

TRAVEL

Cruise Show
sails in



■ Royal Caribbean cruise ship Allure of the Seas

▶ THE Cruise Show visits Manchester this September for the first time. Cruising has more than doubled in popularity over the last 10 years, and now accounts for over one in every eight package holiday booked in the UK. With total passengers expected to reach 1.76 million by the end of 2013 it is clear that Britons have fallen in love with life on the ocean waves.

The event brings together the ultimate cruise showcase to uncover the world of cruise travel.

As hundreds of uniquely styled ships sail to thousands of destinations there is definitely a cruise to fit all tastes. From small boutique ships that cater for only 50 guests, exhilarating adventure and wildlife voyages and sumptuous all inclusive ultra luxury cruising, to culturally rich river cruises and modern resort-style ships perfect for the whole family.

Visitors to the shows can save thousands of pounds with exclusive show-only offers, get up-to-date insider tips and advice from the experts.

Tickets cost £6 in advance and £10 on the door, under 16s free; for full details and to book visit www.cruisingshow.com or call 0871 620 4024.

Much more than surfers' paradise

It's best known as the surfing capital of Britain, but there's more to Newquay than the waves, says **DAVID BARTLETT**

IT'S not every day that you come face to face with a sloth. And in all honesty it's not something you expect when visiting the Cornish seaside town of Newquay, famed for its beaches and surfing.

We found the cute slow-moving South American tree sleeper resting on the roof of a reptile enclosure in the tropical house at Newquay Zoo.

He was literally inches away in the open environment of the tropical house where birds fly around freely – you could touch some of the animals if you were brave or foolish enough.

For my two-and-a-half-year-old son this was just one of the many captivating parts of the zoo. Among many highlights were the "talking" mynah bird and feeding the Humbolt penguins.

Set across 13 acres, the zoo is home to more than 300 animals, and includes plenty of other distractions for children, including a giant outdoor slide.

Nearby is the picturesque and relaxing Trenance Gardens. We saw the gardens on our way out of the zoo and returned with our pet dog the following morning for our little boy to have a run around.

Just over the road is the zoo and Waterworld, which has a 25-metre swimming pool, kids' pool, and fitness centre. There's also a skate park, mini railway, café, a crazy golf

course, pitch and putt, and of course, the lush landscaped gardens.

We didn't have time to visit Waterworld and opted for the seaside instead.

Newquay boasts 12 golden beaches, which make it the surf capital of the UK. Fistral is the town's most famous beach, delivering the most consistent and best surfing to be found in the UK.

However, there is one beach where even the most skilful surfer would be hard pressed to ride a wave – in the harbour. It may seem

an unlikely location for a beach, but actually offers a very pleasant and sheltered location for family fun.

With toilets and cafés nearby it was an ideal location for sun and sand with very little stress.

The only downside is that the sandy beach is only accessible at low tide, and it is a steep walk back up the main strip of shops in the town. But if you want sand, away from the masses, this is the place to come.

In Newquay you are spoiled for choice when it comes to restaurants. We visited Little Italy, at the junction

of Tower Road and North Quay Hill. It has spectacular views down to the harbour and across Newquay Bay.

As the name suggests, this place is all about Italy and, more specifically, pizza. In keeping with the family friendly nature of our break, it offered great-tasting and hassle-free food.

We opted for pizza carne – mozzarella, pepperoni, chorizo, honey roast ham, meatballs and sliced chicken breast (£10.95 for a large one), a parma pizza – mozzarella and gran pedano cheeses, prosciutto and fresh rocket (£9.45), and dough balls (£3.95).

Mrs B couldn't resist the tiramisu (£3.95), while my son and I both had Italian ice cream (£3.95 each).

Little Italy is a great little restaurant, with delightfully friendly staff and great food to match.

We retired to our lodgings at the Tall House, which is just two minutes' drive away in St George's Road. The three of us, and our dog, had bags of room in the restored mid-terrace Victorian house which has room to sleep up to 10 people.

The self-catering property has been renovated to a very high spec and includes all the amenities you'd expect such as a dishwasher, two TVs, and wi-fi broadband.

But junior B was most impressed with the Buckaroo board game in the lounge, although perhaps not as enthralled as he was by that sloth.



■ The beach at Newquay, above, is not the only attraction the Cornwall resort has to offer. The zoo, left is just one attraction to visit. Right is the accommodation at the Tall House



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NEED TO KNOW

- ▶ **DAVID BARTLETT and family stayed in Newquay as guests of The Tallhouse.**
- **The Tallhouse is a high-quality self-catering property with views over Newquay Bay. It sleeps up to 10 people, complete with a walled garden and parking. For details see www.accommodation-newquay.net or call 01637 872094.**
- **Little Italy is a locally owned pizzeria based on Crantock Street with view of the harbour and Newquay Bay. Go to www.littleitalynewquay.com or call 01637 852021.**
- **Newquay Zoo is the largest zoo in Cornwall. Visit www.newquayzoo.org.uk or call 0844 474 2244.**
- **For details of attractions head for www.visitnewquay.org**