

# Sainsbury's magazine

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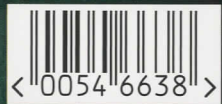
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## Serve up some *sunshine...*

- \* Caribbean hotpot
- \* Spanish chicken pie
- \* Greek pasta bake

### 'How I lost 11 stone'

Tom Kerridge's  
weight-loss  
secrets



### TIME FOR A GETAWAY?

- \* Dubrovnik
- \* Venice
- \* Marrakech
- \* Porto

Spice up  
winter gloom  
Caribbean lamb  
hotpot  
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### FABULOUSLY FUDGY!

John Whaite's salted  
pecan and white  
chocolate brownies

### DATE-NIGHT DINNERS REINVENTED

True love means...  
a healthier supper

## 20

THINGS  
EVERY  
COFFEE  
DRINKER  
SHOULD  
KNOW





# Romantic RETREATS

Roof-top pools, views to die for, exotic cocktails... now is the time to whisk your Valentine off to a dream destination

**DUBROVNIK  
SUN GARDENS**  
By Helena Lang



Picture perfect: the 'biblical' sunset over the Elafiti islands. Left: Helena and her husband Simon

A short drive from Dubrovnik on the sparkling Dalmatian coast, the Sun Gardens resort offers glorious views, exceptional service and great facilities. Sipping a glass of chilled Croatian white wine while watching the sun go down was the perfect start to our first visit to Croatia. The view from our large balcony must surely be one of the best on the Med. In front of us was Kolocep, one of the tiny tree-covered Elafiti islands – an archipelago that fringes the coastline – and the rippling petrol blue sea was interrupted only by yachts and catamarans. The peace was amazing considering the size of the resort, and the sun – like a perfect orange – hung above the horizon for a few minutes before turning the sky a biblical shade of gold. Capturing it nightly for Instagram was a project I enjoyed.

Then it was Mare Nostrum cocktails in the Maraska Lounge Bar, a blend of gin, blue curaçao, grapefruit zest and mint, heated and marinated then poured

over ice with tonic and herbs, created by head barman Mirko Strazicic. It was a perfect cool down before hopping into a hotel taxi to the nearby town of Zaton for supper by the water's edge in one of the low-key seafood tavernas. We loved Kasar (restaurant-kasar.hr) where they

***'The sun, like a perfect orange, hung above the horizon before turning the sky a shade of gold'***

barbecue the day's catch outside. At the hotel, dinner at Cilantro – one of the many restaurants on site – offers Croatian

specialities including delicious oysters from the Bay of Mali Ston, and *brodet*, the rich, tomatoey local fish stew.

Spending a day in Dubrovnik is a must – the old city is a picturesque, walled Unesco heritage site, like an ornate children's sandcastle at the edge of the sea. Rich in dramatic history both long-past and also tragically more recent (the Yugoslav wars only ended in 2001), the sense that everyone wants to move on to happier, more prosperous times is palpable and the atmosphere is welcoming and uplifting. After exploring the city, we climbed up to the restaurant Kopun (restaurantkopun.com) which specialises in capon recipes – the traditional meat of feasts, including a rich, slow cooked stew heaving with oranges and dried fruits. In the market we picked up bags of *arancini*, dried orange peel coated in sugar which Croatians like to nibble with coffee or use in baking, and bottles of delicious wines including Posip and Malvazija, most of which

Rise and shine: pick a pool for an early morning dip





Ready to relax: the exterior of the hotel's well-equipped spa



A capon salad starter at Kopun



are not produced in large enough quantities for export.

The last day of our four-day Dubrovnik dash was spent in glorious sunshine. We took dips in the staggeringly clear water off the small pebble beach before the breeze picked up, my cue to head to the spa – a large, amazingly well-equipped space of pools, saunas, steam rooms, gym and treatment centre. After a swim I had a massage with Anna, a therapist whose fragile-looking arms and shoulders disguised her inner core strength. She expertly pummelled the last knots from my muscles to leave me dozing like a baby and smelling of sweet orange-scented oil.

Nibbling *arancini* with a coffee on the plane home, skin still warm from the sun, we promised ourselves to return to this beautiful spot and its spectacular views and cool cocktails. There's still so much more relaxing to do...

#### **WHO WOULD LOVE IT?**

Sporty, active couples; as well as two gyms there are tennis, squash and badminton courts, wall-climbing, five-a-side football and exercise classes on offer, three swimming pools plus lots of steps to and from the beach and from one bit to another. Phew!

#### **MOST ROMANTIC THING?**

*That sunset.*

**BOOKING** Doubles from €110. Return flights from London Gatwick to Dubrovnik start from £100. ([dubrovniksungardens.com](http://dubrovniksungardens.com))