. Promoter: Mitchells & Butlers plc trading as Toby Restaurants. SUN0511



JUST AS IT SHOULD BE