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New Year Break				
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GO FORWARD



Edited by **VICKY LISSAMAN**

Lates 'N' Breaks

ITALY: Fly next Sunday from Glasgow for a week on half-board at the four-star Colombo Hotel in Lido de Jesolo for £509. See thomascook.com or call 0844 412 5970.

BARCELONA: Go next Saturday from Luton for two nights' room-only at the four-star

Hesperia Sant Just for £175. Visit lastminute.com or call 0871 222 5969.

ORLANDO: Stay for 14 nights on room-only basis at the three-star Monumental Movieland Hotel for £739, based on two adults and two children sharing. Fly Virgin Atlantic from Manchester or Gatwick

on September 20. See travelcitydirect.com or ring 0844 557 6965.

COSTA DEL SOL: Seven nights' self-catering at the three-star Ecuador Park Apartments in Torremolinos cost £433. Fly from Edinburgh on Saturday. Click on jet2holidays.com or call 0800 448 5599.

IBIZA: Pay £279 for seven nights' room-only at the four-star San Remo Hotel in San Antonio Bay. Jet off from Liverpool on September 27. See lowcostholidays.com or call 0800 111 6271.

WEST MED CRUISE: Spend 12 nights on board Carnival Breeze for £849. Fly from Gatwick to board the ship in Barcelona on October 25. Visit virginholidayscruises.co.uk or call 0844 573 4398.

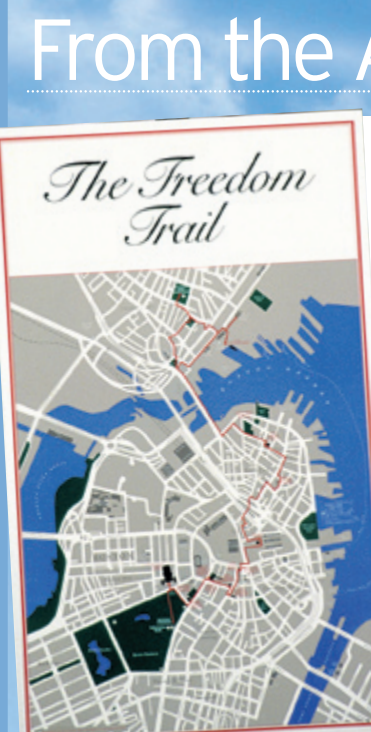
BENDORM: Pay £254 for seven nights' half-board at the five-star Hotel Gran Bali, flying from Gatwick on October 3. See easyjet.com/holidays or dial 0843 104 1000.

LAS VEGAS: Fly from Glasgow between November 18 and 26 for four nights' room-only at the four-star MGM Grand Hotel & Casino for £760. Visit thomascooksignature.com or call 0844 871 6650.

DEVON: Hire Coombehayes Barn in Uplyme near Lyme Regis for four nights for a discounted price of £561. It sleeps 12 and is available on September 17. Call 0845 268 1866 or see cottages4you.co.uk.

ALGARVE: Fly from Glasgow Prestwick on September 20 for a week at the three-star Mirachoro Apartments in Portimao, on a self-catering basis, for £228. Visit onthebeach.co.uk or call 0871 911 0202.

MALTA: Enjoy a week on B&B basis at the four-star Soreda Hotel in Qawra for £245. Fly from Gatwick on September 29. See easyjet.com/holidays or call 0843 104 1000 for details.



RED ROUTE: A map showing Boston's historic Freedom Trail

The title music to hit US sitcom Cheers includes the line: "Sometimes you want to go where everybody knows your name".

At the tourist-filled Cheers Bar in Boston, that may not quite be the case but, sitting in such familiar surroundings, you somehow feel like you're among old friends.

The show, which ran for 11 seasons from 1982-1993, marks its 30th anniversary this month.

In the replica of the original TV set in Quincy Market I pulled up a stool and chatted to the bartender.

Snaps of the main characters Sam (played by Ted Danson), Norm (George Wendt) and Frasier (Kelsey Grammer) line the walls.

And the stars even appear on the menu.

The Giant Norm Burger should fill the hungriest of travellers, while Woody's Taco Salads come in an edible bowl.

The first episode was broadcast on September 30, 1982, and anyone looking to really immerse themselves in nostalgia can follow the Cheers Trail.

It starts at the replica bar and takes in locations from the series before winding up at the Bull & Finch pub – the original inspiration for the show and the building featured in the opening credits.

You can walk around Boston's historic sights on another route – the Freedom Trail, an hour-long meander marked by a red brick line.

It includes the USS Constitution – America's oldest warship still afloat – and the Bunker Hill Monument

■ by **JEFF WHEELER**

which commemorates one of the key battles in the country's fight for independence.

The trail itself is free and unguided but a number of organised tours are available and some of the attractions charge a small entry fee.

Depending on what you read, Boston's North End started off as either a wealthy, fashionable place to live or a hive of partying pirates, slaves and locals who drank together regardless of law or social class.

One thing is for sure – there are a lot of pubs and bars about.

Many are set back from the harbour on the old colonial streets winding up towards Bunker Hill.

Most of them claim to be the oldest but all offer a pint of the local draft – Samuel Adams Boston Lager.

Based on a recipe dating back to the 1870s, Sam Adams is everywhere and the brewery is just a short metro ride away at Stony Brook.

There, for a small donation you get a history lesson, a step-by-step guide to the brewing process and, most importantly, a tasting session.

Back on Boston harbour, Quincy Market is a hotbed of stalls and restaurants and, outside, crowds gather to watch street performers and breakdancers.

You can take to the water on a harbour cruise or, as I did, enjoy a three to four-hour whale-watching trip.

Groups of friendly dolphins swam alongside our boat as we sped along and appeared to race us as we headed out into the Atlantic Ocean.

Marine biologists provided commentary and advice on what to look out for and we were lucky enough to see a pod of endangered North Atlantic right whales.

One of them even basked in the sun alongside the boat.

Humpback and minke whales are

more usual sightings. Back on shore, Joe's American Bar & Grill is great for a meal in the sunshine, with an outdoor decking area facing out to sea.

The menu offers classic American dishes such as prime-cut steak, spare ribs and fresh Atlantic seafood.

If you have a head for heights, don't leave Boston without dining at Top Of The Hub in the stylish Back Bay area.

The restaurant, on the top floor of the 52-storey Prudential Building, offers a bird's eye view of the city.

The wine list is almost as long as the US constitution and a set lunch costs from £40 a head.

But you don't have to be hungry to enjoy the view – the floor below is home to the Skywalk Observatory.

There you can learn more about the surrounding sights, which include Harvard University on the horizon and Hancock Tower, the tallest building in New England.

Boston's baseball team, the Red Sox, are also celebrating a milestone this year – a century of games at Fenway Park, the oldest Major League stadium still in use.

If you want to see them in action, book in advance – the Red Sox have sold out every home game since May 15, 2003.

The season runs until the end of the month and starts up again next spring.

But if you can't get tickets or, like me, the fixture schedule is against you, take a tour. It costs £10 and lasts an hour.

Our guide lived and breathed the Red Sox, with its great traditions, quirks and secrets.

The team – and the city – really is worth raising a glass to. Cheers!

From the American Revolution to a classic TV sitcom, this city has always figured in US history

BOSTON RAISES THE BAR



SHOW TIME: The cast of Cheers, above. Main pic, Joe's American Bar & Grill on Boston Harbour



HIT AND RUN: A Redsox player at Fenway Park



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