27 KIDS COOKING IN VENICE
Surely well ahead in a ranking of most child-pleasing global cuisines, Italian food wins early fans with its pizza and pasta dishes, but junior masterchefs can broaden their range with a class at Cooking Vacations Venice (£175pp; ten two people, accompanied children under 10 are half price, cooking-vacations.com). Menus vary by season, but always feature fresh produce bought from the Rialto Market by friendly local cook Sara. Her lessons are fun but subtly educational, schooling small groups on how to create dishes from scratch – from handmade ravioli stuffed with fresh spinach and ricotta, to Venetian-style tiramisù.

26 ACTIVE WEEKENDS WITH KIDS
Keep the children entertained (while perhaps discovering a new talent), learning Italian cuisine, bushcraft skills or surfing in the Atlantic

28 SNOWY NORWAY
From husky sledding across the pristine snowscapes of north Norway to an igloo sleepover, Discover the World’s four-night Alte Winter Adventure will have children feeling like they’ve woken up in a page out of C.S. Lewis’ The Chronicles of Narnia, and the arctic borealis itself will make an appearance – the town of Alta, where you’ll be based, is famed for its consistently good Northern Lights. And, if the lights don’t show up, ensuring the darkest of dark skies. And, if the lights don’t show up, the novelty of sleeping in a house 12 miles out of town will be enough to compensate. Experience a night-time safari with the Sorrisniva Igloo Hotel, its unique huts built alongside the arctic circle. The Resort’s new Family Winter Adventure will have children swapping stories around a roaring campfire, or creeping among oaks and elms trying to spot some of the abundant nocturnal wildlife, such as deer, and recognise useful plants and trees. Evenings are spent together while learning how to build a shelter, track animals, see parents and children camp over-eights only; raymears.com)

29 BEGINNERS’ BARCELONA
Those who fondly remember cava and jamón-focused weekends in the city pre-parenthood, rejoice. Barcelona is also a welcoming place for families. All ages will enjoy the high-octane play on offer at Bosc Urbà, an adventure park arranged by age-specific zones from complex climbing frames with nets and suspension bridges, to摆 weapons and bungee jumping for teenage adrenaline junkies (from £8, boscurbacanica.com).

30 HORSE RIDING IN THE NEW FOREST
Small cowboys and girls needn’t endure a 10-hour transatlantic flight to enjoy an American ranch-style experience – riding school Burley-Villa offers something remarkably similar in the untamed wilds of Hampshire. Children aged between four and 12 can take part in its Cowboy Adventures for Kids (£49 for two hours; burley-villa.co.uk), first tacking up their own pony before being taught basic Western riding techniques. The morning ends with lassoing lessons, a game of horshoe throwing and a cook-out lunch of burgers and sausages. Families with older children wishing to spend longer in the saddle can book an overnight break, staying in simple rooms at the peaceful on-site B&B, Burley House. Guests head out daily for tours of the New Forest, where horses roam freely (£109pp for a two-night B&B stay, including rides).

31 BUSHCRAFT IN SUSSEX
Wannabe survivalists should look no further than this two-night course in the woodlands of East Sussex. Founded in 1983 by Ray Mean, Woodlore School of Wilderness Bushcraft has instructors that teach outdoor skills and help visitors reconnect with the natural environment. The two-night Family Bushcraft course (£225 per person, five nights only; raymears.com) sees parents and children camp together while learning how to build a shelter, track animals such as deer, and recognise useful plants and trees. Evenings are spent swapping stories around a roaring campfire, or creeping among oaks and elms trying to spot some of the abundant nocturnal wildlife, including badgers and owls.

32 LEARN TO SURF IN DEVON
Croyde Beach is a proper British bit of seaside: one of the finest beaches in Devon. It’s also the county’s surf capital, its reputation for good waves making it an ideal place for youngsters to try their hand at boarding. Surf South West offer expert instruction (from £46pp, surfsw.co.uk). Warm up afterwards with a pub lunch at The Thatch (thethatchcroyde.com), where there are board games behind the bar.

ARRIVE
Fly direct to Venice’s closest airport, Marco Polo, from UK cities (from £67; vueling.com). Ryanair and Vueling fly to Barcelona’s El Prat airport from various UK airports (from £26.10; vueling.com). Charing Cross (from £26.10; southeasttrains.co.uk).

STAY
Splendom Suites offers 2-bed apartments with kitchens (from £90; splendomsuitesbarcelona.com).

STAY
Waterloo go to New Milton, two miles away (from £20; southwesttrains.co.uk). Group rides amid the lush arboreal scenery of the New Forest, where horses roam freely (£190pp for a two-night B&B stay, including rides). Arrive Burley-Villa south of the A31, in the New Forest. Trains from London Waterloo go to New Milton, two miles away (from £20; southwesttrains.co.uk).

ARRIVE
By rail from London to Croyde, 2 hour 10 minutes (from £37.10 from London; gatwickexpress.co.uk). Stay Many of the 120 rooms at resort-style Saunton Sands have sea views, and there’s an indoor pool (from £150 for a two-room suite; saunton sands.co.uk).

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