

FiveBest...Kids' Activities

1 Famous Five adventure Dorset

Enid Blyton turned Brownsea Island in Poole Harbour into the mysterious Whispering Island where the Famous Five evaded baddies to discover the smuggled loot. Brownsea itself is almost as magical, an island of woodland, wetland and heath with red squirrels, peacocks and deer. Throughout August, National Trust wardens will recreate the Five's escapades for children, with a treasure trail across the island and picnics with, you guessed it, lashings of ginger beer. 01202 707744, nationaltrust.org.uk, £4.40 adults, £2.10 children. Ferries from Poole, Sandbanks, Bournemouth and Swanage (brownseaislandferries.com).

2 Cooking Edinburgh

Cooking Mania would get the thumbs up from Jamie Oliver. The kids-only cookery school is running hands-on one-day courses throughout the holidays which are fun and also foster positive attitudes towards food and cooking. Over the next three weeks it will feature Tex-Mex, Far Eastern and Italian cookery. 0131-336 2012, cookingmania.co.uk. Courses £60 per day or £300 per week including all food – with lots to take home.

3 Theatre London

During Kids Week (which actually lasts a fortnight) one child aged between five and 16 can go free and another two go for half price when accompanied by a paying adult to many West End shows, including Billy Elliot, The Lion King, The Sound of Music, Mamma Mia! and Stomp (pictured). There are workshops and post-show question and answer sessions. And though it might be shrewd not mention this part of the deal to the little ones, Hamleys toy shop is giving a money off voucher to all Kids Weekers. August 15-29, kidsweek.co.uk.

4 Water world Pembrokeshire

If the weather's too miserable to enjoy Pembrokeshire's beautiful coast, the new Blue Lagoon water park is the perfect substitute – it's summer all year inside this sub-tropical park shaped like an upturned coracle. There's a splash zone for toddlers and spa pool for adults, but the star attractions are the rapid rivers and flumes, water cannons and waves big enough to boogie board on. 01834 862410, bluelagoonwales.com. Three-hour session £12.45.

5 Film festival Manchester

Kids can learn how to make movies or simply watch the best ones from around the world at the Family Friendly Film Festival in Manchester. As well as 45 screenings there will be a pirates day and a workshop on creating your own animated Manga adventure. Until August 17, 0161-234 2962, familyfriendlyfilmfestival.org.uk.



TripsAndTips

By Georgian!

Wives as They Were and Maids as They Are, a witty, scandalous 18th-century play by Elizabeth Inchbald, is being shown at Bury St Edmunds' newly restored Regency Theatre Royal. She was a daring local farmer's daughter who ran away to become an actress, playwright and novelist in the Georgian era. Other highlights of the new Georgian Gem festival include themed walks and wine tours at the Ickworth estate. theatreroyal.org, September 5-21.

New Palermo pad

Yet another achingly cool hotel has just opened in Buenos Aires' trendy Palermo district. The Hotel Vitrum boasts a gallery of Argentine artists'

work and 16 stylish rooms, each with a kitchenette and an espresso machine. Five nights from £1,420pp inc transfers and flights with Cazenove + Loyd (020-7384 2332, cazloyd.com).

Stig style

The owners of a new yurt camp near Rye in Kent – Barefoot Yurts – describe themselves as being “a bit of a stig, always eyeing skips and bits people take to the local dump.” They've put their magpie tendencies to good use, collecting furniture otherwise destined for landfill or obtained from the Freecycle.com to decorate their two tents, which are booked as one, with a separate bedroom and living room yurt. barefoot-yurts.co.uk, from £150 per night for four people.

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