

The VFM's

The votes have been counted, the red carpet rolled out, and the world's best-value hotspots are now waiting anxiously in the wings. It's the Oscars of tour ops, the Emmys of airlines, the BAFTAs of B&Bs... It can only be our Value For Money Awards 2015! Grab a pen and make notes — our coveted 'golden piggy bank' trophies go only to the globe's most brilliant bargains

Image: **hitandrun**

Best-value European resort



WINNER: Sani Resort, Halkidiki
With four hotels in one, a stay at sunny Sani (saniholidays.com; doubles from £110, half board) means you can 'base yourself in one of the more affordable bits (such as Sani Beach Hotel), and frolic in the luxurious facilities of its posh neighbours'. But it's the 'tons of entertainment' and 'genuinely helpful and caring staff' that elevate it above its Greek-resort competitors — plus 'free transfers from Thessaloniki, if you book five nights or more'. Families take note: it's also got 'spells of free, informal childcare on the beach — staff will keep an eye on your kids so you can get back to your book for half an hour'.

RUNNERS-UP:

● For affordable digs in a luxury region, **Albergo Il Monastero** ([\[monastero.it\]\(http://monastero.it\); doubles from £99, room only\) is set in a former monastery on a rocky outcrop overlooking the isle of Ischia, in the Bay of Naples. 'Secret passageways, rustic cooking and a terrace with stunning Med views — not bad for under £100 a night.'](http://albergoil</p></div><div data-bbox=)

● **Posada de San Marcos** (posadasalajar.com; doubles from £69, B&B) is a rustic hideaway 'in the most gorgeous walking countryside' in Huelva, Andalucía, and 'reassuringly eco-friendly to boot'. Ideally placed for hiking in the Sierra de Aracena natural park, and there's an Ibérico 'ham school' to acquaint you with the local *jamón*.

● Turkey has just the tonic in the **Elixir** (through anatoliansky.com; doubles from £67, room only), a boutique number in Kalkan, with 'chic rooms, draped poolside cabanas and a great location for Kalkan's pebbly beaches'. Not to mention a touch of magic, thanks to its 'charismatic owner and host, Ali'.



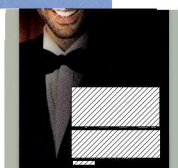
Wild card: Le Lodge du Pont d'Arc (prehistoric-lodge.com; doubles £76, B&B) in the Ardèche, in the Rhône-Alpes region of France, has 'luxurious, safari-style canvas tents with all mod cons, and is situated right by the river'. Think quirky forest eco-lodge, but glammed up by a private beach on the river (and a Jacuzzi).



Word on the tweet: 'Palazzo Radomiri, Montenegro (palazzoradomiri.com; doubles from £102, B&B). Amazing building with incredible views and wonderful staff. Feels five-star. If they can upgrade, they do.' @chantalborch



Rip-off alert: 'Hotels that offer a bed and breakfast rate, except on your first morning you find that half of it — the hot, cooked stuff that you most want — isn't included. Not the best way to start the day.' >





team tip

'Booking flights online? Clear your cookies (look in browser settings). Websites can use these to track what you're interested in — and bump up the fares.'

Tamzin Reynolds,
deputy chief
sub-editor

Greek gift: the Sani Resort, Halkidiki; left, Room Mate Pau in Barcelona

THE PANEL

We assembled a crack team of 25 globe-trotting writers and editors to get the lowdown on their favourite value-for-money finds across the map. Their anonymity ensures absolute frankness — we've even teased out the tips they didn't want to share...



The wild cards: Expect the unexpected with these left-field

tip-offs, from bargain Japan to emerging safari spots.



The rip-offs: We name and shame those travel niggles and hidden costs that drive our panel crazy.



Word on the tweet: We couldn't give our seal of approval without your input. Thanks to everyone who joined the conversation by tweeting @ST_Travelmag.

