

# GREAT ESCAPES

## JOANNE O'CONNOR



### Take me there

#### Tassoultante, Morocco



Hardly a month goes by, it seems, without another gorgeous new hotel opening in the Atlas Mountains, but few can boast such lofty ideals as the Fella. Not only does the hotel offer a cool retreat from the madness of Marrakech, 14km away, but it doubles up as a cultural centre dedicated to promoting contemporary art within Morocco, providing gallery space, artists' studios and residencies, a multilingual library and yoga centre. And, as if that wasn't enough, it also supports local education and literacy projects. Oh, and the rooms look pretty good, too. From €170 per night ([fella-hotel.com](http://fella-hotel.com))



### It's a good time to...

#### Eke out the summer

No, we're not quite ready to say goodbye to the summer either, so it's good news that enterprising seaside resorts are staging off-season events to prolong that holiday feeling.

**Bournemouth's Arts by the Sea Festival** (20 September to 12 October, [artsbournemouth.org.uk/festival](http://artsbournemouth.org.uk/festival)) – a mix of outdoor performance, live music, film screenings, silent discos and vintage markets – kicks off with a weekend of free events, including a sculptural parade and performance from art collective Mutoid Waste (creators of the 2012 Paralympic Games closing ceremony).

In Norfolk the **Wells Pirate Festival** (13-15 Sept, [northnorfolkfestivals.org](http://northnorfolkfestivals.org)) is a family-friendly extravaganza of fancy dress, sea shanties and storytelling, while in Hastings foodies can fill up on the finest local produce at the annual **Seafood and Wine Festival** (14-15 Sept, [visit1066country.com](http://visit1066country.com)). Meanwhile, on Fridays throughout September Blackpool will be lighting up the skies with its **Fireworks Championships** ([visitblackpool.com](http://visitblackpool.com)).

But perhaps the most fitting way to send off the summer is by joining one of the dozens of beach clean-ups and surveys around the country as part of the Marine Conservation Society's annual Beachwatch Big Weekend (20-23 Sept, [mcsuk.org/beachwatch](http://mcsuk.org/beachwatch)). ■

#### ON THE WEB

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#### Home

**Suffolk escape** Book before the end of September for 20% off a winter break at the 15th-century Swan Hotel in the beautiful Tudor village of Lavenham in Suffolk. Discounted rates start from £156 per night for two people sharing a double or twin room with breakfast (normal prices from £195). The offer is valid on stays between 1 October and 31 March ([theswanatlavenham.co.uk](http://theswanatlavenham.co.uk))



#### Away

**Spanish food** Join a Cooking, Sherry & Shopping tour at Annie B's Spanish Kitchen in the white town of Vejer de la Frontera, Andalucia. The four-night trip departs 23 September and includes sherry tastings, cookery sessions with inspiring recipes, and visits to local markets. It costs €773pp based on four people sharing two apartments, a saving of €212pp ([anniebs.co.uk](http://anniebs.co.uk))