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## UK travel news round up

Sustainable holidays in the Highlands, Christmas by steam train and find a local night out in a big city

The Guardian, Saturday 10 October 2009



Friday night social ... spend your evening with local Londoners with the help of new website [Fridaynightsucks.co.uk](http://Fridaynightsucks.co.uk). Photograph: Peet Simard/Corbis

### Blooming lovely

The last thing Wild Rose Escapes, a new, small-scale Scottish operator based in the [Highlands](#), wants to do is give its guests an itinerary and bark "back on the bus!" after excursions. Instead, on its tailor-made family holidays and small group trips, guests are given an idea of possible activities which can be adjusted depending on the weather and how everyone feels each day. The focus is on getting people outdoors, their creative juices flowing, to interact with and learn about the natural environment and sustainability. Days may include shore-side foraging for seaweed and mussels, building clay ovens on the beach or visiting archaeological digs, supplemented with picnics, yoga and [craft](#) workshops.

07765 173029, [wildrose-escapes.co.uk](http://wildrose-escapes.co.uk). From around £650pp per week, including all meals, accommodation in holiday cottages, and transfers from Inverness.

### Full steam ahead

We hardly dare mention the "C" word this early, but a series of luxury steam train trips with a seasonal theme, running from [London](#) to various cathedral cities between now and 21 December, has just gone on sale. The Cathedrals Express has Pullman dining carriages where passengers can enjoy a champagne brunch on the way out, and dinner on their return, after three hours in the city at a carol service and shopping at [Christmas markets](#).

01483 209888, [steamdreams.com](http://steamdreams.com). From £85pp (£169pp inc brunch and dinner).

### Find a friend

A website that was initially aimed at lonely Londoners wanting to make new friends has been adopted by travellers seeking a more authentic night out. [Fridaynightsucks.co.uk](http://Fridaynightsucks.co.uk) launched last month, the creation of Vicki Jenkins, who struggled to fill her Friday nights when she first moved to the capital. Intended to put lost souls in similar situations in touch, the site has become an unexpected hit with people around the globe who plan to visit the capital – they are befriending locals, so they will show them the "real London" party experience. A similar website covering 19 UK cities launched earlier

this summer at [citysocialising.com](http://citysocialising.com).

*[Fridaynightsucks.co.uk](http://Fridaynightsucks.co.uk): free basic service, £5pp per month to create invitations and send private messages. [Citysocialising.com](http://Citysocialising.com): free to join, first five messages free, then £8.33 per month.*

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