GETAWAYS TO INSPIRE

Anybody who has ever cast their eyes over London from the Shard, breathed the fresh air on the shores of Loch Lomond in Scotland or been witness to any number of natural phenomena will agree that a place can be inspirational in lifting the spirits. Here are some inspirational and accessible places you should go to.

By Julia Cameron

Adventure

Here are two activities that could be just what you need to inspire you to do something challenging. Both activities have good accessibility and are sure to be lots of fun.

France – Val Thorens

There's nothing like doing something that makes you feel exhilarated and even a touch breathless. A winter holiday skiing in France will give you the opportunity to savour the spectacular views and feel the wind on your face as you take to the slopes.

The resort caters for novice and experienced skiers with a ski school and plenty of other facilities onsite. (In fact, it was voted the world's best ski resort in 2013.)

Skiing is available in the resort from November to May and Van Thorens have 15 years' experience providing accessible skiing which extends to lodgings, car parking and other activities too.

The nearest airport is Chambery which is about 90 minutes away from Van Thorens and you can fly from the UK with Flybe or British Airways. There are also flights into beautiful Geneva, Grenoble and Saint Exupery, which are all around two hours from the resort with bus links from each airport.

www.valthorens.com

Kendal Cumbria – The Bendrigg Trust

The Bendrigg Trust's motto is 'achieve through adventure'. They want to inspire you to take a challenge and do something you might never have done before.

You don't have to tackle Everest, but you can experience outdoor climbing and abseiling. They have courses for adults and children who want some adventure. As well as climbing, there's caving, fell and lowland walking and a host of other accessible activities.

Based in the beautiful countryside of Kendal in Cumbria, you can stay with the Trust which has accessible accommodation or in a hotel or b&b in Kendal itself.

www.bendrigg.org.uk

Dream Holidays

A holiday away from it all, is always something to look forward to. When it means you'll get the chance to experience something special, then it's even better.

Sri Lanka – Elephants, Tea and Temples

If you dream of far off places, a voyage to the island of Sri Lanka in the Indian Ocean could be for you. Sri Lanka is spiritual, exotic and exciting. Spend your time there in contemplation and relaxation or in exploration and discovery. You can visit monasteries, temples and ornate gardens or take a Jeep tour through any one of Sri Lanka's national parks to see elephants, leopards, buffalo and mongoose. Ride a train or sip tea at a tea plantation.

It's a holiday that will inspire you to want to see more places that are farther afield. Sri Lanka will take your breath away with its beauty, fascinate you with its wildlife and its friendly people will touch your heart. Nevertheless, travelling independently to Sri Lanka isn't recommended. By far the best way to see the country is through a tour operator specialising in holidays for disabled travellers.

www.srilankatravel.com

Search 'Sri Lanka' on: www.disabledholidays.com

Cruising the Norwegian Fjords

Do you want vistas that will take your breath away? You'll get spectacular views from your cruise ship and the opportunity to see some picturesque towns and villages along the way. You can travel with Norwegian Cruise Lines, Fred Olsen

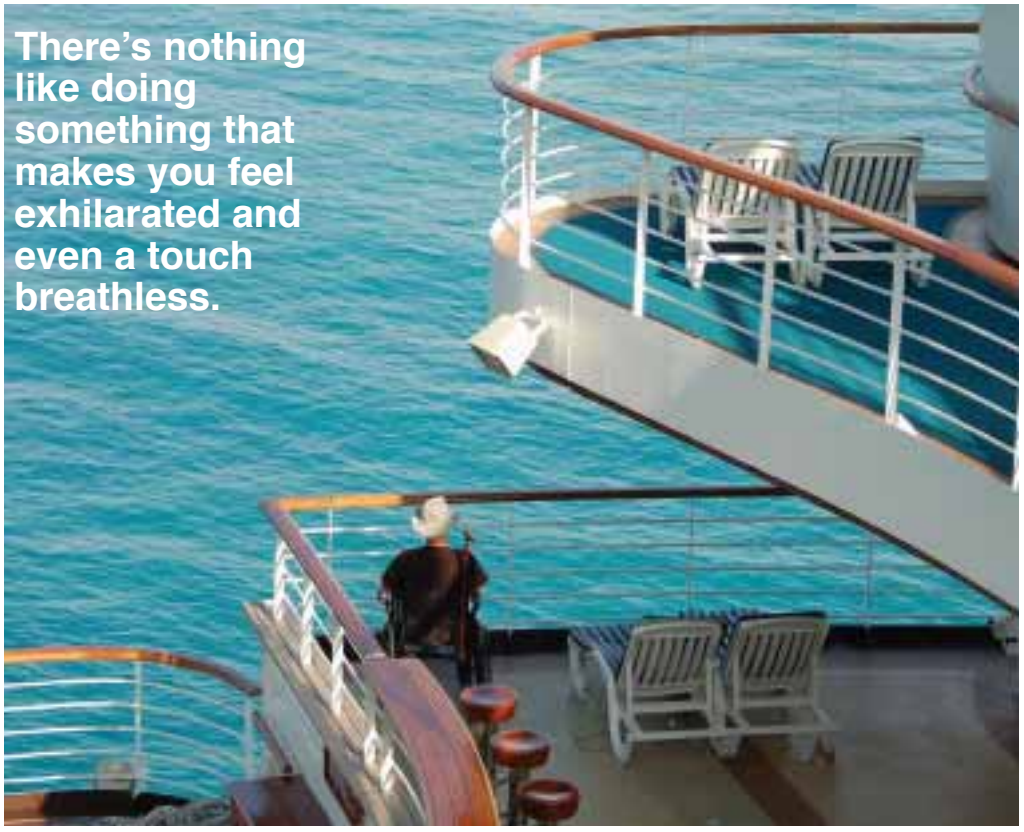
or P&O. (They all have accessible cabins and staff who will help you.)

Visiting Norway is a chance to see nature at its finest. Norway has glaciers, mountains, waterfalls and stunning sunsets. It's the place to soak in everything that is beautiful in the countryside and with a chance to see the stunning Northern Lights if you travel between September and March.

You can either book independently or travel with a holiday company like the Disabled Cruise Club or Disabled Holidays.

Search 'Norwegian Fjords' on: www.disabledholidays.com

Select 'Scandinavia' on: www.disabledcruiseclub.com



Days Out to Remember

If you're looking for some inspiration, for a day out or a short break that's filled with sights and sounds you won't forget in a hurry.

London

What could be more inspirational than visiting the city that hosted the 2012 Paralympics? Yes, London. It's busy, noisy and cosmopolitan. See a show, visit the museums, take in the views from the London Eye or a nose around Borough Market and see for yourself.

The bus is sometimes easier than using the underground. Buy an Oyster Card, which will save you having to root around for change all the time.

www.visitlondon.com

Whale Watching in Oban

How about whale spotting in the sea off the coast of Oban? Wrapped up against the cold, you'll get the chance to see whales, dolphins, porpoises, otters, eagles and many other types of wildlife.

There can be few better ways to observe these majestic creatures in their natural environment than from a boat. Learn about the species from the wildlife guides and see how conservation is helping to keep them healthy.

Seafari Adventures have boats that have been especially adapted for wheelchair access. All you need to do is give them a ring in advance, so that they can prepare a boat that will suit your needs. Whale watching tours take place daily from May until September.

www.seafari.co.uk

We hope some of these locations give you the inspiration you need to explore new places and create some wonderful memories.

More:
Visit www.ablemagazine.co.uk for more accessible travel ideas.